Making ‘fritters with English’: Functions of Early Modern Welsh Dialect on the English Stage

by

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Centre for Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies
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ABSTRACT

The Welsh had a unique status as paradoxically familiar ‘foreigners’ throughout early
modern London; Henry VIII actively suppressed the use of the Welsh language, even though
many in the Tudor line selectively boasted of Welsh ancestry. Still, in the late-sixteenth century,
there was a surge in London’s Welsh population which coincided with the establishment of the
city’s commercial theatres. This timely development created a stage for English playwrights to
dramatically enact the complicated relationship between the nominally unified nations. Welsh
difference was often made theatrically manifest through specific dialect conventions or codified
and inscrutable approximate Welsh language.

This dissertation expands upon critical readings of Welsh characters written for the
English stage by scholars such as Philip Schwyzer, Willy Maley, and Marissa Cull, to
concentrate on the vocal and physical embodiments of performed Welshness and their functions
in contemporary drama. This work begins with a historicist reading of literary and political
Anglo-Welsh relations to build a clear picture of the socio-historical context from which Welsh
characters of the period were constructed. The plays which form the focus of this work range
from popular plays like Shakespeare’s Henry V (1599) to lesser-known works from Thomas
Nashe’s Summer’s Last Will and Testament (1592) to Thomas Dekker’s The Welsh Embassador
(1623) which illuminate the range of Welsh presentations in early modern England. From the characterizations of the foolish ‘foreigner’ to the mystical Welsh woman, these characters shed light on sixteenth and seventeenth-century performance conventions. Through close readings of extant dramatic texts, editors’ emendations of dialects, and archival materials from modern productions, this dissertation exposes where the sounds of stage Welsh fit within the social and theatrical continuum of early modern England.
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Introduction

The rise of commercial theatre in early modern London was dependent on layered influences from dramatic and literary traditions reaching as far back as the origin of the medium itself. One of the most prevalent theatrical tropes used across genre, style, and troupe was the variation of dialects to indicate regional or socioeconomic variations of character. Textual analyses of early modern drama demonstrate that there are repeated dramatic representation of language frequently unconcerned with local fixity. In Shakespeare’s work alone, we encounter a Venice merchant speaking with the same iambic English dexterity as that of a Scottish king or Danish prince. Often in this dramatic convention, social class of characters establishes linguistic authority more frequently than any verisimilar idiosyncrasy of region or nation. However, many Welsh characters onstage between 1592-1630 are marked as such by their nationalized speech patterns and linguistic characteristics. These dramatic Welsh linguistic deviants disrupt the hegemonic theatrical language and direct attention to the variability of speech and the embodiment thereof. In this thesis, I expand critical analyses of potential performances of the extant written dialogue that approximate or mock the Welsh language and dialect play in the early modern era. Throughout this work, I trace the narrative of Anglo-Welsh relations in contemporary myth and historiography; the functions of dialect as a vehicle for comedy; the variations of Welsh representations within and across gendered performance; and the issue of staging Welsh dialect and language in modern performance, especially for Anglophone audiences.

There is a long tradition of language play that influenced the performances of dialect in early modern London. This project builds upon the work of scholars who have studied the traditions of heteroglossia in ancient Greek drama, Roman comedy, and commedia dell’arte.
Heteroglossia, as described by Mikhail Bakhtin, is the representation of multiple forms of the same language based upon socio-economic status, region, and age. While Bakhtin theorized about the use of heteroglossia in novels, the convention of such linguistic variety in Western drama dates to the very first extant play, Aeschylus’s *The Persians* (472 B.C.E.). The Chorus of Persians frequently intersperses their Greek dialogue with an imitative Persian language to highlight the clash of the two cultures. Marvin Carlson explains more broadly, “Persian being the non-Greek language best known to the Greeks, it was the one most likely to appear, even if corrupted in form, in the plays.” The general familiarity of Persian in Athens merely called for an approximation of the phonology, which gestures to linguistic and cultural differences, but also reflects the ludic nature of the Dionysian Festival. Following this convention, Aristophanes would wring comedy out of a theatrically incorrect Thracian language Triballian, which the Greeks viewed as a “barbarian” language in *The Birds* (414 B.C.E).

The Romans perpetuated linguistic mixing with their introduction of New Comedy, which directly influenced the playwrights of early modern London. Plays like Plautus’s *Miles Gloriosus* and *The Brothers Menaechmus* from the first century B.C.E paved the way for the stock characters that became fully realized in commedia dell’arte. In Italian commedia dell’arte, the archetypal characters il Dottore, Arlecchino, and il Capitano were noticeable due to their broad stereotypical characteristics like oblivious didacticism, trickery, and boastfulness, respectively, but each were also performed in marked dialect. Il Dottore was recognizable as

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3 Ibid 27. Carlson’s phrase “even if corrupted in form” is particularly germane to my line of questions about verisimilar portrayals of “foreign” languages in this thesis.
from Bologna, Arlecchinno quipped in Bergamese, whereas the Captain, the *miles gloriosus* figure, was usually an outsider from Spain or France. Because commedia was mainly street theatre, the archetypes were threefold reinforced: masks, dialect, and personality traits made for easy access to plot and action for a casual spectator. The variation of dialect and language also simply created a dynamic theatrical event and allowed for improvised of-the-moment references to local happenings.

The dramatic tradition of regional differentiation of languages was also mined for comedy and theatrical interest throughout the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras. From the liturgical Latin oration and plays of the medieval era, through to the regional dialects mobilized to deepen characterization and empathetic identification in the Townley version of *The Second Shepherds Play*, English spectators were offered similar such dialect play. There is an obvious interest in the employment of ‘alien’ languages across early modern drama as seen by the continental languages approximated in William Haughton’s *Englishmen for My Money*, the Dutch used in Thomas Dekker’s *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, and the invented language used to deceive the braggart Parolles in *All’s Well that Ends Well*, to name just a fraction. However, the interest in dialect mixed with the political and cultural moment of the late sixteenth century sets the stage for multiple dynamic Welsh characters. This thesis develops the research about the politically-charged dramatic representations of Welsh characters, focusing specifically on the performative conception of new conventions and language play as a tool for performing kinship, mockery, and the situational nature of the liminal space between.

Throughout much of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Welsh, along with the French, were England’s most geographically and politically proximate foreigners. Twenty years into his reign, Henry VIII centralized the government of England and Wales through two pieces
of legislation, one in 1536 and another in 1543 retroactively named the “Acts of Union” in 1901. The euphemistic title is deceptive because it echoes the statutes passed in 1707 and 1800 for the English union with Scotland and Ireland, respectively. However, the parliaments of Scotland and Ireland had a political hand in the negotiations. “Deception and trickery were necessary to induce the members of the parliaments of Scotland and Ireland to acquiesce in their abolition, but at least there was acquiescence; the Welsh Act of ‘Union’ was passed solely by England, a body lacking members from Wales.”\(^4\) Indeed, the preamble to the 1536 Laws in Wales Act emphasizes an original alliance between England and Wales. It states, “Wales…is and ever hath bene incorporated, annexed, united, and subiecte to and under the imperiale Crowne of this Realme as a verrye member…of the same.”\(^5\) The propagandist language implies a harmonious relationship predating this union and removes any autonomy from the Welsh people.

Among the new unified legislation outlined in the document were the instatement of the Law of England through Wales, and the foundation of English as the language of the courts. The King declares:

> Also be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That all Justices, Commissioners, Sheriffs, Coroners, Escheators, Stewards, and their Lieutenants, and all other Officers and Ministers of the Law, shall proclaim and keep the Sessions Courts Hundreds Leets Sheriffs Courts, and all other Courts in the English Tongue; and all Oaths of Officers, Juries and Inquests, and all other Affidavits, Verdicts and Wager of Law, to be given and done in the English Tongue; and also that from henceforth no Person or Persons that use the Welch Speech or Language, shall have or enjoy any manner Office or Fees within this Realm of England, Wales, or other the King's Dominion, upon Pain of forfeiting the same

\(^4\) Davies (1994) 232.

\(^5\) Ibid 232.
Offices or Fees, unless he or they use and exercise the *English* Speech or Language.\(^6\)

This short passage is the only mention of language, both Welsh and English, in the statute, and yet it paved the way for Anglicized Welsh gentry that would threaten the very existence of vernacular *cymraeg* (Welsh language),

Despite this legislation, parts of rural Wales remained rather untouched by the English, while, as mentioned above, some Welsh gentry assimilated neatly into aristocratic society in the heart of London or in wholly Anglicized towns in Wales called “Englishries,” which were mostly found in South Pembrokeshire, the Gower Peninsula, or in border counties like Monmouthshire and Herefordshire.\(^7\) Between these extremes, however, were those who were constantly negotiating the limits of their Welshness and Britishness through speech, passing in either society until making a linguistically idiosyncratic misstep. The contemporary grammarian Gruffudd Robert writes, “You will find some men that, so soon as they see the river Severn or the steeples of Shrewsbury, and hear the Englishman but once say good morrow, they shall begin to put their Welsh out of mind and to speak it in most corrupt fashion. Their Welsh will be of an English cut, and their English (God knows) too much after the Welsh fashion.”\(^8\) Yet while the spoken word may have been overtly scrutinized, there was a large population of Welsh migrants in the business of printing and publishing in sixteenth century London.

Since printing and publishing at the time were restricted to the universities and London,

\(^6\) (1536) Statues at Large of England and Great Britain c.26

\(^7\) Outland (2011) 304.

\(^8\) As quoted in J. Gwynfor Jones (1989) 160.
Welshmen in these trades were forced to conduct their business in the capital. Throughout the second half of the sixteenth century there were 131 Welsh printers recorded working in London.\(^9\)

The most significant of work produced during this time was Bishop William Morgan’s Bible written entirely in *cymraeg* in 1588. The huge achievement of Morgan’s Bible not only reflects the desire for Welsh language worship and learning, but it also illuminates the country’s late and gradual shift to Protestantism, yet another point of contention between the two nations. Although already incorporated by Henry VIII’s crown and therefore under the rule of the Church of England at its conception, the lack of universities and trading posts with England left much of Wales steeped in its own Celtic version of Roman Catholicism later than the English shifted to the Anglican Church. Davies explains, “As there were among them only a few with the ability and motivation to effectively to defend the old, and only a few eager to embrace the new, their general reaction to religious change was a sullen acceptance of the ordinances of new government.”\(^10\) It was not until Elizabeth’s reign, however, that Protestantism began to be embraced across the border.

Appealing again to their Celtic beginnings, Elizabeth’s government could convince skeptics that Welsh Christianity existed before imposed practices brought by the Romans. The rhetoric led the Welsh to the conclusion that they were simply returning to the Protestant religion their ancestors practiced, which many believed was directly transmitted from Joseph of Arimathea himself.\(^11\) In 1567 Elizabeth passed a statute that allowed for services in the parishes

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\(^9\) Jones (2001) 43.

\(^10\) Davies (1993) 239.

\(^11\) Ibid 242.
in Wales and Hereford to be conducted in Welsh, but still upheld that secular matters were to conform to her father’s English decree. William Morgan’s Welsh translation of the Bible appealed to the laymen by rejecting the “archaic and the strange and the Latinized in favour of the contemporary, the familiar and the Cymric.” Obliterated from the law, education and the households of the gentry, the Welsh language was given a refuge in the church and permanence in the Bible. While some historians hypothesize that Morgan’s Bible saved the Welsh language, it certainly did create an exceedingly glorified connection between the language and the nation’s faith.

While Welsh was struggling to work within its new limits after Henry VIII’s ruling, the English language was similarly going through an upheaval dubbed the “inkhorn controversy” in the sixteenth century. As diverse immigrants’ languages saturated the acoustic space of the city, the state of the English tongue was vehemently debated. Grammarians and writers debated the adoption of foreign words into the English language, which some argued endowed the language with more elegance, while opposing arguments were split between English purists vehemently against borrowing from other languages and archaizers who favoured the reuse of Old English. The Welsh language was not even considered in the inkhorn debates since Henry VIII was actively erasing its use. Richard Mulcaster’s 1582 *The First Part of the Elementarie* does not mention Welsh as a possible inkhorn language; he lists “Latin, Greke, Hebrew, Italian,

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12 Davies 243.

13 The debates took the name of the inkhorn to illustrate the necessity for more ink to write lengthy borrowed words.

French, Spanish, Dutch, Scottish, &c” as the influential vocabularies. George Puttenham mentions the Welsh only once in *The Arte of English Poesie* simply to point out his distaste for their words of unsuitable length: “and specially such as be propre names of persons or townes or other things and namely Welsh words.” In *An Apology for Actors* written thirty years later, Thomas Heywood laments that the English tongue is, “part Dutch, part Irish, Saxon, Scotch, Welsh, and indeed a gallimaffry of many, but perfect in none, is now by this secondary meanes of playing, continually refined.” However, there is little evidence that Welsh contributed extensively to the 10,000 to 25,000 neologisms created between 1500-1659 in the English language, mostly derived or borrowed from foreign languages.

Despite the proximity of the Welsh language to London culture, the English perceived it as a rough-sounding, harsh language, which made it suitable for comic theatre. Shakespeare’s Glendower speaks in elevated Anglicized English verse but also in unscripted Welsh, while Parson Evans speaks in broken English in which “p’s” substitute “b’s,” among other phonetic differences. Different conventions for the dialect exist simultaneously, and dramatists selectively record stage Welsh as any combination of the following speech habits: a poorly approximated Welsh language; correctly spoken Welsh phrases; substituting ‘her’ for all personal pronouns; pluralizing singular words; awkward syntax; and broken English, which can encompass poor

pronunciation to incomprehensible speech. This dissertation examines the disparate representations throughout time, genre, gender, and class.

The construction of character is a vital part of my research, and philological close readings in this dissertation address the theatrical and dramaturgical function of stage Welsh in opposition with constructed Englishness. The most thorough studies about Welshmen onstage have been dedicated to Shakespeare’s depictions of Wales, but in this thesis, I consider stage Welsh as written by contemporary playwrights such as George Peele, Ben Jonson, Thomas Middleton, Thomas Dekker, William Rowley, and Robert Armin.\textsuperscript{19} As often in criticism of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, there can be a perception that Shakespeare’s creations are somehow more valuable than the characters featured in other playwrights’ works. Certainly, Shakespeare’s canon includes interesting case studies, but his works exist as just a small part of a popular emerging convention of the time. Although there has been a productive shift in alterity studies from analyzing foreign stage images as stock characters to individual entities, the Welsh are frequently categorized as wholly comic or mythic. Lisa Hopkins theorizes that Shakespeare’s Welsh characters “enable him to lighten the tone by the introduction of elements of comedy, as with the counterpoint afforded by the Glendower and Fluellen scenes, or to deepen it by incorporating mythical allusions and appealing to a legendary past.”\textsuperscript{20} In this work, I attempt to trouble the strict comic reading of all Welsh characters, to shed light on the situational nature of performances of Welshness.

\textsuperscript{19} Texts by Lloyd, Schwyzer, Hopkins, and Emrys Jones focus primarily on the Welsh characters in Shakespeare’s works.

\textsuperscript{20} Hopkins (2005) 14.
Unfortunately, a complete history of the Welsh in Elizabethan and Jacobean London is obscured by the very indefinability of a singular Welsh identity in the growing metropolis. Due to its proximate geographical border to the west, Wales is always a presence in the capital in constant exchange with changing socio-political circumstances. Yet imprecise English records of the Welsh in London merely allude to the wide range of possible Welsh experiences in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Emrys Jones positions the Welsh as an invisible ethnicity, “ignored partly because of their invisibility and partly because there was no reason to distinguish them from migrants from other parts of Britain.”

The use of “ethnicity” in this instance is notable, because contemporary epistemology would locate the Welsh within the delineation of the Celtic Britons, Gothic Saxons and Normans as ethnically diverse. Marjorie Rubright posits ethnicity in this period “as a process that happens when identifications are made or disavowed in the cultural sphere.”

The fluid nature of Welsh ethnicity is often represented in contrast to the constructions of Englishness in early modern London. On the surface, Welsh immigrants were no different from Londoners ethnically or economically, but they brought with them their ‘antiquarian’ language and set of cultural customs and inheritance that selectively permeated the perceptions of Britishness as a whole. Each play imagines, stages, and reworks Welsh characters in a process of constructing Welshness anew each time.

Despite the superficial similarities with their staged English counterparts, the repeated presence of Welsh characters onstage suggests a real consideration of a process of nationalized

22 Kidd (1999) 75.
Welsh identity construction in drama and beyond the playhouse walls. Of course, as with any culture or nation, it is impossible to essentialize Welshness, but whether overtly recognized or not, the Welsh continuously saturate the folklore, history, commerce, and theatre in daily London life. However, all extant stage Welshmen on the London commercial stage in this period are wholly English creations. Several characters confirm J.O. Bartley’s summary of the stereotypical Welsh characteristics of bombastic national pride and gluttony, but almost as many stage representations illustrate Welshmen as peers to their English counterparts. In stage language, there are Welshmen who speak a range from elevated Anglicized English verse, like Shakespeare’s Glendower, to broken English gibberish in Dekker’s *The Welsh Embassdor*, to closely approximated Welsh in Jonson’s *For The Honour of Wales*. These different conventions for stage Welsh dialect exist simultaneously, at times within the same work. Such wide inconsistency of representations of Welshness onstage prompts the question of what Londoners knew about their Welsh neighbors’ language, customs and daily life in the city.

To define a London theatregoer in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries would be to describe the hugely diverse demographics of the city itself. The Welsh were far from the only new ethnic group populating the cultural center of England. London experienced a surge in population and tourism from the archipelago and the continent, which diversified the cultural and linguistic landscape of the city. Tens of thousands of immigrants fled to England as religious refugees or to look for significantly better economic opportunities than elsewhere in Europe. “The growth of London was fueled entirely by migration from smaller towns and from rural areas – death rates in the city were so high that London could not even keep its population steady
by natural increase.”

London was swiftly becoming a cultural and economic capital of Europe, and many Welsh people seized on the opportunity to move to the urban center.

The exact number of Welsh residents in London throughout this time is unknown, partly due to the inconsistently selective inclusion of Welsh under the umbrella of Britishness. A 1541 London subsidy list that assessed householders in London as “English” or “Strangers” recorded 99 Welsh names, and 92 of those appear among the English. However, this list only samples about 25 percent of London households at the time, from which W.P. Griffith extrapolates approximately 1,280 Welsh households within London and Southwark accommodating as many as 5,760 occupants. Griffith predicts that the Welsh population in London grew 340 percent between the years 1541 and 1582 alone and he posits a total of 6,336 Welsh households out of 118,000 in London by the end of that time. What is clear is that unlike many other immigrants who geographically grouped in pockets of London along ethnic or linguistic lines, the Welsh were spread from around London Bridge and the Thames up to the northwest of Farringdon Without and Portsoken to the east, and beyond the city walls. This spread was also reflected in the social makeup of the London Welsh in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

As with any form of identification, of course, there was a huge range of explicit and implicit Welshness performed in early modern London. Despite theatrical accusations of all Welsh people being rural “mountain foreigners” and farmers, some immigrants and London-born

24 Smith (1997) 166.
26 Ibid. 11.
27 Ibid. 11.
citizens of Welsh descent rose to the court and gentry. Under Edward VI’s rule, Welshman William Thomas was the clerk to the Privy Council, while Sir Thomas Parry served Elizabeth I. Elizabeth also appointed Swansea native Sir John Herbert as a secretary of state.28 The Welsh contributed to the domestic side of court as well, including Blanche Parry, a gentlewoman of the Queen’s Bedchamber.29 Meanwhile, Welsh-born students also began graduating from England’s institutions like Oxford, Cambridge, and the Inns of Court. Welsh-born denizens contributed to the economic growth of London as lawyers, merchants, and clergymen, but the Welsh cloth and wool trade drove human and economic traffic between London and Wales.30 Drovers from Kent travelled to Wales and Welsh drovers traded throughout the English Midlands, which created roads and allowed more Welsh immigrants to make the journey to London.

The widespread nature of the Welsh population in Elizabethan and Jacobean London makes it unclear if there was much of a sense of a united community of London Welsh. Although immersed in all walks of London life, what is striking is the inconsistency of labeling Welshness. Lloyd Kermode explains that in the second half of the sixteenth century the terms ‘alien’ and ‘stranger’ refer to those from outside of England and the Principality of Wales.31 The term ‘stranger’ was a catchall term which could be used to describe someone from a different country, or even a neighboring parish. The Welsh are often referred to as ‘foreigners’ – not quite so alien as the rival Spanish, perhaps – but still not native Londoners. This definition is not rigidly

28 Ibid 22.
29 Ibid 22.
30 Owen (1964) 147-8.
adhered to, however, since Welshness is always being constructed parallel to a similarly fluid construction of Englishness as well. The Welsh were a ubiquitous presence in London daily life, but they were often seen as a useful Other on the periphery, selectively embraced or left out of the ever-evolving construct of Englishness. As Kermode explains,

> Englishness (especially on the stage) is only an assertion of stability, a construction of identity akin to dramatic performance. Drama always suggests the paradox of ‘playing out’ an ‘essentialism’ like identity. What is asserted in an English character’s performance is often a masculinized demonstration of power with an underlying personal fragility or fear of failure.\(^\text{32}\)

The “masculinized demonstration of power” often hinges on discriminating archipelagic histories, which may include a narrative of the brave Celtic battles against the Romans, but also boast the Anglicization of the Welsh under Henry VIII’s rule. Welshmen were afforded social mobility and consideration as a part of the English histories from systematic suppression through embracing Anglicization. The stage naturally follows with such dynamic identification because with each performative instantiation national identities can be enacted differently each time. These contradictory characterizations between the two nations arise out of a long and complex history of the contiguous lands.

Another important development that lends itself to the potent representation of Wales on the early modern stage is the emergence of the city comedy. Jean Howard describes how city comedies “all in some way negotiate the presence of non-native Londoners and non-native

\(^{32}\text{Kermode (2009) 14-5.}\)
commodities within the space of the city.” Such comedies provide opportunities for the English to dramatize London as a human production stabilized by English characters. Although termed the “city comedy,” some scholars use the label “citizen comedy,” for plays with similar conventions of farcical humor and topical commentary on London society that are set elsewhere. Under either term, however, one major characteristic of the comedies is the presentation of Anglophone characters demonstrating linguistic prowess and competence in a space that often contradicts foreigners’ linguistic impotence. The deliberate reproduction or imitative constructions of broken English and dialect were signposts of foreignness and became quite a popular convention to discursively construct the boundaries of what it means to be foreign within the emerging self-definition of London society.

Again, these satires then challenge a strictly nationalist binary of Welshness in opposition to Englishness by introducing other foreign bodies and sounds within an English context. Lloyd Kermode writes, “Elizabethan dramatists understood the difficulty of homing in on a concept of Englishness, since it is a formulation that depends in large part on dynamic, mutable, unstable alien forces.” Kermode posits an oppositional relationship between English and Other in a teleological fashion to describe the alien as decidedly Not English, a label that does not necessarily quite fit all dramatizations of Welsh characters.

While much attention has been paid to hetero-images of English and Other to analyze early modern perceptions of Englishness and foreignness, there are instances when Welshness lurks somewhere between English and markedly Other foreign characters. Being dramatically

Welsh is often shaped by the staged explorations of broader national and ethnic identities which illustrate the potential for linguistic alterity in the dramatized English societies represented. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor* Welsh parson Sir Hugh Evans actively others Frenchman Caius along with the citizens of Windsor. Likewise, *Henry V* stages a cacophony of British dialects when the markedly nationalized Jamy, Macmorris, Fluellen, and Gower fight about nationhood. Dekker also rewrites *The Noble Spanish Soldier* as *The Welsh Embassador*, which sheds light on one playwright’s positioning of the Spanish versus the Welsh. Englishness, Welshness and Other foreign idiosyncrasies as understood through dialect in these plays then demonstrate the shifting dynamics of nationhood as performance. However, imaginative recreations of dialect and alienation shed light on an acceptance that relies on assimilation and similitude that may be more precarious than the city comedies superficially enact.

This is significant also because the city comedy, although not entirely consistent, demonstrates potential social dynamics of English life at the time. The immediacy of subject and audience also erases some of the mystic allure of the Welsh as metonymic for British heritage inscribed in Cambria, Glendower or the Tudors, as seen in contemporary plays like *Cymbeline* which relegates the land to mysticism and fantasy. The Welsh characters in many of these plays are simply citizens or denizens (to the extent to which any Elizabethan or Jacobean Welsh character can “simply” be anything). Such representations offer insight into the perceptions of Welshness as linguistically vulnerable, yet ultimately “acceptable” at a time when the theatre enjoyed a reflexive relationship with London society. However, the playwrights’ imaginative recreations of dialect and alienation shed light on an acceptance that relies on assimilation and similitude that may be more precarious than the city comedies superficially enact. The selective linguistic deviants represented by extant foreign dialects in text disrupt the hegemonic theatrical language and direct attention to the variability of speech but also to the apparent necessity of
acceptance by submission.

There has been a great deal of scholarly attention given to the theatrical history of representations of Scottish, Irish, French, Italian, and other “alien” characters on the early English stage, but the Welsh have only recently begun to emerge as a site of critical inquiry. Due to the nation’s unique place (geographically, politically, and linguistically) from the perspective of the early modern English, the stage Welshman similarly presents a complex, and often conflicting, character onstage. The study of Welsh figures on the early modern English stage begins with J.O. Bartley’s 1954 _Teague, Shenkin and Sawney_, an integral, albeit broad, analysis of stage Irish, Scots, and Welsh. A review of Bartley’s work states that people from these nations have “been aware, only too painfully so at times, of the caricature ‘stage’ creatures who have been used to symbolise (or realise) them upon the stage.”\(^35\) Although he does not deconstruct the stereotypes, Bartley compiles a concise list of all extant non-English characters of the archipelago and their repeated linguistic quirks and theatrical mannerisms. While I focus on many representations of the “stage Welshman,” my work moves beyond this totalizing image of the Welsh as laughable embodiments of national inferiority to more nuanced performative creations.

Philip Schwyzer and Willy Maley’s collection _Shakespeare and Wales_ (2010) was the first critical collection to concentrate on the political and theatrical implications of claiming Welshness onstage and in the city. Along with that compendium, Marissa Cull’s _Shakespeare’s Princes of Wales_ (2014) identifies the princedom as a rare solid symbol of the nation that can be analyzed with specificity from the late sixteenth century. In the past twenty years, studies of the

\(^{35}\) Quinn (1955) 348.
early modern English pursuit of linguistic identity have turned to theatre history. Paula Blank (Broken English 1996) traces the history and patterns of sixteenth and seventeenth writers’ portrayal and manipulation of the English language and dialects throughout the British Isles and Ireland to expose the theatrical manifestations of linguistic politics. A.J Hoenslaars (Images of Englishmen and Foreigners in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries 1992) and Lloyd Kermode (Aliens and Englishness in Elizabethan Drama 2009) both focus on repeated stage images of foreign characters on the English stage to demonstrate the changing perceptions of national identities in this era. In Archipelagic English (2008), John Kerrigan traces representations of Welsh citizens (along with their neighbors on the archipelago) in English and Welsh literature in the seventeenth century.

In the first chapter of this thesis, I draw upon these works to explore the 16th- and 17th-century depictions of Anglo-Welsh relations in popular culture in England at large to piece together the place of the stage Welshman in the continuum of English-written Welshness. By looking at the source material of the playwrights themselves, I analyze the place of Wales in the general culture of early modern London and how such representations work reflexively with the stage. In this chapter, I outline the historiographies and mythologies of Wales and their influences on to two of Shakespeare’s English history plays Henry IV and Henry V. This analysis sheds light on 16th-century political legacies and archipelagic interactions as embodied by Shakespeare’s most prominent Welshmen, Fluellen and Glendower. I also examine two other plays set in Romano-British culture which still linguistically mark Welsh characters such as The Valiant Welshman, often attributed to Robert Armin, and William Rowley’s A Shoemaker, A Gentleman. This chapter then turns to the dramatic representation of the Welsh landscape as a place of mysticism and wildness in Shakespeare’s Cymbeline and its representations in modern productions.
The second chapter delves deeply into the comic traditions from which some Welsh characters are born. Drawing upon commedia dell’arte tropes, early modern city comedies, and comic theory, I analyze Shakespeare’s *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and the Cambridge student play *Club Law*, which both depict a Welsh character of authority bumbling through the plot due, at least in part, to their foreignness. This section also includes two recorded instances of playwrights changing unfavorable works into comedies by adding Welsh characters: Ben Jonson’s masque *For the Honour of Wales* and Thomas Dekker’s *The Welsh Ambassador*. Each of these plays utilizes various forms of comedy simultaneously, but I offer an analysis of the comic value instilled within the stage Welshman on the London stage. This chapter concludes with a close reading of some recent productions of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* to interrogate if such dialect comedy can be anachronistic to a modern audience.

The third chapter turns from dialect to consider the Welsh language as it has been represented in three plays, significantly, as embodied by female characters. Shakespeare’s enigmatic extant scene in *Henry IV Part One*, which leaves only the stage directions “The Lady speaks in Welsh” has plagued practitioners and scholars alike. However, by pairing this enigmatic scene with Thomas Dekker’s Welsh-speaking Gwenthyan of *Patient Grissill* and Thomas Middleton’s hybrid Welsh Gentlewoman in *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, I read the various ways Welsh women’s bodies are sexualized and Othered through their foreign language.

By highlighting archival research about the rehearsal processes of some recent productions of the Welsh scene in *Henry IV Part One*, the final chapter contemplates the question of verisimilar linguistic performance, authority, and audience reception. Who has had authority in creating dialogue for the absent Welsh speech in *Henry IV Part One*? How have non-Welsh actors played the role of Lady Mortimer? To what extent does it matter what the
Welsh woman says to an Anglophone audience? This chapter also examines representations of the most-staged Welshman, Fluellen, and how and why the character’s Welshness is activated in certain performances. In 1583 Sir Philip Sidney wrote, “For what is it to make folks gape at a wretched beggar or a beggarly clown, or, against law of hospitality, to jest at strangers because they speak not English so well as we do? What do we learn?” While this thesis may not answer Sidney’s request, it does seek to provide a performance history of the theatrical value or detriment to the early modern theatre born out of linguistically-marked Welshness.

36 Sidney (1583) 68.
Chapter 1
“For I am Welsh, you know, good countryman”: Narratives of Welshness in British History Plays

Captain Fluellen of Shakespeare’s *Henry V* may be the most frequently staged Welsh character created in Elizabethan drama. He is a soldier repeatedly praised in kinship by his English counterparts, and yet his story culminates in a heated debate with Pistol over his overt national pride. In response to the English soldier, Pistol’s offstage mocking of Fluellen’s affinity for the symbolically Welsh leek, Fluellen brutally strikes the “scurvy lousy knave” and forces him to eat a leek onstage. Fluellen explains, “You called me yesterday ‘mountain squire’ but I will make you today a ‘squire of low degree.’ I pray you, fall to. If you can mock a leek you can eat a leek. *He strikes him.*”37 The history play includes its fair share of the rhetoric of war and violence, yet this scene arguably demonstrates the most violent onstage action as written. At the most fundamental level, Fluellen’s aggressive theatrical assertion of his Welsh nationhood forces Pistol and the audience alike to recognize the real presence of Welsh citizens in early modern London and, more importantly, throughout the island’s history. The scripted rupture of Fluellen’s otherwise loyalist behavior illuminates the murkiness of Anglo-Welsh identities and performances thereof in sixteenth and seventeenth century London.

Wales and Welshness were perceived as multifaceted in early modern London. Wales offered historical and mythical representations of ancient Briton that could be employed in drama to signal beyond a monolithic English cultural landscape but also to provide theatrical

texture. Philip Schwyzer succinctly summarizes,

Viewed as the locus of an ethnically and spiritually pristine Britishness, Welshness was a valuable attainment – to the extent, that is, that it could be imitated or co-opted by the English. Particular aspects of a perceived Welsh identity (genetic links with British antiquity, access to mystic British knowledge, imperial and poetic authority) could be isolated and made accessible through a range of literary modes.\(^3\)

This chapter will follow the historical chronology of production to trace the cultural and political trends which influenced stage representations of the Welsh in narratives of Briton/Britain. This analysis will begin with a broad overview of the major cultural and political moments which constructed the early modern English sensibilities which retroactively include Wales. The chapter will then focus on Elizabethan depictions of the rebel Glendower and the loyal soldier Fluellen in Shakespeare’s *Henry IV Part One*, *Henry V*, and George Peele’s *Edward I* to show the ways nationalized Welsh characters permeate hegemonic English histories. The chapter will then focus attention on the surge of Jacobean treatments of Romano-British plays which emphasize Welsh characters or settings. In close readings of William Rowley’s *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*, Robert Armin’s *The Valiant Welshman*, and Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline*, I will uncover the several ways Welshness is opportunistically championed and manipulated in a Romano-British context. The chapter ends with a look at some modern productions of *Cymbeline* which expose a convention of performing Wales in a North American context.

\(^3\) Schwyzer (2010) 40.
Anglo-Welsh Historiographies and Mythologies

The English fascination with ancient Wales, Cambria, or Briton is often linked to the search for an English origin myth in early modern English writings. Even with their proximate histories and cultures, Welsh ethnicity is forever tied to the Celtic origins of the island while the English often include their ancient beginnings in its process of building nationalized characteristics. Long before the borders between Wales and England were set, Celtic Britons were spread throughout the entire archipelago. Although the broad term ‘Britons’ signifies a unified people, the population was more accurately described as several disputing tribes with a shared Brittonic language and similar customs. These settlements quickly fractured when Julius Caesar’s 55 B.C.E. colonization gradually Romanized the people throughout the island. As Latin began to replace the mother tongue of the Britons in the east, resistance against acceding fully to Roman power is shown in the persistence of the Brittonic languages in the west and north.6

Sixteenth and seventeenth century English dramatic narratives often conceive of this Romano-British historiography as a Romantic episode in the island’s history, one that shows the direct line of native peoples of England and Wales unifying against different iterations of the Roman army.

In the years between 400-600 AD – after the fall of the Roman Empire – the Brittonic west of modern-day Wales, the Teutonic east, and the Gaelic north became even more clearly

6 Welsh historians often write ideally about the persistence of the Brittonic language in the face of Roman invasion, but the inhospitable terrain of the west also surely contributed to the preservation of Celtic society. Indeed, the craggy façade of the Welsh countryside continues to be an advantage against potential conquerors throughout the region’s history. Holinshed recounts these events to describe the “Welshmen” as “the verie Britains in deed.”
divided domains with distinctive languages.\textsuperscript{40} The demise of the Roman rule allowed space for an internally structured governing body. Without imperial rule, local kingdoms were formed west of the Marches, while Saxon tribes began infiltrating eastern villages. For about one hundred years there was Brittonic rule over the southern part of the island, but political power and cultural boundaries quickly changed with the invading Saxons. The earliest publicly recorded writing of the Welsh language is inscribed in a church at Tywyn in 700.\textsuperscript{41} At this time, the boundaries of the land were reflected by Welsh terminology: inhabitants of Wales identified their land as Cymru and themselves as Cymry (“fellow countrymen”), a designation that lasted well into the sixteenth century and carry on today in some circles. However, it is still the Anglo-Saxon term “Welsh,” meaning “foreigner,” that denotes the inhabitants of the land by English speakers, which indicates the active linguistic Othering of the nation’s people. In 780, the Anglo-Saxon King Offa designed a large ditch known as Offa’s Dyke, that ran for 130 kilometers on the western border of Mercia to define his own kingdom, which concurrently created a geographically cohesive Cymry population.\textsuperscript{42}

Davies explains, “The existence of Offa’s Dyke may well have deepened the self-awareness of the Welsh people, for, in the generation following its construction, kingdom was linked with kingdom with the result that the greater part of the inhabitants of Wales became the subjects of a single ruler.”\textsuperscript{43} Inhabitants on either side of the man-made boundary began relating

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{40}] Davies (1994) 45.
\item[\textsuperscript{41}] Ibid 70.
\item[\textsuperscript{42}] Much of Offa’s Dyke remains intact today, at some points aligning with the modern day Welsh border, but the Welsh were able to reclaim some territory beyond the dyke in the following centuries.
\item[\textsuperscript{43}] Davies (1994) 80.
\end{itemize}
to the land and people as those “beyond the dyke,” phrasing to reinforce cultural mystery and active alienation from the Welsh Other. As the two cultures began to construct oppositional identities, the relationship between the English and Welsh was also significantly defined through mythology. Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britannia* is a highly embellished text, in which the author recounts British monarchies from Troy to the Saxon invasions. Importantly, this text also includes the first complete narrative of King Arthur. Geoffrey’s account became an authoritative text on this topic of British history into the sixteenth century, influencing Holinshed’s 1577 *Chronicles*. Often laced with more fiction than real history, Geoffrey of Monmouth’s narrative permeates the early modern ideological encoding of Anglo-Welsh relations, also notably through his retelling of the Old Welsh tales of Merlin (named after the Welsh bard Myrddin) and King Arthur as links to a wholly British identity.

King Arthur is first mentioned in *Y Gododdin*, the oldest extant Welsh language poem, dated approximately 600 AD. The poet merely describes a hero on the battlefield: “He fed black ravens on the rampart of a fortress/Though he was no Arthur.”44 Disseminated through oral history for centuries, the Galfridian history imports the mythic characters into a composite British national history framed as truly historical figures.45 He describes a teenaged Arthur with “innate goodness” and “such grace that he was beloved by almost all the people.”46 Arthur’s mythic heroism in the twelfth century text continues as he leads the charge against invading

45 Galfridian references the tales told by Geoffrey of Monmouth.
Saxons: “And so, in the name of Mary, he drew his sword Caliburn and rushed in among the dense battle-lines of the enemy. Whomever he struck while calling out the name of the Lord fell with a single blow.”

However, the medieval Anglo-Norman appropriation of the Old Welsh legend strips the narrative of its political intentions. Michael Faletra explains, “The Old Welsh Merlinic prophecies were explicitly political and their message could not be clearer: they anticipated the day when the foreign Saxons would be uprooted from British soil and the island would revert to native Celtic rule.”

The twelfth century English retelling locates the pseudohistorical mysticism to the hills and lakes of Wales, relegating the remote land to a site of exoticism and fantasy. This account of Arthur’s conquests and the enchanted nature of the Welsh countryside becomes but one facet of English perceptions of life beyond the dyke, influencing playwrights and authors of the early London commercial stage.

Edward I, Henry IV Part One, and Henry V

Despite the fibers of this folk memory weaving Old Wales into a malleable English national narrative, the historical reality is that throughout the next several centuries Wales became increasingly subjected to English control. Under the rule of Edward I in 1277, an army of fifteen thousand Englishmen invaded Gwynedd and in three years Edward had seized complete control over the Welsh territories from Llewelyn II.

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48 Ibid 19.
49 Welsh ruler Llewelyn is now referred to as “Llewelyn the Last,” as the final officially recognized native leader of Wales.
introduced English Criminal Law and a monetary economy to the Principality, seceding much of the local institutions and traditions to English officials. In the face of the Edwardian colonization “language came to be viewed as the touchstone of Welsh nationality.”\(^{50}\) This chapter of history is dramatized in George Peele’s *Edward I*, wherein the character Lluellen rebels against Edward, but is ultimately replaced by an English Prince of Wales, ending the era of native Welsh princes.

George Peele’s 1592 chronicle gives equal dramatic power to the English monarch and Welsh rebel. Both printings from 1593 and 1599 title the play “*The Chronicle of King Edward the first, Sirnamed Edward Longshankes, with his returne from the holy land*” with the subtitle: “Also the Life of Llewellen rebell in Wales.”\(^{51}\) The start of the play shows the Queen Mother welcoming her son back from his journey from Palestine and Jerusalem as she praises his rule in England. She commends:

```plaintext
Illustrious England, auncient feare of kinges,
    Whose chivalrie hath royallized thy fame:
That sounding bravely through terrestiall vaile,
    Proclayming conquests, spoyles, and victories,
Ringes glorious Ecchoes through the farthest worlde.
What warlike nation train in feates of Armes?
What barbourous people, stubborne or untaimd
What climate under the Meridian signes,
Est have not quaked and trembled at the name
Of Britain, and hir mightie Conquerers?\(^{52}\)
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To the Queen Mother, and for Edward Longshanks, England and Britain mean one in the same. In this speech, she also elides England’s enemies with “barborous people,” which implicitly

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\(^{50}\) Davies (1994) 168.


\(^{52}\) 16-25.
qualifies Lluellen’s imminent rebellion. Her next lines name Scotland, Denmark and France as the “neighbor realms,” but the Welsh are designated “Camber Britains” distinguishing between English and Welsh within Britain, while the Scots are considered a different nation.  

Peele’s characterization of Lluellen evolves from a vociferous soldier, to disguised Robin Hood, to a foolish mutineer. In his entrance monologue, he parallels the Queen Mother’s speech when he beckons his countryman, Rice: “rouse thee for thy countries good/Followe the man that meanes to make you great:/Follow Lluellen rightfull prince of Wales/ Sprong from the loines of great Cadwallader.” The native Prince of Wales deliberately mentions his Welshness at every opportunity, and in this instance, he draws a direct line from him to the last British king, Cadwaladr. This creates a dichotomy against the Queen Mother and Longshanks’ model of a predominantly English Britain, to a fictionalized one governed by the Welsh. The play distills Lluellen’s rebellion through adapted romantic ballads and tales of Robin Hood, therefore making the dramaturgy awkwardly episodic. Lluellen’s initial episode shows him befriending other Welshmen (including a lusty Friar) to confront Edward, who has captured Lluellen’s wife Elinor. In directions to his companion Owen, Lluellen calls, “Prepare awaie in poste, and take with thee./A hundred of thy chosen countrimen,/And scowre the marches with your Welshmens

53 26; 174.
54 297-300.
55 Indeed, the play does introduce six named Welsh characters, but it is notable that not one speaks in a Welsh dialect. The only instance of linguistic slippage is a quick moment in which Lluellen’s companion Rice says, “Payd, payd, Digone, we are thy countrimen, Mundue” (456). The addition of “mon dieu” at the end could have been a joke about linguistic mixing, or perhaps Peele simply did not know the difference between Welsh and French.
When the Welshmen confront the king, they ask him to grant Wales sovereignty. A nameless soldier implores, “But for our Countrie cheefe this boones we beg./And England’s promise princely to thy Wales./That none be Cambrias prince to governe us/But he that is a Welshman borne in Wales.”57 This key moment allows for Edward’s plan to usurp the princedom of Wales for his unborn son, Edward II. The scene that follows the monarch shows Queen Elinor (Edward’s Spanish wife, not to be confused with Lluellen’s Elinor) in Wales so she can give birth to Edward II on Welsh soil. The king slyly notes, “Tell me what name shal this young Welshman have./Borne Prince of Wales by Cambrias ful consent.”58 As the sixteenth-century audience would surely know, Edward II begins the permanent reign of English Princes of Wales.

Meanwhile, Lluellen and his newly reunited wife disguise themselves as Robin Hood, Maid Marian, Friar Tuck, and Little John. Marissa Cull notes that this seemingly tangential interlude “places an enduring English myth into the hands of a Welsh rebel.”59 Although entertaining, the merry interlude also renders Lluellen’s self-described military prowess into that of a May Day pick-pocket. When Lluellen next confronts Edward, he stays in disguise as Robin Hood and fails again. However, when Edward exits, Lluellen admires the king: “his courage is like to the Lion, and were it not that rule and soveraigntie sets us at jarre, I could love and honor

56 661-64.
57 1069-71.
58 1664-65.
59 Cull (2014) 103.
the man for his valor.” This line brands the Welshman a laughing stock, since the audience has just watched Edward II supplant his princedom. Peele’s characterization of Lluellen does follow the folklore that the Welsh prince was killed at the hands of unknown soldiers. The theatrical effect of such a demise, though, completely shuts down any Welsh threat, and glorifies the English usurpation of the princedom which motivates the English claim to Welshness.

A century after Edward II’s rule of English oppression, the most enigmatic Welsh historical figure to date, Owain Glydŵr, revolted to reclaim the land for his people and left a popular folk myth in his wake. By 1400, Henry IV was Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester and shared his lordship over the Principality with aristocratic English families. Shakespeare’s *Henry IV* and *Henry V* present yet a different English dimension to the princedom. In the fifteenth century, there were areas of Wales where “an English or Anglicized population was in the overwhelming majority; equally over most of north and west Wales, and indeed over much of southern Wales likewise, such English settlements as existed were tiny islands in a vast sea of indigenous Welsh settlement.” It is in this internally fragmented social climate that Glydŵr proclaimed himself Prince of Wales and ancestor to Cadwaladr, just as Peele’s Lluellen claims. With the confidence in his ancient British authority – a fulfillment of Merlinic prophecy of restored Welsh power – he led a five-day attack against English occupied towns. Henry IV was superficially threatened, but the royal reaction to the massacre quickly extinguished the threat

60 2122-24.

61 In this dissertation, I use the correct Welsh spelling for the historical figures but the Anglicized or corrupted spellings given to characters for the English stage. The Anglicization takes place in the character’s name, which reflects onto their dialect in performance as well.

with many of the rebels immediately submitting. However, it is Glydŵr’s mysterious disappearance that popularized his fabled status in Welsh history, and further strengthened the mysterious portrait of Welsh rebellion for the English.

Holinshed’s *Chronicle* describes the Welshman’s disappearance in these terms:

About mid of August [1402] the King to chastise the presumptuous attempts of the Welshmen, went with a great power of men into Wales to pursue the captain of the Welsh rebels, Owen Glendower; but in effect he lost his labor, for Owen conveyed himself out of the way into his known lurking-places; and, as was thought through art magic, he caused such foul weather of winds, tempest, rain, snow, and hail to be raised (for the annoyance of the King’s army) that the like had not been heard of; in such sort that the King was constrained to return home.⁶³

Shakespeare assigns his dramatic character of Glendower similar lines to describe his birth. He claims,

At my nativity
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
Of burning cressets; and at my birth
The frame and a huge foundation of the earth
Shaked like a coward.⁶⁴

Fueled by his fabled history, the character is recognizable immediately as a braggart who can effect earthly substances, but in the text this characteristic is elided with his nativity and nationality.

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⁶⁴ Shakespeare (1598: 2016) Ed. Anna Pruitt, 3.1.11-15. All further references to *Henry IV Part One* will come from this edition and be noted by their line numbers.
David J. Baker points to the tripartite indenture between Mortimer, Hotspur, and Glendower transparently springing from Holinshed’s writing as well through the distinct similarities between the *Chronicle* and the play text. Holinshed writes, “This was done through a foolish credit given to a vaine prophesie, as though king Henrie was the mouldwarpe, cursed of Gods owne mouth, and they three were the dragon, the lion, and the woolfe, which should divide this realme betweene them.”65 In Shakespeare’s text, Hotspur complains that Glendower angers him “With telling me of the mouldwarp and the ant, Of the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies, And of a dragon and a finless fish.”66 Baker focuses on the word “mouldwarpe” here to prove the source material, but more significant to my inquiry, is the fact that Holinshed and Shakespeare’s Hotspur both discredit the rebels to be following a “vaine prophesie” – one that Glendower’s character takes very seriously. Glendower, clearly the Welsh dragon in this metaphor, is full of hubris which is made laughable by the dramatic irony of his imminent failure. However, this makes Glendower’s brief moments onstage crucial to understanding the place of Wales in *Henry IV*.

Glendower is also one of the few Welsh characters of the period to be written with fully Anglicized lines. He notes that he was “trained up in the English court” and yet much of the scene’s tête-à-tête hinges upon the Hotspur’s deflation of Glendower’s authority through jibes about his mother tongue. After he continuously boasts about his great power at birth, Hotspur quips, “I think there’s no man speaks in better Welsh.” Later in the scene, he instructs

66 3.1.144-6.
Glendower: “Let me not understand you then: speak it in Welsh.”67 Anna Pruitt footnotes the term Welsh here and notes that this “refers both to the [sic] Glendower’s native language, considered barbourous and unintelligible by the English, and to his pronouncements in English, which are unintelligible to Hotspur.”68 However, in performance, men who take on the role of the Welshman typically speak perfect English with a boastful Welsh lilt. The content of Glendower’s speeches is not unintelligible, but the grandeur of his imagination and his swollen national pride are metonymic with Welshness.

The contributions to the plot in this scene are minimal: the three men quarrel over the division of the map in their tripartite indenture and then bid adieu to their wives. More broadly, though, the theatricality of the scene squarely places constructions of Welshness through broken English, Welsh dialogue, and music. Dramaturgically, 3.1 introduces a seismic shift when Kate Percy and Lady Mortimer enter and Glendower softens to become translator between his daughter and son-in-law. Despite the absence of Welsh text originally performed, Glendower’s nationalized hierarchy swings in comparison with his daughter’s while his bilingual knowledge deepens the mystery of the character. The dynamic of the scene in which Hotspur constantly undermines the Welshman is transferred to Glendower as he and Mortimer work to Anglicize Lady Mortimer’s performance.69 Despite the Welshman’s efforts to assert his hybridity and to assimilate with his English counterparts in this scene, the character’s persistent Welshness marks him as an immutable foreigner. This presentation of an eagerly assimilating Glendower serves

67 3.1.118; 47; 116.
68 Pruitt 3.1.47 fn.
69 I will analyze Lady Mortimer’s own significance in the play and for early modern drama more thoroughly in chapters three and four of this dissertation.
the English narrative of his rebellion, since Shakespeare shows him trying to linguistically equate with the English and then ends his story before he challenges the throne.

Shakespeare’s portrayal of the blustering rebel thus straddles the line between boastful soldier and mystic conjuror, ultimately further reinforcing the construction of Wales as a land of exoticism and magic, much as he later depicts the country in *Cymbeline*. This exclusion of Wales in *Henry IV Part One* serves the plot in which the monarch is fending off rebels from within the archipelago. Exposed to lore of Holinshed’s mysterious account and then strengthened by Shakespeare’s caricature onstage, early modern inhabitants of London could read Glendower, even as cousin to the Tudors of Anglesey, as a symbol for a discordant political relationship between the English crown and the rebels in the 15th century. Conversely, this opportunistic exclusion is completely turned on its head when Shakespeare represents England warring against the French in *Henry V*.

The selectively foregrounded moments of Anglo-Welsh history are the tales of the Welsh origins of the Tudor dynasty asserted both by Fluellen and the king himself. The Earl of Richmond, Henry Tudor, was of Welsh gentry stock. His ascension to the English crown at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485 began the dynasty under which the two nations would be nominally united. Holinshed’s account of the events leading to the Battle of Bosworth illustrates an Elizabethan perception of the Welsh experience of the historical moment. He mentions the “great power of wild Welshmen” that march through the forest of Dean, and continues to demonstrate how the Earl of Richmond “prepared an armie of fiue thousand manlie Britons, and fortie well furnished ships.”70 The inclusionary term ‘Britons’ signifies men from the entire

island. Indeed, while Shakespeare’s dramatization of Richard III only includes two passing mentions of Henry’s Welsh ancestry, Holinshed assigns Richard a derisive speech to his army targeting the Earl of Richmond’s nationhood: “I doubt you know how the devil…hath entered into the ear of an unknown Welshman…exciting him to aspire and covet our realm, crown, and dignity, and thereof clearly to deprive and spoil us and our prosperity.” He continues, “And to begin with the Earl of Richmond, captain of this rebellion, he is a Welsh milksop, a man of small courage and of less experience in martial acts and feats of war.” Holinshed’s Richard emphasizes Henry’s Welshness as a weakness, but with full understanding of Henry’s imminent ascent to the throne. Henry VII’s association with Wales is not mentioned again in Holinshed’s Chronicle once he becomes king.

Similarly, while many cymry interpreted his reign as a Welsh victory, Henry VII’s allegiance to his origins was ambiguous. He flew a red dragon flag at the battle, but he was only a quarter Welsh; it was his English blood that allowed his claim to the throne. As Davies explains, “It was not a matter of the Tudors identifying themselves as Welsh, but the Welsh identifying themselves with the Tudors.” Despite the ambiguity of the Tudor’s actual allegiance to Wales, Shakespeare’s Henry V takes a bold stance on this issue with Fluellen – whose name also happens to be an Anglicized spelling of the last native Prince of Wales, Llewelyn. Shakespeare’s Henry V first performed in 1599 perhaps marks the playwright’s most-

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71 Ibid 264.
72 Ibid 264.
73 Indeed, the red dragon had been a symbol of the English royal house since Henry II, so his flag may not have been affiliated with the Welsh legend of the dragon of Cadwaladr.
produced endeavor in the composition of archipelagic Englishes. Still, “the words England, English, and Englishman appear more often in Henry V than in any other of Shakespeare’s plays.” The constructions of archipelagic identities are always compared against the central English history narrative presented.

The first half of the play sets up the Battle of Agincourt between England and France and the second half – marked by Fluellen’s entrance – indicates the performance of a refracted British identity. The comic scenes consistently foreground linguistic diversity: in Eastcheap, low class Nim, Bardolph, and Mistress Quickly speak in obscenities, repetition, and incoherent malapropisms. However, these characters are fully coded as local Londoners. On the battlefield, the Welsh Fluellen, Scottish Jamy, and Irish Macmorris fight explicitly about nationhood in the “what ish my nation?” scene. Yet Fluellen also serves a much larger role for his nation than Jamy and Macmorris do for theirs. Many scholars have written about the linguistic periphery of the archipelagic characters, but despite being outside of the hegemonic English linguistic space, when Fluellen is on stage, he is quite often the focus of the scene – not of the periphery.

On a surface level, Fluellen’s lines read like the archetypal stage Welshman, as he is described to be “touched with choler, hot as gunpowder” much like Shakespeare’s depiction of Glendower. However, Fluellen is also given the conventional Welsh dialect for comedy’s sake and his myopic mission is to stick to the “disciplines of the wars” as he acts as the king’s surrogate in repeated instances. Act 3 begins with Henry’s famous invocation “Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more.” During Fluellen’s first entrance just forty lines later, he

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76 4.7.164-5.
encounters Pistol, Nim, Bardolph, and the boy dithering and yells, “God’s plud! Up to the breach, you dogs!/Avaunt you cullions!”77 Inverting Henry’s noble plea to his “friends” in the name of Harry, England, and St. George, Fluellen turns the king’s command into archetypal Welsh characteristics with the use of “plud” and aggressively heated overtones.

However, Fluellen’s character is allowed a deeper and more complex characterization than the simple conventional stage Welshman. The character is also a practical theatrical presence as a lyrically diverse sound in the playhouse and he aerates the dense history of war, bringing levity and variety to the stage.78 This is best evidenced in the oft-cut lines after Fluellen comes upon a dead boy in 4.7. He enters, lamenting “Kill the poys and the luggage! ‘Tis expressly against the law of arms.” The scene continues:

Gower: …O ‘tis a gallant king!

Fluellen: Ay, he was born at Monmouth. Captain Gower, what call you the town’s name where Alexander the Pig was born?

Gower: Alexander the Great.

Fluellen: Why, I pray you, is not ‘pig’ great? The pig, or the great, or the mighty, or the huge, or the magnanimous, are all one reckonings, save the phrase is a little variations.79

The Welsh soldier continues fabricating the similarities between Macedonia and Monmouth to

77 3.2.18-19.
78 Perhaps Shakespeare was concerned about the breadth of theatricality in the “wooden O” which could have prompted his exploration of the eccentricities of various dialects in Henry V.
79 4.7.12-18.
equate king Henry to Alexander the Great in his turning away of Falstaff. This extensive episode is understandably cut from most modern productions as directors also often stage a young boy dead from battle on the stage to clarify Fluellen’s entrance line. The joke which relies solely on Fluellen’s Welsh affectation of “p’s” for “b’s” and his misunderstanding of the Macedonian commander’s moniker seems in poor taste at the feet of a dead soldier. Still, it is in this passage that Fluellen first asserts Henry’s Welshness, given to him by his birth at Monmouth. The meandering joke of the scene points to the mythic composition of the Tudor’s Welshness as it is always found in the past. Although Fluellen specifies localities from where the Tudor dynasty began such as the Wye at Monmouth, the reference to Wales alone is not enough to reinforce his argument of Welsh heroism, such that he stretches the comparison to Alexander the Great.

After the battle, Fluellen reasserts the king’s Welshness, this time in direct conversation in the exchange below:

Fluellen: Your grandfather of famous memory, an’t please you Majesty, and your great uncle Edward the Plack Prince of Wales, as I Have read in the chronicles, fought a most prave pattle here in France.

King Harry: They did, Fluellen.

Fluellen: Your majesty says very true. If your majesties is remembered Of it, the Welshmen did a good service in a garden where leeks did grow, Wearing leeks in their Monmouth caps, which your majesty know to This hour is an honourable badge of the service. And I do believe your Majesty takes no scorn to wear the leek upon St. Tavy’s Day.80

80 4.7.79-87.
Christopher Highley focuses in on this moment in the play to point to Fluellen as a fully integrated foreigner who has “internalized English values and subordinated his own provincial loyalties to service to the English nation-state.” Highley uses this argument to underscore how Fluellen’s assimilation illuminates a possible tactic for the contemporary rebellion in Ireland, which is alluded to earlier in the play. While this may certainly be the case, it is also essentially this repeated performance of the Anglo-Welsh shared mythology of contemporary monarchical ancestry which allows for Fluellen to identify Henry as Welsh. The assertion of this shared history is precisely what keeps the Welsh Other subjugated, especially when compared to Peele’s depiction of Edward II’s stolen prindedom.

I must also emphasize the passivity of Henry’s participation in this staged conversation once again. Fluellen is using the same theatrical technique of the Chorus, telling Henry and the audience to imaginatively recreate the imagery of Welsh soldiers with leeks in their caps. Henry’s response to the rhetorical scene is simply, “I wear it for a memorable honour;/For I am Welsh, you know, good countryman.” Fluellen’s answer: “All the water in the Wye cannot wash your majesty’s/Welsh plood out of your pody, I can tell you that.” The captain’s concentration on the king’s Welsh “plood” removes the need for the monarch to actively prove his hybrid identity, but consistently locates his nationality within his nativity. Fluellen inscribes Welshness in him from his birthplace, and perhaps, from his recent title as Prince of Wales (a powerful association from a character named for the last native Welsh prince). For a 1599 audience, this reinforces the contemporary Welsh claim of the Tudor dynasty springing from Monmouth.

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81 Highley (1997) 147.
82 4.7.100-103.
Fluellen’s inclusion as a loyal and capable soldier in the king’s company marks a significant moment wherein Shakespeare writes Welsh ancestral traditions and shared history into a staunchly English historical monarchy. Still, the king’s allegiance to Wales is directed by the Welsh captain. Much has been written of Henry’s expert ability to codeswitch his rhetoric and performance: from the carousing Prince Hal in Eastcheap, the warlike aggressor on the battlefield, undercover amongst his camp at Agincourt, and in his “courtship” bargaining for Katherine in broken French. In performance, Fluellen’s Welsh accent authenticates Henry’s ancestry while the king effortlessly slides into the role Fluellen assigns simply by agreeing. In *Broken English*, Paula Blank writes, “Fluellen repeatedly serves as Harry’s historical conscience, reminding him of what he was, of a past that, despite his triumph in the French wars, continues to haunt him.”83 This recalls historian John Davies comment that, “It was not a matter of the Tudors identifying themselves as Welsh, but the Welsh identifying themselves with the Tudors.”84 Fluellen’s dialect is the external, theatrical means by which Shakespeare reinforces and authenticates Henry’s Welsh ancestry.

I introduced this chapter with the example of Fluellen’s eruption of anger at the close of *Henry V*. No analysis of the Welsh captain would be complete without considering his “Welsh correction” to Englishman Pistol’s mockery of the leek. 5.1 which can be a staged as a ruthless attack against the English soldier. As I wrote before, *Henry V* utilizes brutal war imagery, especially in Henry’s speech at the gates of Harfleur. In that speech, Henry claims that if the town does not surrender, English soldiers will “defile” their “shrill-shrieking daughters” and that

83 Blank (2002) 139.
the French will see their “naked infants spitted on pikes.” The king’s vicious threat prefigures the violence enacted by Fluellen as he repeatedly strikes Pistol and defiles him by forcing him to eat a leek. Patricia Parker points to the sexual suggestiveness of the phallic leek, a stage image which is often exploited in performance. Fluellen says, “By Jesu, I will make him eat some part of my leek, or I will peat his pate four days. – Bite, I pray you. It is good for your green/wound and your ploody coxcomb.” This makes the scene recollect the “shameful villanie” of the Welsh women spoken about in the opening scene of Henry IV Part One. Although the fight is certainly about Welsh pride, Gower retroactively frames the attack as rooted in Englishness when Gower says, “You thought, because he could not speak/English in a native garb, he could not therefore handle an English/cudgel. You find it otherwise.” Pistol’s mockery of the Welsh symbol is dislocated to an assault on his language, which Fluellen defends by using violence demonstrated repeatedly in the king’s speech. While Fluellen’s outburst is termed a “Welsh correction,” he embodies the rhetoric delivered by his English monarch.

Jacobean Dramatic Representations of Wales in Romano-British Histories

When James I inherited the throne in 1603 there were multiple factors which pulled Anglo-Welsh relations to the forefront of English consciousness. With the Scottish king ruling

85 3.3.104; 107.
87 5.1.31-33.
88 5.1.59-61.
over the entire island, a sense of British unity permeated the culture of England. Specifically in Wales, nostalgia for the Galfridian prophecy of a British king restoring unity to the full island was popularized. William Harbert wrote “A present salve hath cured a pensive sore/Britaine is now what Britaine was of yore.” However, in truth, when the Scottish king inherited the dual kingdom, “the status and extent of Wales were unfinished business.” The 1536 Act of Unity was not a contained issue, and there were heated debates about the Anglo-Welsh borders which reached a climax in the first decade of James’s reign. The 1536 document was followed by another act of Union in 1543 which created the Council of Wales and the Marches, but did not specify or delimit the geographical borders of the marches. The Council began operations at Ludlow Castle and oversaw the principality and the border shires of Shropshire, Gloucester, Hereford, and Worcester, also named The Four Shires. Throughout the 1590s, disputes about the border were fought by English aristocrats from these counties because they felt they were being overtaxed and underrepresented. Although their efforts reached parliament in 1597, they were consistently denied. In 1604, just one year after James I’s accession, Herbert Croft led the gentry from The Four Shires in a campaign that lasted ten years. James’ opposition to the English gentry ultimately succeeded, but the ten-year political battles in court and in parliament certainly would have resonated in London.

Adding another complex layer to these plays is their proximity to the investiture of Henry

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89 Schwyzer (2009) 152.
90 Kerrigan (2008) 118.
91 For a full, detailed account of the legal tactics from the English gentry and the crown, refer to R.E. Ham’s “The Four Shire Controversy” in The Welsh History Review (1976).
Frederick Stuart as Prince of Wales in 1610.\textsuperscript{92} \textit{The Valiant Welshman} staged in 1610 was written for the Prince’s Men, and is a hyperbolic representation of an ancient British king, framed as a Welsh story, which extols the company’s patron. Similarly, Shakespeare’s \textit{Cymbeline} was written for the King’s Men and is dated to 1610 or 1611. Rowley’s comedy dated two years before the investiture is less focused on a distinct Welsh hero, but highlights shared religious customs among the archipelago. On a more artistic note, it was also widely known that James I had an affinity for Roman aesthetics, requesting Roman architecture and classical references in pageants which certainly influenced the trends on the commercial stage.\textsuperscript{93}

Steeped in this political and cultural context, many playwrights reacted with a newly rejuvenated interest in Romano-British narratives on the stage with a focus on Welsh border counties. Each of the plays analyzed here show Wales as a discrete nation and culture from England, but one which integrates with England against the Romans. In William Rowley’s \textit{A Shoemaker, A Gentleman}, the playwright merges various tales of Christian martyrdom to show the legacy of “pure” British Christianity which united ancient Britain. Robert Armin shifts to focus on a Welsh martial hero as he works to help the Saxons against the Romans in \textit{The Valiant Welshman}. Lastly, Shakespeare’s \textit{Cymbeline} meditates on a hybrid Anglo-Welsh sense of nobility inherited from the shared land and identified by its ancient customs. However, each of these plays also mark Wales and its people as Other by theatrical means. Performances of these plays posit a retroactive unity which superficially fabricates ancient Anglo-Welsh harmony. This serves the English imperial project of Welsh subjugation by positing a past in which the nations

\textsuperscript{92} Cull (2014) 122.

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid 121.
have always been unified.

The earliest representation of a Romano-British history with a specified Welsh element is in William Rowley’s *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*, first performed at the Red Bull theatre in 1608 by Queen Anne’s Men. The text borrows from various sources, which blends a confusing medley of histories and myths which each focus on Christian martyrdom in Britain. The play opens with the defeat of Allured’s Christian rebellion against Diocletian, which would date these events in the early 4th century AD. The king of Britain dies on the battlefield and the Queen urges her two Saxon sons, Offa and Eldred, to go into hiding disguised as Crispin and Crispianus, and work in a shoemaker’s shop in Faversham. While Offa is perhaps superficially named for the king who made the dyke along the Marches, the prince in *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman* is otherwise rooted solely in the story of the eventual saint’s life. The princes’ feigned names are reflective of Rowley’s source material, Thomas Deloney’s 1597 *The Gentle Craft*. In this collection, Deloney paints an apocryphal portrait of the patron saints in disguise as cobblers to Faversham and how they rose to renown and distinction despite their disguises as apprentices. Rowley stays close to his source in this plotline: Crispin becomes the shoemaker to Roman emperor Maximinius’s daughter Leodice, gets secretly married and has a child. Crispianus is forced into the Roman army and becomes a decorated war hero, saving Diocletian in battle twice.94 Another plot line follows Alban, a Roman soldier, and his conversion to Christianity led by Amphiabel, and his subsequent execution in Verulamium, now St. Alban’s.

The Welsh plot bridges the actions of Alban and the two princes to connect all three under an umbrella of Christian heroism. The story is based on St. Winifred, a 7th-century Welsh

94 Only Leodice’s name is different in Rowley’s retelling; Deloney names her Ursula. Chapman (2001) 1470.
woman who was sainted after a Welsh prince tried to rape the cloistered woman, and decapitated her. Caxton’s version in *The Golden Legend* which tells Winifred’s story describes how water sprung from a well where her head fell, restored her to health, and she continued to live as an abbess. St. Winifred’s Well is still in Holywell, and it was believed even in 1608 to possess miraculous cures for the ill.

Rowley fabricates a noble Welsh suitor for the cloistered woman in Sir Hugh. The gallant Welsh knight is from Powys, a border county in the north. In Rowley’s dramatization of the Welsh story, Winifred goes with the Christian knight Amphiabel to the well, where an angel appears to portend the curing powers of the waters and to name the spring after Winifred. Hugh travels to Wales in hopes of marrying Winifred, but she tells him to wait three months and then come back for an answer. When he does, she tells him she is married to God, but soon after she and Amphiabel are seized by Roman soldiers and taken to Maximinius’s court in Kent. Hugh follows and works for the Shoemaker as he keeps a watchful eye on his beloved. This is a tale of Welsh martyrs, however, and Maximinius executes Winifred, Amphiabel, and Sir Hugh, and they each achieve sainthood.

Rowley’s treatment of the Welsh text is significant because Winifred and Sir High are treated as some of the most noble characters in the play. The comic action is contained in the Shoemaker’s shop, whereas the Welsh characters are steeped in a religious tragedy. The characters are not explicitly nationalized in dialect or early modern archetypal Welsh character tropes, but Winifred’s magical powers, although derived from her devout Christianity, do reinforce her Welsh alterity. As the Roman soldier Lutius apprehends the Welsh woman, she

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conjures his temporary blindness:

Winifred: Thou deputy tyrant, this place is hallowed.  
Do not awake the thunder; if it strike,  
The bolt will fall down perpendicular.  
And strike thee under mercy.

Lutius: Ha, ha, ha!  
What pretty dreams these Christians apprehend.  
They say your well is very sovereign  
To cure the itch. I have got a scab today,  
I’ll try the virtue of your virgin water.  
‘Tis good for sore eyes, too, is it not? [Rubs his eyes.]  
Mine are something rheumatic.

Winifred: Do, play with lightning till it blasts thee.

Lutius: Oh, here’s hell! Witchcraft! My eyes are lost;  
This sorcerous pool hath ta’en away my sight.  
Witch, I’ll find thee out and break thy magic  
By drawing of blood.  

Unlike the ‘sorcerer’ image Glendower projects in Henry IV, Winifred can perform acts of harming and curing bodies, just like her namesake well. While Winifred does this simply to show her captor that she can also restore his eyesight, he claims that she practices witchcraft, and that Apollo and Jupiter kindly restored his sight. Winifred serves as one of the immaculate Christians in the play, but because she is a Welsh woman, she is the only one drawn with an air of mysticism. This scene also imbues the Welsh land with magic, as the well is the source (per contemporary myth) of that power.

There is Welsh language play and genuine Welsh text present in A Shoemaker, A Gentleman, but only in Faversham with the Shoemaker’s company. When the princes come to

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97 The presentations of exoticism in dramatized Welsh femininity will be explored more deeply in the third and fourth chapters of this dissertation.
work as apprentices, the Shoemaker chastises his wife to stay out of their business, but he uses the concocted term “Tausume.” He says “Peace, Cecily. No problems, no figures, no woman’s rhetoric; the tongue may undo the whole body. Tausume – there is Greek for ye, wife.”\footnote{Darby 1.2.151 footnote.} Trudi Darby’s edition of the play glosses this word as “be quiet (not Greek, but the Latin root from tacite ‘be silent’ put into Middle Voice of a Greek verb).”\footnote{Darby 1.2.51-53.} However, given Rowley’s later demonstrable interest in the Welsh language, I would argue that the Shoemaker’s is using the Welsh “taw son” for “be quiet.” Barnaby, another apprentice, has the line “Duw gatwo chi” a phonetic rendering of “Duw cadw chi, or, “May God keep you” at the Roman court.\footnote{2.1.125. David Nichol posits that Rowley himself may have played the clownish Barnaby, so perhaps the actor simply wanted to have a bit of linguistic fun onstage. Nicol (2012) 72.}

The Shoemaker is given another opportunity to play upon his Welsh ‘knowledge’ when Hugh enters the shop wishing to become an apprentice. He introduces himself, “Wales is my country; my name is Hugh,” which prompts the Shoemaker: “I have some cousins in your country. You know Penvenmower, Blue Morris, Laughathin, Abergenni Terdawhee, St. Davy’s Harp and the Great Organ at Wrexham?”\footnote{3.2.187-90.} These are all incorrectly Anglicized names for the Welsh towns Penmaenmawr, Beaumaris, Llangollen, Abergavenny, and Troedyrhiw. The Shoemaker’s reference may be included to mock the ‘funny-sounding’ Welsh language and names, to expose the Shoemaker’s ignorance of Welsh, or to Anglicize Wales linguistically. Even though this is followed up with the claim that because Hugh is Welsh he “canst not choose
but be a gentleman,” the text focuses on early modern Welsh jokes.\textsuperscript{102} The linguistic othering by the patently English characters functions to distinguish Hugh as an Other, even as his scenes strengthen the pre-Roman claim to British Christianity.

John Kerrigan argues, “Rowley changed his sources to emphasize the Welshness of the British saints, and thus how much Protestant England owes to the principality.”\textsuperscript{103} While I agree that \textit{A Shoemaker, A Gentleman} seeks to legitimize pre-Roman Christianity as a pan-British phenomenon, Rowley still actively Others the Welsh characters. Unlike Glendower or Fluellen, neither Winifred nor Hugh perform explicit Welshness unless encountered by other characters. Winifred’s theatrical Welshness is only made manifest in her Galfridian supernatural powers when the Roman soldiers break into her well. Similarly, Hugh makes passing mention of his nationality, but his theatricalized Welshness is mapped onto him by the Shoemaker. The play ends with the deceased Welsh newly minted as St. Winifred and St. Hugh, as examples of Welsh Christianity contrasted with the Romans. The Roman plot ends with Diocletian dividing the island into north and south, and the two Saxon brothers, Offa and Eldred inherit the land. The Jacobean play offers a narrative for Saxons to valiantly integrate within the Roman narrative, while the only way for the Welsh characters to thrive in a Roman England is to die. Marked by their linguistic and mystic Welshness, they authenticate the early modern English perception of ancestral Christianity from within history, but in a way which does not advocate for contemporary Anglo-Welsh integration. It is particularly significant that in a play labeled as a comedy, the Welsh plot follows the beats of a Christian tragedy, offering no levity apart from the

\textsuperscript{102} 3.2.199.

\textsuperscript{103} Kerrigan (2008) 125.
foreignness inscribed by the English.

_The Valiant Welshman_, speculatively written by Robert Armin in 1610, repurposes a British narrative with a Welsh point of view. The war drama follows the military ambitions of Caradoc (sometimes called Caractacus) and his ascension to King of Wales.¹⁰⁴ A preface to the “Ingenuous Reader” from the 1663 print shares the playwright’s intentions of re-framing the British story:

I searched the Chronicles of elder ages, wherein I found amongst diuers renowned persons, one Brittish Prince, who of his enemies, receiued the title of _Valiant Brittaine_, his name was _Caradoc_, he was King of _Siluria_, _Ordonica_, and _March_, which Countries are now called, _South-Wales_, _North-Wales_, and the _Marches_; and therefore being borne in Wales, and King of Wales, I called him the _valiant Welshman_.¹⁰⁵

The objective of this shift from Britain to Wales is transparent due to the patronage of the play. Armin wrote this for Prince Henry’s Men in the year of his investiture and he is clearly valorizing Henry Frederick by referring to Caradoc as “Prince of Wales” as an analog to the young prince. However, while scholars like John Kerrigan and Marissa Cull have read the play consistently as a politically straightforward tribute to Wales as a part of a unified Britain, I would like to highlight two theatrical practices which specifically contribute to the mystification of Wales: the character Morgan of Anglesey and the battle against the serpent in the fourth act.

The play begins with Fortune descending from the heavens. She cues harpers to play so that by “_the sound of their Musicke they might awake the ancient Bardh, a kind of Welsh Poet_,

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¹⁰⁴ I must qualify that scholars now attribute _The Valiant Welshman_ to Robert Armin, but the 1615 quarto only denotes the author as “R.A. Gent.”

¹⁰⁵ Armin (1663) “To the Ingenuous Reader” EEBO.
who long agoe was there intoombed.”¹⁰⁶ (The Welsh associations here are obvious: the harp and bard are related to Galfridian Welsh storytelling and still strongly linked to Celtic cultures.) As she conjures the Welsh poet, she says, “Be dumbe you scornefull English, whose blacke mouthes/ Haue dim'd the glorious splendor of those men… And let his tongue this Welshmans Crest adorne.”¹⁰⁷ This is a clever tactic by Armin to highlight the fact that he is contributing Welsh protagonists on the stage, while using similar rhetorical devices popular as used in English history plays.

Stylistically, A Valiant Welshman is an imitation of chronicle history plays with an episodic timeline of Caradoc valiantly dismantling usurpers, traitors, Romans, and a serpent. Indeed, the Bard acts as does the Chorus in Henry V, opening each new act with a summary of off-stage accomplishments of the valorized protagonist. The dramatis personae includes thirteen Welsh characters, only one of whom is distinctly nationalized through dialect and archetypal stage practices. Not only do most of the characters in the play speak verse, but they are also often assigned heroic couplets. Here the not-yet-traitorous Codigune (son of Octavian the King of North Wales) exemplifies the style of dialogue spoken by many of the Welsh characters:

And that base Monmouth, that with his goldēhead Salutes the Sunne, may with the Sunne fal dead. For base Rebellion drawes so short a breath, That in the day she moues, she moues to death: And like the Marigold opens with the Sunne, But at the night her pride is shut and done.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ 1.1.1 SD.
¹⁰⁷ 1.1.17-18; 23.
¹⁰⁸ 1.2.22-27.
This speech, like much of the play, looks romantically at the pursuit of war. This is starkly contrasted with Morgan’s conventional dialect in which he switches ‘p’s’ for ‘b’s,’ pluralizes singular words, and calls male characters ‘her.’ In response to Codigune’s above dialogue, Morgan replies, “As for the Rebell Monmouth, I kanow very well what I will do with her. I will make Martlemas beefe on her flesh, and false dice on her pones for euery Conicatcher: I warrant her for Case bobby and Metheglin: I will make her pate ring noone for all her resurrections and rebellions.”

Armin layers every instance of Morgan’s dialogue with Welsh national speech stereotypes, which is a disjunctive choice in a play that superficially features a cast full of Welsh characters.

Indeed, one moment in the play is dependent upon Morgan’s incomprehensibility. When the Roman soldier Marcus Gallicus comes to Caradoc’s court, he first happens upon Morgan. The Welsh caricature declares, “From Rome! And I pray you, what a poxe ayles her, that you cannot keepe her at home? Have you any Waspes in her tayles? Or live Eeles in her pelly that you cannot keep her at home?” to which the Roman replies, “I understand you not.”

Exasperated by the linguistic clash, Morgan says, “Cood people, doth Morgan speake Hebrewes or no?” This joke points to a particular linguistic argument of the time. Some in the early seventeenth century who were searching for an origin myth in the ancient Celtic roots of Wales looked to the Old Testament to discover direct genealogies. The Celts claimed to be descendants of Gomer, the eldest son of Japheth. Motivated by the Abbé Paul Pezron, the Welsh and the

\[1^09\] 1.2.33-39.
\[1^10\] 4.1.79-82.
\[1^11\] 4.1.86-88
Britons were encouraged to construct their patriotism upon the fact that they had “the honour to preserve the language and the posterity of Gomer.” Gomerians argued that Welsh was a dialect of original Hebrew uncorrupted by the Tower of Babel and constructed tables to compare vocabulary to demonstrate similarities. Indeed, the two languages do share many phonetic qualities. It is impossible to say if Armin knew of this theory, but his awareness of the sounds of the languages performance could have motivated this comparison.

There are other textual oddities which illuminate how Armin’s play still does not consider Welshness as a default representation. When Codigune turns against Caradoc, he claims, “Ile fall my selfe, or plucke this Welshman down.” Armin marks the conflict as a nationalized affair, even though both characters are Welsh. The Romans similarly qualify Caradoc’s bravery as otherworldly, citing “Magicke spels” as the cause for his good fortune. So, too, are all the mystical elements of the play relegated to the boundaries of Wales. After Caradoc overthrows Codigune to win the title of King of Wales, Gloster seeks the help of a Witch from an unspecified cave, who creates “a furious beast,/Mov’d by a subtill spirit, full of force/And hellish fury, whose devouring jawes...havocke all the borders of Wales.” Caradoc effortlessly defeats the serpent with an herb given to him by an old man in the forest, but the spectacular

113 See Karel Jongeling’s Comparing Welsh and Hebrew (2000) for a comprehensive comparison of the two languages.
114 1.4.106. Since Armin was himself a renowned clown, if he wrote this character, he may have done so with his own performance in mind.
115 3.4.46-49.
staging of the magician, the witch, and the serpent fuses the wilds of ancient Cambria with “blacke enchantments” and “sorcery.”

By the end of *The Valiant Welshman*, Caradoc manages to help Gederus, King of Britain against the Romans, and he saves his sister from Marcus Gallicus. However, Caesar praises the king, “So brave a Bryttaine hath not Cesar heard...and this shall Cesar speake unto thy Fame.//The valiant Welshman merits honours name.” Such an idealized portrait of a unified Britain represented by a Welsh hero may have been influenced by the company for which Armin was writing. However, the play still manages to distinguish alternative Welshness. The valiant Caradoc exemplifies mythology of a harmonious island, whereas Morgan embodies the seventeenth-century London attitude towards broken English and ethnic stereotyping. It is significant that both William Rowley and Robert Armin were actors known for their clown roles who each write distinct Welsh accents, an indication that Welsh caricatures may have been a popularly performed comic style, which will be explored in the next chapter. Whereas the Welsh characters in *The Valiant Welshman* and *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman* represent a certain era of Cambria or Wales, *Cymbeline*, on the other hand, manages to explore a geographical and environmental Welshness that is grafted onto those who inhabit it.

Shakespeare’s late romance calls on parts of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Brittanica*, Holinshed’s 1577 *Chronicles*, and William Camden’s 1587 *Brittania* to shape his narrative of Cymbeline’s reign. Holinshed’s account dwells mainly on the fact that “‘Kymbeline’

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116 4.2.12; 21.
117 5.5.78; 140-141.
or ‘Cymbeline’” ruled during the time of Jesus’s birth. However, Shakespeare makes no mention of this monumental moment in the play, and instead focuses on the king’s three children. Holinshed merely mentions Arviragus by name, and explains how Guiderius was less peaceful with the Romans than his father during his own reign (a quality dramatized in The Valiant Welshman). The name Innogen, however, in both Geoffrey of Monmouth and Holinshed’s writings, is a major part of the Trojan myth of the formation of Britain itself. According to these sources, Innogen was the daughter of Greek King Pandrasus, who was defeated by Brutus. Brutus married Innogen and moved her to Albion, therefore making her the matriarch of all British kings to come. The circumstances and consequences of Innogen’s journey to Milford Haven in Cymbeline are amplified within this mythic context. Not only is Innogen an Anglo-Saxon princess undergoing trials in a mystical foreign land, but her reunion with her brothers in Wales serves to construct an ideal Anglo-Welsh, or British, monarchy.

The world of the play is a strange amalgam of specifically codified times and locations: ancient Britain, cosmopolitan Renaissance Italy and Milford Haven exist distinctly and simultaneously in a hierarchy in which the Romans require tribute from Cymbeline’s Briton. The Italian setting is metonymic for the licentious underbelly of London, where Iachomo’s villainy is associated with a Machiavellian perception of his nationality. However, although Wales is typically included in the term “Britain,” the play makes certain to signify that Lud’s Town and Milford Haven are discrete governmental and geographical entities. John Kerrigan points to the Welsh-Brittonic creation in the play as an artificial “pan-British design” which excludes any


119 Marissa R. Cull contends that Guiderius is the Prince of Wales’s theatrical double as a product of the land (2014).
Welsh-born characters.\textsuperscript{120} Unlike \textit{Henry V}, the term ‘England’ is not mentioned in the play once, but there is no mistaking the boundary of the Severn distinguishing the two nations. The only extant firsthand account of the play in performance was penned by Simon Forman, an astrological physician, who is likely to have seen the play at the Globe. Twice Forman calls Cymbeline the “king of England” as he also emphasizes the locale of the “woods” and “cave” in Milford Haven.\textsuperscript{121}

The specificity of naming Milford Haven as Posthumus’s false land of exile is significant as the harbor where Henry Tudor arrived from France in 1485, something that would have been familiar to a 1610 audience. Garrett Sullivan summarizes the nationalist rhetoric which surrounds the location. For instance, in William Camden’s \textit{Britannia}, he describes the harbor as a haven “like which there is not another in all Europe more noble or safer” and which “hence gave forth unto England then hopelesse the first signall to hope well, and raise it selfe up.”\textsuperscript{122} However, the harbor was also a cause for concern in 1595 as the potential site for a Spanish invasion.\textsuperscript{123} Perhaps Shakespeare chose this west coast harbor due to the easy recognition of its geography from its political context, comprehensible as one of the most distant locations in Wales on the west coast. However, the playwright also makes the most of the term ‘haven.’ The play foreshadows the move to Wales with the repetition of “haven” in the first act: Pisanio says Posthumus would not let him “bring him to the haven,” and again, at the start of 1.3 Innogen tells

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\textsuperscript{120} Kerrigan (2008) 131.
\textsuperscript{121} Loughnane (2016) 2977. There is no known date for the performance Forman saw, but it must have been before his death in 1611.
\textsuperscript{122} Camden (1610) 651.
\end{flushleft}
Pisanio, “I would thou grew’st unto the shores o’th’ haven/And question’dst every sail.” Once more, upon reading Posthumus’s feigned letter avowing he has fled to “Cambria in Milford Haven,” Innogen asks “Tell me how Wales was made so happy as/ T’inherit such a haven.” This works doubly, since Innogen never quite makes it to the haven, but finds a different familial comfort in Belarius’s cave with her brothers.

When Innogen first reads Posthumus’s letter, her concerns are primarily focused on distance and travel. She inquires, “How far ‘tis thither” and “why may I not glide thither in a day?” Garrett Sullivan takes this question at face value to emphasize that Innogen’s cartographic questions indicate that the Welsh landscape eludes measurement in an English audience’s collective imagination. By discussing the distance in time – riding “one score ‘twixt sun and sun” – Innogen reinforces the difference and deepens the mystery between the two nations in the play, even when she anachronistically refers to it as Wales. Of course, on the unlocalized stage, the action moves from Lud’s Town to Wales in the next scene in which we are introduced to the double constructions of Welsh living.

Belarius introduces their country dwelling as a “house i’th’rock” with a low roof, but changes the imagery to contrast their cave to the “gates of monarchs” which are “arched so high that giants may jet through/And keep their impious turbans on without/Good morrow to the sun.” This spatial rhetoric begins the repeated imagery of Guiderius (Polydore) and Arviragus

124 1.1.172
125 1.3.1-2;
126 3.2.58-59
(Cadwal) as nobler than the court due to their environment. Giuderius terms the brothers “poor unfledged” and Arviragus claims that they are “beastly,” but Belarius repeatedly reports their lives as an “honest freedom.”\(^{128}\) This is not unusual imagery following the trope of the honest pastoral life, but in context the Welsh setting is more like an abstractly magical forest rather than a specific locale. Indeed, Innogen prefigures her fate by wishing to be “A neatherd’s daughter, and my Leonatus/Our neighbor shepherd’s son.”\(^{129}\) She romanticizes the simplicity of marital affairs in pastoral life, but Shakespeare replaces Innogen’s placid imagery of the countryside with a rough, mystical landscape, terminology which recalls his description of the “irregular and wild Glendower” in \textit{Henry IV Part One}.

Innogen’s journey through Wales is transformational. Disguised as Fidele, she encounters the “savage hold” where she meets her kin, who immediately offer hospitality. Again, Shakespeare highlights the cave as an outward show of the men’s true natures:

\begin{quote}
Great men
That had a court no bigger than this cave,
That did attend themselves and had the virtue
Which their own conscience sealed them, laying by
That nothing-gift of differing multitudes,
Could not outpeer these twain.\(^ {130}\)
\end{quote}

This assertion reinforces their royal blood as Cymbeline’s sons, but ascribes their nobility to the experience of the rough nature of Wales. While villainous Cloten struggles with what he deems the “mountain rustics,” Guiderius, Arviragus, and Innogen are all fortified by their time in Wales.

\(^{128}\) 3.3.4-6; 27; 40; 71.

\(^{129}\) 1.1.150-1.

\(^{130}\) 3.6.79-84.
to outpeer all at court. Jean E. Feerick writes about our anachronistic way of reading the human body as “ontologically distinct from other embodied life forms” and turns her reading of *Cymbeline* to reflect the early modern perception of all living beings as “materially and symbolically contiguous with the surrounding world.” Belarius teaches the princes hospitality and poetry, but also demands they hunt in the mountains and “play the cook and servant.” Similarly, Innogen is reborn from Pisanio’s drug and her encounter with Cloten’s headless trunk. Their experience in the rugged landscape is etched into their characters, which translates to an ideal British martial effort against the Romans.

The mystical wildness of Wales in the text is carried over into modern productions of *Cymbeline*. The play has been produced at the Canadian Stratford Festival four times with productions in 1970, 1986, 2004, and 2012. In Jean Gascon’s 1970 production, the role of Cymbeline was acted by Powys Thomas with his natural Welsh accent while the Canadian ensemble attempt a vague English Received Pronunciation. Despite the Welshness of the actor who portrayed the king, the scenes in the Welsh countryside signalled the unruly landscape that Cloten imagines. In the grainy black-and-white recording, one can barely make out the loincloths on Guiderius and Arviragus, but they carry huge bows and arrows on their backs. Belarius wore a toga and carried a staff, and all three men had long, overgrown hair. Rory Loughnane’s edition of the text shares, “Their costume might seem especially rustic and the boys might seem

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131 Feerick (2016) 212.
132 3.6.30
133 Gascon (1970) *Cymbeline*, Stratford Festival Archive, VHS.
uncultured.”\textsuperscript{134} And, indeed, this suggestion of costume is utilized in David Latham’s\textsuperscript{135} 2004 Stratford production as well, this time accompanied by updated lighting effects of sun shining through a lush forest.\textsuperscript{135}

Director Robin Phillips set his\textsuperscript{135} 1986 production in the 1920s. As noted by Herbert S. Weil, Jr., “this \textit{Cymbeline} used three basic contrasting ‘worlds’: circa 1920s theatrical and social splendor for the early scenes in England and Renaissance Italy; World War I for the large war scenes and for the railroad station of the disguised Imogen’s trip; and ‘prehistoric’ rags and skins for the cave of Belarius.”\textsuperscript{136} While the scraps of clothing point to a reclusive lifestyle in the unlocalized Gascon production of 1970, the same worn by Guiderius, Arviragus, and Belarius in a twentieth century setting indicates a shift to another world, or it reveals either ignorance or disregard of Welsh history. In a more generous reading, the disjointed representation could be an outward reflection of the eclectic dramatic and literary styles used by Shakespeare in this romance. However, the incongruous pairing was played for laughs, solidified by Innogen’s first entrance as Fidele which shows her stopping in her tracks on a bicycle as she first encounters the isolated princes. Roger Warren’s review of the production shows the jarring effect of the shift to Milford Haven. He writes,

“A decadent English aristocracy was set against a different kind of decadence in Italy: the civilians lounged indolently in clubs or in the lido…boldly contrasted with the scenes in Wales, where the exiled princes were near-naked savages, images of natural man uncorrupted by the clothes and institutions of twentieth-century ‘civilization.’”\textsuperscript{137}

\textsuperscript{134} Loughnane (2016) 3.3.0SD.
\textsuperscript{135} Latham (2004) \textit{Cymbeline}, Stratford Festival Archive, VHS.
\textsuperscript{137} Warren (1988) 159.
Milford Haven is a place of magical realism in the play, testing the limits of the theatrical medium, but such a stark contrast merely points to Wales as an imaginatively untouched land.

Antoni Cimolino’s 2012 *Cymbeline* was the most lauded production of the late romance at Stratford, and yet, the scenes in Wales look and sound almost identical to those from each previous incarnation of the play. The cave is designed simply with echoing sound effects when Belarius, Guiderius and Arviragus enter in the stock Welsh robes. In a review of this performance for *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Dana E. Aspanall notes, “Later, in the wilds of Wales, the princes Guiderius and Arviragus, who at this point identified themselves as Polydore and Cadwal, respectively, stood over Innogen’s unresponsive body (they knew her as Fidele) and lamented their loss after she consumed a drug Pisario provided her.”138 Again, the “wilds” of Welsh nature was exemplified by Guiderius and Arviragus’s costumes, while their characters remained chivalric. A similar extreme change of style was seen in Melly Still’s over-ambitious production at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon in 2016. Still set the play in a dystopian British, vaguely steampunk future peppered with superfluous musical numbers. The members of the English court inexplicably wore patchwork denim and tulle; in Italy Iachomo wore a white leisure suit; but again, the three exiled men carried bows and arrows in tattered dystopian hand-me-downs.

In such productions, the similarities of the visual space and costumes for England and Italy more distinctly align those two worlds against the “wilds” of Wales. The theatrical difference helps emphasize the hybridization of Innogen and her brothers as ideal British royalty, but it also reinforces the fact that it is not a Romanized space. The choices made by directors

romanticize the natural, pastoral landscape, but deride Welsh human reality, in a move that shows not only that Milford Haven is a week away by travel, but centuries away in development. The other tactic used by many other companies is to give the royal brothers dressed-down versions of the aristocratic men’s clothing. Cheek by Jowl’s 2007 production had the Milford men camped around a fire pit in plain clothes. So, too, were they bedecked in street clothes in Fiasco Theatre’s off-Broadway 2011 iteration, but the characters played “hillbilly ballads” to indicate their unpolished natures. These stagings both read as appropriate interpretations of how Arviragus and Guiderius might have been costumed in 1610. A tiny detail embedded in the text that suggests the royal brothers may have been originally performed in clothing much more akin to Posthumous rather than Tarzan. After Innogen (as Fidele) sips the potion given to her by Pisanio, Arviragus describes how he found her: “O’th’floor,/His arm thus leagued, I thought he slept, and put/My clouted brogues from off my feet, whose rudeness/Answered my steps too loud.” Although it may seem pedantic, in a play that hinges so much on men’s clothing (for the Posthumous/Cloten mix up and Innogen’s disguise as Fidele), Arviragus’s mention of “clouted brogues” insinuates a much less drastically primeval approach to their garments.

As Jean E. Feerick writes, the princes’ “movement to Cambria or Wales causes them to be ‘enchafed’ by savage conditions,” but the theatrical externalization of the surrounding verdure and unruly land is often inscribed onto their bodies, marrying the disorderly Welsh topography with uncharacteristic disorder. While many scholars and practitioners take Shakespeare’s

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140 4.2.214-217.
141 Feerick (2016) 224.
terms of “savage,” and “wilds” at face value, despite appearances, the royal children’s nobility increases through their Britishness. Despite the specificity of Milford Haven oft spoken of in the play, it is the failed journey to the harbor which fortifies Innogen as an ideally pan-British heroine. Wales is utilized in the play partly as a fantastical land, much like the maze of the forest in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, but also to further mythologize unity among ancient Briton. The utility of Wales as a metonym for ancient Britain is manifested theatrically through archetypal depictions. Glendower and Fluellen serve to connect contemporary Wales to recent history, reinforcing the Welsh as a non-threatening neighbor, while *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*, *The Valiant Welshman*, and *Cymbeline* serve to narratively lengthen archipelagic unity under the Scottish king.
Chapter Two

“A true welse man scornes and redicles and laughins”:¹⁴²

Exploitations of the Welsh Dialect on the Early Comedy Stage

Many plays on the early modern London stage dramatize immigrants and foreigners performing linguistic pratfalls with broken English, dialects, and non-English languages. Using commedia dell’arte as an example, Robert Garapon notes how the “premise that language itself becomes not just a mode of communication but the subject of certain types of theatre.”¹⁴³ The Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre is rife with the eccentricities of language to excite laughter, but also uses linguistic misunderstanding as an impetus for plot. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Welshness was popularly deployed to provide cultural and mythical depth to historical narratives, but also as an addition to the aural variety of a theatrical endeavor. My lines of inquiry for this chapter concern the styles and effects of exploitative performances of Welsh dialect for comedy. Certainly, there are many nuanced layers to the representations of Welsh characters – and even when dialect-driven, they are not always comic – but there are complexities about the value of theatrical Welshness to be found within the foreigner-as-clown trope. More broadly, this chapter will interrogate contemporary and modern comic theories regarding Welsh representations in extant Elizabethan and Jacobean plays to find the what value broken English and pidgin Welsh adds, or takes away from performance.

This chapter will begin by analyzing the significant theatrical movements which shaped the early modern city comedy and the popularization of dialect play on the London stage. Then I will analyze their manifestations in Shakespeare’s *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in text and in modern performance to explore comic theories which influence and effect of the theatrical Welsh accent onstage today. The chapter then shifts to three lesser-known works which feature Welsh characters: the Cambridge student play *Club Law* which satirizes a real, local Welshman; Ben Jonson’s masque for the Prince of Wales, *For the Honour of Wales*; and the Welsh disguise plot in *The Welsh Embassador*. Throughout my analysis of these plays, I also read the comedies through the prism of existing comic theories to uncover the technical methods by which this humour works.

It is impossible to trace the exact moment when the Welsh became a target of mockery for the English, since laughter has always been an avenue for dealing with the tensions of linguistic and cultural differences. The comedy of dialect humor is dependent on displacing a fear of the unknown or the inadequacy of translation into a disruption of sense, breaking with logical forms of language. Simon Critchley notes that “humour is a form of critical social anthropology, defamiliarizing the familiar, demythologizing the exotic and inverting the world of common sense.”

By imitating and mocking foreign languages or accent-inflected speech, we confront the function of language and reduce it to sound. The 1526 compilation of jests called *A Hundred Merry Tales* includes six separate joke tales which hinge upon Welsh stereotypes,

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including “Of the welchman that shrove him for breaking his fast on the Friday” which describes a Welshman confessing to eating cheese.145

In English drama, macaronic works emerged as combinations of Latin and vernacular English in fourteenth century medieval morality plays and mystery cycles. The transition from liturgical drama to public performance created “a dialectic between a relatively formal Latinate dialect for God and other holy speakers and a colloquial, sometimes obscene or nonsensical, vernacular dialect for the figure of the Vice and his counterparts.”146 As the plays were written to appeal to the entire local population of a village, rudimentary or recognizable Latin was used to indicate the voice of God or the past, while the common people utilized the local vernacular. By 1380, vernacular languages penetrated the academy as Oxford University began conducting studies in English and French, demonstrating the gradually increasing respectability of vernacular languages.147 Elsewhere in performance, the highly influential Italian commedia dell’arte conventionalized dialects to correspond with stock characters. Il Dottore’s Bolognese dialect (often mottled with blunders in Latin) reinforces the character’s false erudition while Arlecchino’s Bergamese fits the language of the typical working class dialect in Venice. Contemporary nuances in these dialects enriched the situational comedies as the theatre of languages provided shorthand for addressing changing cultural climates. Within the limits of the Elizabethan and Jacobean playhouse, dramatists developed similar dialect conventions for

145 Zall (1526: 1963) 78. The format continues to this day. In 2008, Welsh writer Dilwyn Phillips published a collection of Welsh Jokes. The cover features a ruddy-faced large man holding a glass of metheglin with leeks tucked inside his visible boxer shorts.


characters with a wide range of socioeconomic slang, regional accents, and topical cultural and political influences. The nationalized stage Welshman was an obviously recognizable character which “needed no explaining to the audience, but he offered novelty all the same.”\footnote{Bartley \textit{(1954)} 50.} The stage then allows for a reciprocal and dynamic understanding of Welshness beyond the playhouse walls.

The first extant portrayal of the comic Welshman on the early modern stage, however, can be found in Thomas Nashe’s 1592 play \textit{Summer’s Last Will and Testament}. Part masque, part morality play, part folk entertainment, Nashe’s play is hard to pin down. The fool character Will Summers, (named for Henry VIII’s royal jester with layered significance to the title) points to this fact in his prologue, “Why, he hath made a Prologue longer than/his play. Nay, ‘tis no play neither, but a show.”\footnote{Nashe \textit{1.74-75}} In this festive entertainment, Summers playfully performs Welshness simply as a jest:

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‘Hur come to Powl,’” as the Welshman says,
’and hur pay an halfpenny for hur seat, and hur hear the
Preacher talge, and a talge very well, by gis, but
yet a connot make hur laugh; go a theater and hear a
Queen’s Fice, and he make hur laugh, and laugh hur bellyful.’
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\footnote{\textit{1.3443-45}}

These lines provide little support to the drama. Will parodies the stereotype of the ignorant Welshman to criticize the play he is witnessing and to add to the laundry list of gags and styles of entertainment utilized in the show. This scene reads as if Nashe is adding a ready-made joke to the script, and the punchline is Welsh speech. In the same year, the Lord Strange’s Men
played Will Kemp’s *A Knack to Know a Knave* at the Rose. The straightforward play follows Honesty as he exposes men in his town to be knaves, and in doing so imitates a Welshman from “as far as Carnarvan” to deceive Cuthbert the Coneycatcher. In his Welsh lines, Honesty similarly repeats “her” and plays the ignorant bumpkin. These scenes suggest that the Welsh character could have been a part of the jester’s tool belt, since the first pays homage to Will Summers and the second was played by the comedian Kemp.

After these two plays, the stage Welshman is parodied most potently in the city or citizen comedy. Frequently noted as the first city comedy of its kind, William Haughton’s *Englishmen for My Money* is a prime example of a play that relies upon mocking foreigners as its most fruitful source of comic fodder. Superficially, Haughton’s plot is quite straightforward; a widowed father wishes to marry his three daughters to men of his choosing, while the women vie for the love of three different men. However, the geographical and cultural background of each character is clearly brought to the forefront as the comedy unfolds. Pisaro, the widowed father and usurer, asserts in the opening monologue that he is a Portingale by birth, but resides in London even after the death of his English wife. His three daughters are thus “hybrid” characters; Portugese-English women who make it clear they desire to marry Englishmen to fully assimilate into society. While they truly love three Englishmen, who are in debt to Pisaro, their father insists on marrying his daughters to foreign merchants Delion, Alvaro and Vandalle, a Frenchman, Italian, and Dutchman, respectively.

The play’s subtitle, *A Woman Will Have Her Will*, concisely explains the outcome. Through multiple compounded deceptions the women do wed the Englishmen (allowing the men to win back their property), but not before incessantly abusing the foreign suitors and exposing their inability to assimilate into the dramatized London society. On the surface, *Englishmen for
My Money is a courting drama, but within that narrative is the exploitation of foreign caricatures who are not given the chance to assimilate into their society. There are no Welshmen in this play, but Haughton sets up a familiar framework for the plays in this dissertation. The consistent ridicule of the foreigner’s broken English is a familiar target to audiences on the Bankside. Jannette Dillon asserts that after Englishmen for My Money there are “entire plays [which] exist for the central purpose of mocking and abusing foreigners.” While this might be a reductive reading, the trope of comic foreigners certainly heightened in the years following Haughton’s play.

The elements of unreserved ludic play and absurdity encouraged on the early modern stage can better illuminate the function of such characters for entertainment’s sake. For example, when a conventional dialect devolves into gibberish, there is no longer a recognizable signifier from which the speech is deviating – the joy then lies in a kind of contained (if it is scripted) anarchy. In this example, laughter is elicited simultaneously from an intellectual recognition and the liberation from rationality. The exercise known as grammalet occurred frequently in troupes of commedia dell’arte players in sixteenth century Italy, and it is likely many English performers would be familiarized with the convention. The modern commedia dell’arte performer and scholar Dario Fo defines the term as follows:

Grammelot is a term of French origin, coined by Commedia players, and the word itself is devoid of meaning. It refers to a babel of sounds which, nonetheless, manage to convey the sense of speech. Grammelot indicates the onomatopoeic flow of speech, articulated

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without rhyme or reason, but capable of transmitting, with the aid of particular gestures, rhythms and sounds, an entire, rounded speech.¹⁵²

This theatrical approximation of language depends on the audience’s imaginative engagement to flourish. A London audience’s passing familiarity with the sounds and intonations of Welsh help to complete the performance. In fact, commedia dell’arte players created linguistic cacophonies of Bergamense, Florentine, and Spanish interacting through improvised scenarios. Contemporary nuances in these dialects enriched the situational comedies as the theatre of languages provided shorthand for addressing changing cultural interactions.

Here again, scholars of commedia dell’arte and multilingual theatre can illuminate the various levels of linguistic mixing in London comedy. Mikhail Bakhtin was the first to shed light on the nuanced differences between heteroglossia and polyglossia, wherein he defines heteroglossia as the representation of multiple forms of the same language (class, age, region, etc.) and polyglossia as the interaction between two distinct languages (like English and Welsh).¹⁵³ However, he also describes heteroglossia as used in the novel as “another’s speech in another’s language, serving to express authorial intentions but in a refracted way.”¹⁵⁴ In performance, the English playwright’s dialogue is mediated through an English player’s mouth which likewise refracts intent, but could be further complicated by multilingual dialogue. This refraction allows for multiple levels of audience reception at once: audience members who

¹⁵² Fo (1991) 103.
understand only the primary language may laugh superficially at the sounds of the alien language, while spectators fluent in both languages will comprehend and follow the dialogue, which could diminish or enrich the comedy. Marvin Carlson presents cases of the macaronic stage, instances in which phrases or idioms from one language are mixed within dialogue of another. He writes that “the problem that macaronic theatre presents to reception analysis disappears when we recognize that in many periods…audiences were themselves macaronic.”

While I will analyze the comedic structures of the various forms of language play, I think it is also integral to delve deeply into the multiple levels of potential audience reception of dramatic instances of language mixing.

Such explicit targeting of the Other can be read easily through the dialectic relationship of the superior power onstage versus the inferior subjects. This dynamic has been outlined thoroughly as a source of comedy from the inception of Western theatre from classical Greek thought. Plato points to comedy as the public representation of human folly and ugliness. Aristotle upholds this belief writing, “Comedy is…an imitation of characters of a lower type – not, however, in the full sense of the word bad, the Ludicrous being merely a subdivision of the ugly. It consists in some defect or ugliness which is not painful or destructive.” The influence of Roman comedies on sixteenth and seventeenth century drama spring from these ideas as well. Of course, Roman playwrights, such as Plautus and Terence, shift this same framework of comedy to useful social commentary wherein the “ugly” or “defective” characters are politicians and authority figures pitted against wily servants.

155 Carlson (2009) 41.
It is not until 1651 that this phenomenon was given a concrete critical terminology by Thomas Hobbes, who is credited as superiority theory’s founding father. In *Leviathan*, he states, “Sudden glory is the passion which maketh those grimaces called Laughter; and is caused by either some sudden act of their own that pleaseth them; or by the apprehension of some deformed thing in another, by comparison whereof they suddenly applaud themselves.”\(^{157}\) Hobbes is seemingly disdainful of the practice altogether, convinced that humor at its very core orbits around schadenfreude. In the 19th century, Alexander Bain extends Hobbes’s idea claiming, “The occasion of the ludicrous is the degradation of some person or interest possessing dignity, in circumstances that excite no other strong emotion.”\(^{158}\) In this instance, Bain introduces the integral interpretation of a necessary lack of empathy of a person or idea that is being degraded for the audience’s pleasure. Most theorists who write about the superiority theory look derisively at comedy, seeing only its malicious utility. But what happens when the comic target is treated with some semblance of respect? While it could be easy to label each instance of a comic Welshman as completely derogatory, there is also a function of acceptance in the comedy of making language seem like a barrier when the Welsh can be fully understood.

*The Merry Wives of Windsor*

In 1598, Shakespeare’s *The Merry Wives of Windsor* married the convention of the comic outsider to the dramaturgy of a city comedy. J.O. Bartley claims that Hugh Evans is the “first fully nationalized and developed Welsh character” of the period.\(^{159}\) We cannot be sure of such a

\(^{157}\) Hobbes (1651: 2005) 45-6

\(^{158}\) Bain (1888) 248.

\(^{159}\) Bartley (1964) 52.
decisive statement, but Evans is certainly the weightiest Welsh part in any extant citizen comedy of the period. The Merry Wives of Windsor is a play about Falstaff, first and foremost. It is a flawed comedy, which is rumored to be a result of Queen Elizabeth’s request to see “Falstaff in love.” Although this request is not quite fulfilled – we see him as a deceptive, but undesirable cad – we are given Shakespeare’s only English-set comedy. In its 400-year history, the play has been the subject of much criticism due to its lack of cohesion, its flat humor, but also for its treatment of the previously amusing bombastic knight. In her essay “Falstaff and the comic community,” Anne Barton calls the play “a betrayal” of the character by allowing him “to be humiliated at the hands of an unremarkable, small-town society: deceived by housewives, mocked and tormented by children, and, outwitted for all his linguistic dexterity, by men who make ‘fritters of English.’” The “men” Barton alludes to here is just the one Welshman: Sir Hugh Evans. The comedy is riddled with linguistic confusion; and yet Falstaff’s only target (in this matter) is the Welsh parson. Barton’s critique mirrors the binary of the linguistically Othered Welsh parson and the fat knight in the play. Indeed, Evans is most easily read in contrast to those with whom he shares the stage: Caius the Frenchman; Mistress Quickly the mistress of malapropisms; and the citizens who make up the cacophonous Windsor.

The “mountain foreigner” Evans speaks in the conventional early modern Anglo-Welsh literary dialect, much like Shakespeare’s other Welshman, Fluellen. More farcical is the fact that

160 Henslowe mentions some lost plays in his diary: one titled Welche Man on November 29, 1595; another called Welchman’s Price on March 3, 1598; and then on March 13, 1598 he writes that Drayton and Chettle have written a play which includes a part for a “weallche man.” Of course, the last two examples may be from the same play.

161 Melchiori (2000) 2. There is no record of this exact sentiment from the Queen, but the fact that the rumour has lasted for so long, shows the potential expectation of the spectators attending the performance.

162 Barton (1994) 70.
Evans is not only a pedantic, moralizing priest, but he is also a stubborn language instructor who zealously corrects the English being used by the inhabitants of Windsor. He advises Falstaff that he is using “Good worts” and leads a Latin lesson with schoolboy William, wherein his comic enunciation reduces Latin to nonsense. Despite his idiosyncrasies, Evans is a non-threatening denizen – unable to pass as English, but loyal to the town – he is permanently marked as Welsh since “his dialect is the outward sign of his inward and domesticated yet unremittingly foreign Welshness.” Although the Welsh parson acts in Windsor’s best interest, he is always kept on the periphery of acceptance due to his inability to linguistically assimilate.

The comedy was probably written in 1598, a year after Henry IV and one before Henry V, and The Merry Wives of Windsor bridges the gap between the two history plays in many ways. Of course, there are the obvious shared characters from the Eastcheap scenes: Pistol, Nym, Bardolf, Mistress Quickly and Falstaff are all taken to the countryside in this comedy. Henry V's convoy of French characters is reduced and distilled into Doctor Caius’s over-the-top caricature of an incompetent foreigner. Sir Hugh Evans is very much an analogue to Fluellen in his pedantry and his desire (and failure) to fully assimilate with his English counterparts. The dramaturgy of The Merry Wives of Windsor is a recognizable mix of the popular comedies of its day, and the play may have suffered from its comic copia. A considerable swathe of comedy in The Merry Wives of Windsor depends upon a Jonsonian celebration of the eccentricities of language and personalities. The 1602 quarto title page calls the play “A Most pleasant and excellent conceited Comedie of Syr John Falstaffe and the merrie Wives of Windsor” with the addition “Entermixed with Sundrie and variable and pleasing humors of Syr Hugh the Welch

\[163\] Outland (2011) 329.
Knight, Justice Shallow, and his wise Cousin M. Slender.” While Shallow and Slender play the straight men in contrast to the chaos of the play, the Welsh parson adds a commedia dell’arte flavor to the production. Sir Hugh is a meek Pantalone, with his sophistry and Latin malapropsims, thus doubling his archetypal portrayal as a stage Welshman and Pantalone. Much like in *Henry V*, Pistol is recognizable again as an aggressive *miles gloriosus*, while Caius is a flamboyant version of the same archetype.

The play begins with Shallow angry due to Falstaff’s misbehavior towards him and his deer. It opens: “Sir Hugh, persuade me not: I will make a Star/Chamber matter of it. If he were twenty Sir John/Falstaffs, he shall not abuse Robert Shallow esquire” The opening in medias res implies Evans is trying to help Falstaff, but the English knight has no sense of the Welsh parson as an ally, nor does Shallow take Evans’ advice. Sir Hugh is introduced as a man being repeatedly denied despite his best intentions to keep the peace, and his role rarely deviates from this course. It is in this first scene that Evans plants the idea for Slender to woo Anne Page. He says, “It were a goot motion, if we leave our pribbles and prabbles, and desire a marriage between Master Abraham and Mistress Anne Page.” Evans terms Shallow and Slender’s conversation “pribbles and prabbles,” to assert his English pedantry as he simultaneously attempts to displace Shallow’s anger at the “greasy knight” to lighter affairs. In this line, Sir Hugh motivates the second plot that follows the younger generation, which is how he unwittingly incites conflict with the French Doctor Caius.

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164 Quarto 1602.
165 1.1.1-3.
166 1.1.49-51.
Caius’ Frenchified speech is similarly nationally emphasized which corresponds to a modern understanding of broken English. The main characteristic of his orthographic dialect is the replacement of “v’s” for “w’s,” and he aggressively peppers his prose with stage French – that is, occasionally linguistically accurate French and more frequently English mistranslations. His first line is, “Vat is you sing? I do not like dese toys. Pray you go and vetch me in my closet un boîte en vert – a box, a green-a box. Do intend vat I speak? A green-a box.” A jumble of affectation, his most flagrant transgression is his stubborn conviction that he is a viable suitor for young English Anne Page. It is precisely this desire that leads to a convoluted rivalry of the two characters, which exposes the hierarchical valuation of foreignness in Windsor.

The conflict of the Welsh-French relationship begins with an inconsistency in predictable plot progression. Evans sends Slender’s servant Simple to ask after the affections of the young Anne Page at Mistress Quickly’s place of work. Unfortunately, that place of work is Caius’ boarding house, and the French doctor is also, quite conveniently, seeking Anne’s hand in marriage. Simple hides in the closet leading to Caius’ inevitable discovery of the servant and his quest: “O, diable, diable! Vat is in my closet? Villainy! Larron!” This is met with Quickly’s cover up, “Hear the truth of it. He came of an errand to me from Parson Hugh.” Caius bombastically responds, “You jack’nape, give-a this letter to Sir Hugh. By gar it is a shallenge. I will cut his troat in de Park, and I will teach a scurvy jack’nape to meddle or make.” While he should be directing his shallenge to Slender, the aggression is purposefully misdirected to the

167 1.4.40-3.
168 1.4.71.
169 1.4.100-3
only other outsider by the English Mistress Quickly. It is clear by Shakespeare’s expert stagecraft that this linguistic duel is being mined for its comedic potential. And surely, this leads to plentiful material, which usefully allows Shakespeare to overtly demonstrate national differentiations between these two outsiders to Windsor.

Although the Welsh parson could call attention to the mistake, Evans agrees to the *challenge* to fight on behalf of Slender, tacitly defending the English hegemony (of which he is not a part) against the French. And yet, his loyalty is not reciprocated. The Host of the Garter, assigned to “measure their weapons” instead “appoints them to contrary places” in the outskirts of town therefore explicitly manipulating the two linguistic misfits and would-be duelists into waiting in the physical periphery of the community. There, we get a glimpse of the men in isolation from one another. First, Caius stands erect, rapier in hand, damning the “scurvy, jack-dog priest…the Englishman.” This seemingly throw away joke indicates how Evans can pass in English society when viewed from even remoter fringes; the audience can read Evans as superior to the French fool through his misunderstanding of nationality. On the other hand, Evans stands with his rapier in one hand, “Pible” in the other, singing Marlowe’s “Come live with me and be my love” and Psalm 137, which Tom Flanigan notes is “the archetypal psalm of lament in exile”¹⁷⁰ Evans’ scene of isolation in waiting for a duel turns the archetype of a hot-headed Welshman to the very picture of a coward. He laments, “How melancholies I am. I will knog his urinals/about his knave’s costard when I have good opportunities/for the ‘ork. Pless my soul…Mercy on me, I have a great dispositions to cry.”¹⁷¹ This comic moment also incisively

¹⁷⁰ Flanigan (2010) 76.
¹⁷¹ 3.1.13-20.
reinforces the fact that the parson is exiled within his own town, but also inverts the stereotype of the hotheaded Welshman, and emasculates the speaker.

After what Caius reports to be “six or seven, two, tree hours,” the Host, who acts as stage manager to the duel, displaces the violence to language. Immediately he orders, “Disarm them, and let them question. Let them keep their limbs whole and hack our English.” The Host is otherwise representative of early modern hospitality, but by the rules of the play, neither Caius nor Evans are afforded such generosity. Shallow and Page follow orders and take the men’s rapiers, rendering them impotent in the fight; forcing French and Welsh alike to battle with their least effectual tool – English. Evans and Caius sputter and spar for about ten lines only, but the damage has been done. This episode demonstrates how easily the foreign bodies are manipulated in Shakespeare’s Windsor, but the two characters’ distinctly different fates illuminate the stratification of nationalities.

Upon this humiliating encounter, Shakespeare simply reintegrates Evans into the principal plot of Falstaff’s sexual misadventures where he is again kept on the margins of Windsor’s English authority. On the other hand, Caius is given a wholly comical denouement wherein he is run out of town, and “put in his place” as it were. Mostly absent until the final act, he is duped into marrying a boy in disguise, punished for his gall at asserting himself as an equal in the English town. Caius, exits cursing, “I’ll raise all Windsor!” His bitter end is a reminder of the precarious nature of Evans’ conditional acceptance in society through submission. While this episode demonstrates Evans’ English is considered superior to Caius’ use of the language, the

172 3.1.71. Emphasis mine.
final act reinforces both foreigners’ alterity while Falstaff is redeemed from the most egregious actions of the play.

In 5.5 the townspeople perform a masque of fairies, elves, and oafs to catch Falstaff in a secret meeting with Mrs. Page and Mrs. Ford. For his part in the act, Evans dons a disguise of a satyr and he instructs the fairy children to torment Falstaff. In the masque, Evans taunts, “But stay, I smell a man of middle earth” to which a cowering Falstaff retorts, “Heavens defend me from that Welsh fairy./Lest he transform me to a piece of cheese!”173 Even under comic duress, Falstaff is able to insult the man’s Welsh lilt. While the masque continues, the people of Windsor taunt and pinch the fat knight to fully humiliate him for his wrongdoing, until he admits he has been “made an ass.” Still, after but a smattering of shaming, the comic antihero rejoins the Windsor society, while Evans returns to being the Welsh scapegoat. Master Ford jests to Evans, “I will never mistrust my wife again till thou art able to woo her in good English” a jab that reinforces the Welshman’s marginality, but acknowledges his essential presence to uphold Windsor’s self-appointed superior English structure.174 Falstaff repeatedly penetrates the “merry” picture of Windsor aggressively and without regret, and yet he is invited to “eat a posset” with the Pages, while Evans has returned to his “safe” peripheral position.

In performance, the outsider characters are often reduced to foreign caricatures. The Stratford Festival has produced the play seven times to date, even though the play is a less

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173 5.5.80-82.
174 5.5.132-134.
accomplished work than many of Shakespeare’s other comedies. Each of the five productions that are left recorded show a continuum of performance practices for both Sir Hugh and Doctor Caius. Actors in the role of Caius seem to have no problem stretching their interpretations of the incompetent doctor to the limit of clowning, much like an Inspector Clouseau character. Peter Moss directed the 1978 production at the Festival Theatre in Stratford, Ontario with Francois-Regis Klanfer, a francophone, dressed as Molière, shouting with an exaggerated affectation. Robert Beard’s production on the same stage four years later sees Richard Monette as Caius in oversized ruff and inflated pantaloons while Jack Medley’s Sir Hugh is dressed soberly in a cleric's robe. Stephen Ouimette and Nigel Bennett similarly played Caius with a hyperbolic refiguring of the dandy in 1995 and 2011, respectively.

The overemotional manner of Caius’s dialogue begets strange performative choices. For a production of *Merry Wives* in 2007 at the Lion Theatre in Theatre Row in New York, the Oberon Theatre Ensemble transferred the setting to Windsor, California and Americanized all parts other than those of Cauis and Sir Hugh. Stephanie Pietros writes that Stewart Walker’s portrayal was the cliché of the Frenchman in dialect, but strangely he was dressed as “a would-be ninja, replete with head band, a black gi, and excessive karate-chopping that was particularly overdone in the fight with Sir Hugh Evans.” Doctor Caius is certainly the more exaggeratedly drawn of the two foreign characters, such that actors and director stage his surplus speech together with farcical action. Sir Hugh Evans, on the other hand, becomes a reaction to Caius’s

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175 Samuel Pepys saw the play performed at the King’s Theatre in 1667 and reported the performance “did not please me at all, in no part of it.” Stendhal wrote “If this wasn’t by Shakespeare, no one would ever have read it to the end. It’s terrible” (1811).

eruption of energy as a more staid man. In 1995, the Stratford Festival cast English actress Barbara Byrne and Scotsman Barry Macgregor to play Mistress Quickly and the Host of the Garter with matching South London accents. The poor articulation in Robert Haley’s stilted Welsh accent was magnified when he shared the stage with native Brits.\textsuperscript{177} The oddity of the Welsh dialect comes primarily from when modern actors still use the conventionalized arbitrary pronoun “her” peppered in otherwise normative English phrases and the unnecessary pluralization of singular words.

Richard Ouzounian reviewed the 2011 Stratford production and notes, “the Welsh and the French get it in the neck mostly” with Andrew Gilles given only “one thing to play.”\textsuperscript{178} However, the clumsiest element in this production was the relationship between Falstaff and Evans. Geraint Wyn Davies was cast in the role of Falstaff and used his parents’ Welsh accent, which should weaken the character’s derision at Sir Hugh’s speech, but makes his jests like “I am not able to answer the Welsh flannel” into incongruent in-jokes between countrymen.\textsuperscript{179} Again, Davies’ regionally accurate portrayal of a Welsh accent also emphasized the peculiar way that Andrew Gillies pronounced each letter of the written dialect as Sir Hugh.

Productions in the UK tend to generate Welsh speech that less strictly adheres to the textual record. Mainly Welsh actors have played Hugh Evans for the RSC; Emrys James in 1968 and 1975, David Lloyd Meredith in 1979, Ian Hughes in 2006, and David Charles in 2012. Christopher Luscombe’s 2010 production presented at Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre, had Gareth

\textsuperscript{177} Cimolino (1995) \textit{Merry Wives of Windsor}, Stratford Festival Archive, VHS.
\textsuperscript{178} Ouzounian (2011) \textit{The Star}. Online.
\textsuperscript{179} 5.5145.
Armstrong playing Evans in his native Swansea accent, dexterously incorporating eccentricities like “I have a great dispositions to cry” but correcting phrases like “vlouting-stog” to its intended meaning, ‘flouting stock.’ The balancing act between the written dialect and verisimilar Welsh cadence pares down the caricature, refocusing the comedy within his pendency and false confidence. Performers who attempt to stay faithful to the written material expose the anachronism of early modern extant dialects as written.

The humour of the play depends upon the commedia archetypes of Caius and Sir Hugh, which fundamentally includes the dialect work. There is theatrical utility to performing these characters with an emphasized Welsh or French accent, but comic effect is often lost in the translation of time. *Henry V* stages military conflict between the French and English, therefore the French language is presented as threatening. However, in the placid town of Windsor, dramatic conflict relocates that threat in language, making the French vs. Welsh linguistic “hacking” the source of entertaining comedy. In the case of Sir Hugh Evans, the comedy eked out of his Welshness is also dependent on pathos, whereas Caius is entirely used as the play’s ‘vlouting stock.’

*Club Law*

*Club Law* similarly stages an oblivious Welshman in direct contrast with a French *miles gloriosus* under wholly different circumstances. The farce was produced by Cambridge students in 1599 at Clare Hall and has since been attributed to a Mr. George Ruggle, who also wrote a

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180 3.1.17;91.
Latin comedy called *Ignoramus*. The substance of the play is exactly as it sounds: a group of Cambridge students stage a series of brawls with the townspeople and government officials due to the very real town versus gown conflict. By the authority of royal charters, the university could restrict its people and supplies from leaving the colleges’ walls. However, the town had no such reciprocal rule. By 1561, Elizabeth I specified that the university’s officers “at their pleasure, might make search and inquisition” of the townspeople and punish them “by imprisonment of their bodies, banishment, or otherwise as the Chancellor or his vice-gerent should deem fit.” Understandably, this did not settle well with town’s inhabitants, and resentment only deepened throughout the years.

By the time Cambridge students wrote *Club Law*, Thomas Fuller’s *History of the University of Cambridge* notes,

> The young Schollars conceiving themselves somewhat wronged by the Townsmen (the particulars whereof I know not) betook for them revenge to their wits, as the weapon wherein lay their best advantage. These having gotten a discovery of some Town privacies from Miles Goldsborrough (one of their own Corporation) composed a merry but abusive Comedy (which they call’d CLUB LAW) in English, as calculated for the capacities of such, whom they intended spectatours thereof.

The play shows local government officials alongside dramatic renderings of the student players. The fact that *Club Law* was performed in English, rather than the typical Latin, makes it evident

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181 Smith (1907) lvi.

182 Moore xiv

183 Ibid xl
that the Mayor and his company who are attacked therein were invited to the comedy as well.

Indeed, there is record that John Yaxley, the mayor at the time, complained of the libelous play.\textsuperscript{184}

The comedy follows Niphil, who represents current mayor John Yaxley, as he campaigns to take the title of Burgomaster of Athens, from Mr. Brecknocke (a Welsh pun on the actual former mayor’s name, Wallis).\textsuperscript{185} Opposing the governmental contingent, are the citizens of Athens led in “club law” by Nicholas Cricket. The Welsh caricature Tavie represents Hugh Jones, an infamously corrupt sergeant of the town. As the embodiment of city law, Hugh Jones got into various scrapes with the university proctors. Despite, or perhaps because of these conflicts, Yaxley did appoint Jones as Chief, which makes him rife for mocking material. The contemporary report read:

\begin{quote}
Hughe Jones, sometimes servant to the Taxer of the Universitie, discharged the Univeristie service, and banished that bodie for his corrupt dealing and other misdemeanor in his service…is now by this Major preferred to be Sergeant unto the towne, being a man manie ways infamous, as being a fit instrument to deale (as he notoriouslie doth) against the Universitie.\textsuperscript{186}
\end{quote}

Even if the typical characteristics associated with Wales and its people were over-the-top in this era, Tavie is the only utterly unlikable character from this period, repeatedly referred to as the “welsh rogue” and welsh Raskall.

\textsuperscript{184} The theatrical upstarts were never punished. The story goes that the young academics were saved of any punishment, since the Lords of Cambridge requested that they see the play themselves to judge if the play was indeed libelous. Since the townspeople represented did not want the play performed again, the case against the students was dropped. Moore xli.

\textsuperscript{185} Burgomaster is a Dutch and Flemish term, which adds to the messy treatment of nationality here. The students are rhetorically distancing themselves from the Cambridge outside of Clare Hall.

\textsuperscript{186} Moore xxi.
The extant manuscript is missing large swathes of material, so the play as we have it begins at the end of 1.4 wherein Niphil is making a deal with sergeant Tavie that he will appoint him to Captain, if he is elected Burgomaster. Tavie’s dialogue follows convention: “Her hope her arsips as tinke ferie well of her, and her shance to be Mr. Burgomaster, an ples cod her will, will let her be shefe Shergent?”

However, when the play introduces his sister Luce, her character is not written in Welsh dialect. Perhaps because she is not a particularly comic character, the students found an accent too distracting. However, Ruggle does write a quick quip explaining why she sounds different from her buffoon of a brother when Tavie says, “Her was petterrought up, thanke her cood uncle Morgan.” This is a subtle moment which indicates the performers’ awareness of the impact of dialect on audience reception.

Much of the plot hinges upon Cricket, the main Athenian hero, playing pranks on the obviously corrupt Welshman to get to Niphil. Within that story, there is a significant scene which introduces Monsieur Grand Combatant who feasts at the election day dinner. Puff introduces him as “a certaine Frenchman called Monsiery grand Combatant…it would make a horse laugh to heare him talke…he is as good a foole to make us sport.” The French miles gloriosus goes to the dinner, but is quickly on to Puff’s game: “de scurvie Rogue Puffe…abuse mee, he spake french, de great clowne so laugh, abuse…wee will goe the Accademicks…is better goods fellowes there.” This offense sets the scene for the two dialect-based characters to spar,

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188 3.9.1613-14.
189 1.8.621; 623; 625.
190 2.1.652-657.
Monsieur joins the Athenian academics against Tavie, now Captain, and the government officials.

Despite his consistent corruption, when Tavie is promoted to Captain, he feels strongly about “militarie discipline and service” in a move which recalls Fluellen’s obsession. However, when the time comes to fight the academics, he cries, “Cots plud, looke to your selfe (hee runnes awaye).”\textsuperscript{191} Much like Sir Hugh Evans, the Welsh character proves a coward when confronted with a brawl. Monsieur Grand Combatant also hides under a stall, until he sees Puff and attacks him as a “fatt rouge, impudent rouge.”\textsuperscript{192} Ruggle does not exploit the dialect performances in a linguistic duel as Shakespeare does, but he does manipulate the action such that the two theatrically Othered characters are likewise ineffective in combat.

The conflicts between Falstaff and Evans; Evans and Caius; and Tavie and Monsieur Grand Combatant expose that the hierarchy of linguistic dexterity can be read through the lens of the superiority theory in comedy. Although manipulating an English audience to shun or disapprove of broken English may not fully ignite a nationalist sentiment, disparaging groups of Others reinforces their place at the margins of London society. Alan Powers writes, “The word ‘Welsh’ was used in Elizabethan mockery, almost the ethnic and linguistic equivalent of ‘Polish’ in ethnic jokes in our era.”\textsuperscript{193} Surely, in these examples, Welsh and Polish people are not championing the kind of derision and superiority gained from such jokes. However, early modern London entertainment exhibits no shortage of laughter at the misfortunes of others. \textit{The

\textsuperscript{191} 4.6.2221.  
\textsuperscript{192} 4.6.2269.  
\textsuperscript{193} Powers (1994) 111.
*Merry Wives of Windsor* demonstrates that a Frenchman will never win an English woman’s hand in marriage in a comedy. Shakespeare gives Caius an embarrassing end, but Sir Hugh is mocked as an in-joke, almost like family. On the other hand, Tavie’s Welshness is merged with his corruption in *Club Law*, which is likely more of a statement about genuinely corrupt authority figure Hugh Jones rather than the Welsh themselves.

Such productions of comedy are still read within the socio-ideological foundations early modern constructions of Englishness and Welshness onstage. Objectified dialect becomes an externalized demonstration of deformity or weakness; what Falstaff terms making “fritters of English.” Varying degrees of broken English used by “strangers” in dramas explicitly expose characters’ inability (or, on occasion, indifference) to adapt into a native Londoner’s version of society. Both Hobbes and Bain describe laughter as a product of a joke that debases the subject, yet the Welsh were widespread in early modern English society. In my previous chapter, I argued that the Welsh are a unique out-group in London as an affable, easily-controlled Other. This also puts them in the position for convenient social scapegoating. D.H. Munro explains,

> For in comedy we have, not a mighty clash of wills as in tragedy, but a constant series of dimly discerned misunderstandings. We are all slightly at cross purposes with our neighbours; our values are never quite their values, and our language never quite the same as theirs. Add to this the constant effort on everybody’s part to keep his end up, to justify his own behavior and outlook according to the current codes, and we have the human comedy.\(^{194}\)

Colonizers write history, but they also constructed the comedies in early modern London. All the plays in this thesis are written by English practitioners (as far as can be discerned). The English position themselves as superior to their neighbors as the playwrights and players, and indeed the term ‘superior’ can be easily translated into ‘normative.’ For the shapers of the mainstream

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\(^{194}\) Monro (1963) 58. Emphasis added.
narratives, linguistic difference is an expression of inferiority. The English can readily degrade their mother tongue to verbally caricature the Welsh “worts” and the French with their “by gars.”

Of course, the superiority theory proves only that the laughter at a non-English character’s misfortune was a part of the comedic inspiration for Others. Sir Hugh Evans exemplifies another layer of comic interplay with his outright obliviousness to his alienation. Henri Bergson’s essay Laughter presents a formula of comedy which posits the laughable to be “something mechanical encrusted upon the living.”195 His essay “Laughter” concentrates mostly on the ways in which human beings and characters perform like automatons. A misplaced gesture, word, or attitude calls attention to human fallibility within the systematic spaces we navigate daily. These spaces can be physical, social, or ideological, but Bergson consistently makes a correlation between a lack of control or awareness to automatic unsociability. Therefore, in the normative space of male Englishness, the inability to assimilate points to human fallibility, which provokes laughter at the speaker. Sir Hugh Evans’ insistence on being the arbiter of good sense and upright Englishness while stumbling over his words makes him a prime example of an oblivious automaton. Sir Hugh is the pedantic, moral backbone in a carnivalesque world. The character is simply not a fun addition to Windsor, so this is theatrically reinforced with his accented speech.

For the Honour of Wales

Ben Jonson’s antimasque For the Honour of Wales similarly layers Welsh characters who codeswitch from perfect Welsh to conventionalized broken English, but are made laughable due to their obliviousness to the magnitude of the occasion at which they are performing. On Twelfth

Night in 1618, Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones presented the court masque *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* to King James I with his son, Charles, the Prince of Wales at the Whitehall Banqueting House. For the teenaged Charles in the principal role, Jonson created an educational tale drawn from several myths of Hercules at crossroads. The masque was recorded as unsuccessful, and there are reports that James shouted, “Why don’t they dance? What did you make me come here for? Devil take all of you, dance!”\(^{196}\) However, the masque was scheduled to have a second performance on Shrove Tuesday.

To improve the poorly received script, Jonson added a new antimasque, *For the Honor of Wales*, to be performed in conjunction with the production. In the second Folio of Jonson’s collected works, *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* ends with the comment: “This pleased the King so well as he would see it again, when it was presented with these additions.”\(^{197}\) The Folio then begins the antimasque with the stage direction: “*The scene standing as before, a mountain, but now the name changed from Atlas to Craig Eyri.*”\(^{198}\) The classical setting transformed to the Welsh countryside, three Welshmen, Griffith, Jenkin and Evan, praise the court and petition the prince to visit Wales. The overtly theatrical dialects are balanced with technically correct speeches in Welsh, but it is noteworthy that Jonson uses such a seemingly “low” form of comedy to redeem the original dramatic disappointment. Martin Butler describes this tactic, “Only minds as trivial as these, Jonson implied, could prefer dancing goats to the original fare.”\(^{199}\)

\(^{196}\) As quoted in Butler (2012) 311.


\(^{198}\) Jonson (1618:2012) *For the Honour of Wales*. (Ed. Butler), Cambridge: 1.1.0SD.

\(^{199}\) Butler (2008) 92.
As mentioned, *For the Honor of Wales* was Ben Jonson’s attempt at improving the poorly received *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*. The original masque was to welcome Charles, who had his investiture as Prince of Wales in 1616, in his first role as a primary performer. The performance was set in and around Atlas, a grand mountain designed by Inigo Jones “*who had his top ending in the figure of an old man, his head and beard all hoary and frost as if his shoulders were covered with snow.*” The saturnalian antimasque shows Comus, the Greek god of cheer; young Charles as Hercules enjoying the spoils of Pleasure and Virtue; and a singing Daedalus among a chorus of revelers. The revised antimasque was performed on February 17, 1618, only six weeks after the original flop. Therefore, instead of creating an entirely different narrative or set pieces, Jonson combines the craggy mountain and the honoree’s title to inspire a wholly comedic antimasque upon a Welsh mountainside. With the fixed set, the most convenient dramatic ploy to change the content with little production effort is seemingly to reform the language as opposed to the structure.

And, indeed, for an Englishman, Jonson writes precise Welsh. Anecdotally, Ben Jonson proved to have at least a slight interest in the Welsh language, as he is known to have procured Davies’s *Welsh Grammar* in the 1630s. Perhaps the playwright consulted William Salesbury’s 1567 Welsh language guide, or he was accompanied by a fluent speaker. The three main characters slip easily from semantically accurate Welsh into inconsistent Welsh-inflected broken English as exemplified below:

Griffith: Cossin, I know what belongs to this place symwhat petter than you, and therefore give me leave to be pold to advise you. ’Is not a small matter to offer yourself into presence of a king and aull his court! Be not too byssy and forward til you be caulled, I tauk reason to you.

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200 1.1.0SD
Jenkin: Cym, never talk any talks. If the king of Great Prittain keep it assizes here, I will cym into court, loog yow, do you see now, and please Got.

Griffith: Taw, dyn ynfyd! Ydwyt yn abl i anafu pob peth o’th ffolineb, ag i dynnu gwtwar ar dy wlad. [Silence, silly! You may spoil everything with your folly and make your country a laughing-stock.]

Jenkin: Gâd fi’n llonydd. [Leave me alone.] I say I will appear in court.\textsuperscript{202}

The performance begins with this scene which teaches the audience how to engage with the characters, signaling that there will be Welsh asides that are incomprehensible to most of the audience. Although Jonson’s masque is far outside of the scope of realism, this selective verisimilitude deepens a theatrical association with Wales, but it also creates a private space in the dramatic world from apart from the audience. Also, much like in Dekker, Chettle and Haughton’s Patient Grissil, the Welshmen here tend to speak in Welsh when they are agitated, which points to the convention of foreign languages being used for madness or uncontainable emotion onstage.

Despite his ability to write convincing seventeenth-century Welsh, Jonson otherwise paints Wales with broad strokes, digging deep into the well of stock stereotypes and clichés about the people and their land. In his masque, Welsh language, geography, agriculture, mythology and ancestry are all one in the same, and they are all-encompassing. The leads rehearse and discuss their “upcoming” performance at court with one another and remark on the great size of the hall, indicating that they are amateurs in theatre and in court matters. Significantly, these Welshmen are used mainly to apologize to the king about the failed attempt in Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue as they openly criticize the original antimasque as “naught,

\textsuperscript{202} 1-12.
naught, stark naught.”

This could be a message of humility from Jonson for his failure six weeks earlier, but by hiding behind these characters, he simultaneously works to reinforce the Welshmen’s country-bumpkin standing. Jenkin rebukes his author: “‘Is a great huge deal of anger upon yow from aull Wales and the nation, that your Ursip would suffer out young Master Sarles, Your Ursip’s son and heir and Prince of Wales, the first time he ever play dance, to be put up a in a mountain, Got knows where, by a palterly poet.’

The problem for the trio is not the mountain nor the dramatic action around it, but the fact that Jonson did not initially write the masque in Wales. Therefore, they do their best to thoroughly rename and reclaim the original setting, spouting lists of Welsh hills “as good standing and as good descent as the proudest Adlas christened.”

Evan names “Talgar…Eliennieth…Cadier Arthur..Penmaen-mawr” as the “British Aulps,” which points to Camden’s *Brittania* as the source for much of Jonson’s geography.

Jonson’s references about Welsh names and history work much like the ancient narratives of *Cymbeline*, *A Valiant Welshman*, and *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*, to reinforce a sense of consistent Britishness balanced between the Scottish king and his newly installed Anglo-Scottish Prince of Wales. Evan, Jenkin, and Griffith are joined by two other named Welsh characters, Rheese and Howell, who mimic the list of hills with a catalogue of Welsh names. However, for this project, the five Welshmen pretend to uncover Welsh roots for each of the eleven English and Scottish courtiers who danced in *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*. For the Earl of Montgomery, Philip Herbert, they say he is “as sound Welse too as fless and blood can make

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203 42.
204 29-32.
205 49.
206 52; 54; 56; 58; 63.
him, as his family held estates in Wales.” However, it proves harder to twist the Scots into Welsh names, and they play a feigned word association to relate the names. For example, Palmer becomes “Penmaur” and Abercromby is offered as “Abermarlys, Abertawe, Aberdugledhaw,” and other Welsh names relating simply by their first four letters. The comedy here is earned from the oblivious commitment of the Welshmen to absorb the English and Scottish courtiers into shared ancestry and present composite Britishness.

Evan begins the musical portion of the masque, and the first song starts at the very beginning of Welsh mythology. He sings, “I’s not come here to tauk of Brut,/From whence the Welse does take his root….But hark yow me now, for a liddle tales/S’all make a gread deal to the credit of Wales.” The song does its due diligence to reinforce the Welsh stereotypes already established, and to further reinforce retroactive unity of the isle. Evan, Rhys, and the Chorus praise methglin, goats, and other goods harkening from the motherland. The songs and dances culminate in what one can assume was quite the spectacle: “Here the dance of goats.” The closing dance sequence is a carnivalesque piece for the Welsh clowns to parade the nationalized stereotypes, but order is restored at the end of the antimasque with speeches of praise to the king in which Jenkin relates, “Your Madesty s’ud be the first king of Gread Pritain, and sit in Cadier Arthur, which is Arthur’s Chair, as by God’s blessing you do.” This Welsh praise would be a powerful statement if acted by Welsh players, but since the performance was

207 Butler footnote 132.
208 139; 141—3.
209 175-6; 181-2.
210 SD 278.
211 309-9
fully enacted by English and Scottish players, this sentiment merely blurs the significance of Welsh royalty. Much like the *Cymbeline*, *The Valiant Welshman*, and *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*, Jonson utilizes the ancient Cambrian myths to locate ideal Britishness within Welsh history, but in a way that adapts to a Scottish audience.

Despite the thorough Welshing of Whitehall, the masquers reassert the hierarchy of England and Scotland, with Wales as the laughing stock of the island. Sir Gerard Herbert noted in a letter to Sir Dudley Carleton that the revised masque was “much better liked than twelveth-night; by reason of the newe Conceites & ante masks & pleasant merry speeches made to the kinge, by such as Counterfeyted wels men, & wisht the kings Comynge to Wales.”

However, Nathaniel Brent also wrote to Sir Dudley Carleton with a more critical eye: “The princes maske was shewed againe…with som few additions of Goats and welshe speeches sufficient to make an English man laugh and a welsh-man cholerique.” Brent’s apt description points to the prospect of Welsh offense at the overzealous, jingoistic clichés of the conventional stage Welshman.

However, it is their language that is consistently parodied and foregrounded as content. Evan, Jenkin, and Griffith remark on their ability to “tauk” to the king himself. Jenkin asserts, “Why cannot yow and I tauk too, cossin? The haul, God bless it, is big enough to hold both our taiks…” Similarly, Evan apologizes for his bumbling speech: “How does Your Highness? – I know not a ‘oord or a syllable what I say; ‘is do me that vexations” to which he cries “Oh, Evan,

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212 National Archives, *SP 14/96/27*, fol. 5

213 National Archives, *SP 14/96/24*, fols. 46v.

214 69-70.
for the honour of Wales!”215 The title less of an entreaty to the King or a celebration of the nation, but a verbal tic throughout the masque, and one that is used to make fun of the speakers.

In Martin Butler’s companion essay to the masque in the New Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson, he notes the inconsistency of the recorded Welsh-accented dialogue. While the printer typically abides by the convention of switching “b” for “p,” “d” for “g,” and spellings of words like “tauk” are also recorded in the normative “talk,” as “loog” oftentimes becomes “look.”216 Butler refers to these slips as changes in pronunciation, but it is more likely that the Welsh accent was adopted and kept throughout the performance. Even though the Welsh language is well preserved in the extant script, there is no record of the accuracy or consistency of the spoken word in performance. In Bergsonian terms, the language and the accent are ‘encrusted’ onto the characters as a kind of verbal deformity to which they do not allude. Their inability to fit into the normative English and Scottish court makes them laughable.217

The comedy of the antimasque works in multiple levels. The overarching approach of Welsh stereotyping depends on the binary of superior courtly English and Scottish culture versus the perceived rugged country life of Wales. The text as it exists today could be read as subversive as it shows country Welshmen and their goats penetrating the court to boast about the riches of their land and culture. However, the specificity and accuracy of Welsh language is actively more malicious due to its linguistic and cultural detail. The Welsh can still be a diminutive Other in certain parts of the UK and Ireland, but the heavy-handed mockery in this masque would still read as distasteful and anachronistic. Many comic tropes have evolved

215 95-7.
216 Butler (2012)
217 However, it is notable that while the Scottish king and his retinue may not understand Welsh, but the Scottish language is similar in sound and origin.
seamlessly throughout time; for example, the clever slave of the Roman era became the wise servant or of early modern comedy scene, which has been translated to the witty sidekick in television and films of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. However, this blatant Welsh language mockery can seem stagnant and lost in an era in which those who sought to construct British identities were transfixed on the history and mythology of the archipelago.

The three main characters in *For the Honour of Wales* carry out the entirety of the plot of the antimasque, so there is more to their addition than to laugh at their inferiority (and indeed such a tactic could be foolhardy of Jonson in the presence of the Prince of Wales). Comedy of superiority, almost dependent on being devoid of empathy, does still rely on an affective response based in authoritative assessment of value. On the other hand, theories developed around the disruption of expectation operate on an entirely intellectual level. In “Critique of Aesthetic Judgment,” Kant explains what will become the building blocks of the incongruity theory:

> Whatever is to arouse lively, convulsive laughter must contain something absurd (hence something that the understanding cannot like for its own sake). Laughter is an affect that arises if a tense expectation is transformed into nothing…We must the expected object, for that is always something funny and may frequently grieve us.\(^{218}\)

Kant’s description fuses “nothing” with the absurd – a chasm between conceptual understanding and perception to disturb or redirect linear thought. He even explains the physical embodiment of such pleasure, laughter, as an effect of “mental agitation.” In my deployment of incongruity theory here, dialect disrupts the very function of language as a social tool of communication to render the form absurd. Incongruous language, in the form of gibberish and nonsense Welsh

\(^{218}\) *Kant (1790) 332-3.*
speech in plays like *The Welsh Embassador*, point to yet another manifestation of the Welsh
custom on the London stage.

*The Welsh Embassador*

Most theorists implicitly create a kind of hierarchy of humor of their own categorization,
and language play is often considered an unsophisticated method. John Morreall refers to the
“lowest level” of comedy in which “language involves merely the sounds of the spoken word or
the shape of the written word, apart from the word’s meaning.”

Even so, puns, witticisms, homonyms, and double-entendres are sometimes relegated to a world of frivolity focused on the
form rather than content of language. However, so many instances of verbal humor exploit the
very nature and utility of language rendering it to nonsense, which makes our very dependence
on language laughable. Constructed linguistic flaws in dialogue require attention to the form, and
the inherent function of communication that language provides in daily life is transformed into a
destabilized – at times unstable – mode of expression.

Thomas Dekker’s *The Welsh Embassador* is another example of a remastered script,
which is inflated by its inclusion of Welsh comic caricatures. In this case, however, the script
shows Saxon characters in disguise speaking broken English with occasional Welsh lines, too.
Twenty-one years later, he produced *The Welsh Embassador*, which takes *The Noble Spanish
Soldier* as its foundation, shifts the action to Saxon England, and adds a convoluted comedy of

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219 Morreall (1983) 72.
disguises based upon a false Welsh knight.\textsuperscript{220} In \textit{The Noble Spanish Soldier}, Thomas Dekker plots a tale about a nameless Spanish king who has had a child out of wedlock with a commoner named Onaelia. The king promises to marry her; however, he has a dastardly plan to break that contract and secure his kingdom by wedding the Florentine royal Paulina. To set this in motion, the king introduces Onaelia to a bumbling suitor named Don Cockadillio to try to pawn her off to another. The play is rife with revenge plots and deception, and it ultimately ends with the king drinking poison, and his conspirator stabbed. Although there are no Welsh characters in this tragic iteration, Dekker does include dialogue about national attributes. In 3.3, the Queen says to Baltazar, “Thou art not banished” to which he replies:

\begin{quote}
If I were, I lose nothing, I can make any Country mine:
I have a private Coat for Italian Steeletto’s, I can be treacherous with the Wallowne, drunke with the Dutch, a Chimney-sweeper with the Irish, a Gentleman with the Welsh, and turne arrant theefe with the English, what then is my Country to me?\textsuperscript{221}
\end{quote}

It is quite rare that the Welsh are given the most noble account in this list of national stereotypes. However, when Dekker fully theatricalizes Welsh gentlemanliness, it becomes the source for such nonsense that it devolves into psuedo-minstrelsy.

The center of each play is implicit in the title. The action in \textit{The Noble Spanish Soldier} hinges upon Baltazar, the repentant henchman who tries to appeal to the conscience of the king to marry Onaelia. Whereas in \textit{The Welsh Embassador}, Baltazar’s replacement, Voltimar, shifts the focus to the analogue Don Cockadillio, which is Penda’s Welsh disguise, Powis. The outline of the play remains the same: King Athelstane has had an affair with Armante, which gives her a

\textsuperscript{220} Indeed, there are four scenes which remain untouched from its source, apart from characters’ names. Hoy (1980) 107.

\textsuperscript{221} Dekker (1602: 1961) \textit{The Noble Spanish Soldier} (Ed. Bowers), Cambridge: 3.3.100-105.
son. However, the king has his sights set on Carintha, Penda’s wife. Penda, and brothers Edmond and Eldred dress in disguise to expose King Athelstane in his dirty dealings with both women, and his kingdom.

In both plays, Dekker writes fluent English verse for his Spanish and Saxon characters, but the two Welsh imitators in his later play speak in a borderline incomprehensible dialect. Penda (as Powis) and Eldred (as Reese ap meredith, ap shon, ap lewellin, ap morris) are indicated as Welsh entirely through dialect that degrades language to utter nonsense. The men enter and immediately Powis apologizes for the tacit inferiority of Wales:

Penda: In Wales (oh magnanimous kinge Athelstanes) wee have noe universities to tawge in uplandish greekes and lattins, wee are not so full of our rhetoriques as you are here, and therefore youre great and masticall eares was not to look for fyled oratories and pig high stiles.222

The doubly-constructed English perception of the Welsh (Dekker’s conception as embodied by Penda’s here), then, is instantaneously conflated with a substandard grasp on the practice of rhetoric. Refashioning an old work may not have been uncommon in the early seventeenth century, but Dekker’s distinctly different approaches for the two foreign cultures reinforce the comic power of stage Welsh. To both Jonson and Dekker, and their audiences alike, Welsh characters add comic value to previously “serious” material.

The treatment of the Welsh gibberish is significant in this play, however, because Dekker gives us a comedic insight into actors’ potential approaches to stage accents at the time. Voltimar, hatching the disguise plot, says, “Did I not steere your course well at our cominge out of Fraunce to land you in Wales, tho t’weare the fardest waie about?”223 He notes that because

223 2.2.99-100
the soldiers have spent time in Wales, they can mimic its countrymen. Eldred agrees for he “drunck healthes in *metheglin* amonge ‘em, never met nobler companions, and said so longe, I could gabble very handsomely, so that dor a sentill man of Wales, one of my lord embassadors followers, if I faile flea me.” Although Eldred is superficially giving the Welsh a compliment, his analysis of the people leans fully on stereotypical “gabbling” over a round of metheglin, as if he can simultaneously drink in the language itself. Like Shakespeare’s double act of Welsh and French, Dekker assigns Penda as a Welsh nobleman; Eldred as his Welsh serving man; but Edmond plays the role of Irish footman. Indeed, Edmond notes that he “shall not laugh else” unless he plays a lower-class Irishman. Penda’s button on this scene is the simple statement, “For a comedy of disguises lets then Arme/Which tho it doe noe good, can doe no harme.” And truly, the plot nearly unravels time and again to set the stage for a tangential romp of national difference.

The Welsh dialect Dekker employs in this play depends on some of the conventionalized stage speech seen before: namely, the repetition of “her” and “sentillman” which both sound absurd and simultaneously mock the speaker for effeminacy and non-elite status. However, the playwright also contrives a sing-songy way of delivering dialogue with lists of internal rhymes and alliterative scatology. For example, Penda/Powis reacts to the cliché that Welshmen are hot headed by saying, “Collers? Had I the petter of us awle in powis land to fleere and seere and sneere in our faces was as good to eate a welse goate, hairs and hornes, and pudding and awle in
her pelly piping hot.” The joke relies on performance aloud; the internal rhyming makes it sound like a children’s poem, wherein the sounds are more important than the baffling content.

Eldred, too, adopts the melodious speech as seen below:

Colchester: Is that your man my lord.
Penda: Yes and a sentill man of an old as anie Wales.
Kent: Hees very furious.
Eldred: Furies, a true welse man scornes and redicles and laughins.

Although this reads oddly, the disguises are quaint and mysterious in the world of the play. King Athelstane sends Powis to woo his castoff, Armante, and his linguistic seduction follows another poetic, rhythmic pattern:

Penda: Wud you kanaw her mistris face?
   See the moone with starrs in shace.
Wud you kanaw her mistris nyes?
   Lure down a goshawk from her sykes…
Wud you kanaw her mistris nose?
   Tis fine pridge ore which pewtie goes.
Wud you kanaw her mistris cheeks?
   ‘Tis sattin white and red as leekes.

This poem parodies Shakespeare’s Sonnet 130 as if it is being retold by an illiterate Welsh child. The repetition turns the focus of his dialogue on abstract sound and the playful nature of the disguise plot in general, which exposes the parody of general verbal eccentricity as the method to humor, rather than a specifically identifiable Welshness.

The spectrum of dialect and language imitation offers varying levels of verisimilitude to differing comic effect. The more linguistically, semantically, and culturally accurate the

226 3.2.67-70
227 3.2.277-80.
228 4.1.82-93.
performance of the language or dialect, the more sinister the satire can be about the specific
ethnicity or culture. When a language or dialect is reduced to gibberish, the crux of comedy
might rely on the parody of the mechanics of communication, rather than a direct critique of the
nation, region, or character. However, nonsense Welsh speech does not transform language into
nothing (as in Kant’s example of incongruity) but into an ineffective medium that can construct
Welsh characters as voiceless. The speeches of Gwendhyan from Patient Grissil could be just as
easily performed as Welshified gibberish as they could with Welsh lines. Is verisimilitude
funnier than the reductive stereotype of gibberish?

To Bergson, obliviousness is a necessary attribute of comic characters and actions. But
what could be more mechanical than language onstage? We can instantaneously appreciate how
porous language truly is by playfully subverting the mechanics of ubiquitous speech. Indeed,
Bergson approaches an explanation of a comical lapse of utility when he explains, “the play upon
words makes us think somehow of a negligence on the part of language, which, for the time
being, seems to have forgotten its real function and now claims to accommodate things to itself
instead of accommodating itself to things.”\textsuperscript{229} Characters who consistently misuse the hegemonic
language offer dynamic examples of language as a fragile human construct at an important
cultural moment in theatrical and archipelagic history. However, due to the inkhorn debate in
sixteenth century London, flagrant misuses of the newly forming English vernacular points to the
oblivious speaker as the butt of the joke.

The idiosyncrasies of Welsh dialect in The Welsh Embassador, For the Honour of Wales,
and Club Law might be grafted on to the characters by way of dramatic economy. These

\textsuperscript{229} Bergson (1911:1956) 139.
characters are marginal, if by varying degrees, and their sounds concretize this fact outwardly. The metatheatrical nature of the disguised Welshman in *The Welsh Embassador* helps point to contemporary acting practices for approaching dialect: ‘neutral’ English actors – even if they are playing ancient Saxons – could play the Welsh language as a form of *grammelot*. The sources of phonetic Welsh phrases and faux Welsh dialogue are unclear for many of these plays, but the sheer number of extant characters who are rhetorically marked in a ‘strange,’ ‘counterfeit,’ or ‘foreign’ way as specifically Welsh merit comparison with those instances of English. This duality provides a particularly fruitful structure for an examination of superiority vs. inferiority; expectation vs. incongruity; and the mechanical linguistic “deformity” encrusted upon a stereotyped Welsh character. Each theory does not clearly align with the texts and performances, but they can shed light on potential comedic effects and theatrical utility of each Welsh character presented onstage then and now. Bergson calls comedy a “social corrective,” an instructive prism through which we can effectively critique our surroundings.

As a practice, language play does have comic value, but it must be thoroughly grounded within ideology, just as language must. Bergson beautifully concludes “The Comic Element in Words” with the following sentiment:

Language only attains laughable results because it is a human product, modeled as exactly as possible on the forms of the human mind. We feel it contains some living element of our own life; and if this life of language were complete and perfect, if there were nothing stereotype in it, if, in short, language were an absolutely unified organism incapable of being split up into independent organisms, it would evade the comic as
would a soul whose life was one harmonious whole, unruffled as the calm surface of a peaceful lake.\textsuperscript{230}

The English vernacular emerging in London theatre is torn asunder through the perceived misuse of the language when appropriated by Others. The hegemonic language system is presented as impenetrable, whereas Welsh can be reduced to sounds and stylized gibberish. While the plays analyzed in this chapter selectively include the Welsh in the hegemonic society, the plays’ dialects reaffirm their role in the periphery. In the next chapter, I look at the ways in which Welsh women are theatrically written even further from the margins of London society.

\textsuperscript{230} Bergson (1911: 1956) 144.
Chapter Three

Linguistic Leaks of Female Welsh Alterity in Early Modern Drama

Shakespeare’s *Henry IV Part Two* concludes with an unexpected prose epilogue. The speech closes a pair of plays that includes very few female characters. The epilogue is a bit disjointed, then, since after a superficial apology for the preceding performance as a potentially “displeasing play,” Epilogue states, “And so I kneel down before you, but, indeed, to pray for the queen.” Only a few lines later, Epilogue returns to his rhetoric of apology as he appeals to the women of the audience: “All the gentlewomen here have forgiven me; if the gentlemen will not, then the gentlemen do not agree with the gentlewomen, which was never seen in such an assembly.” This nod to Elizabeth I paired with the late appeal to female spectators throws a relief onto to the female characters in Shakespeare’s second tetralogy. Phyllis Rackin explains, “The…patriarchal ideology that marginalized women in Shakespeare’s historical sources also excluded women from his company of actors, but the presence of women in the audience prevented their total erasure from the scene of theatrical performance.” Women are often read as marginal characters in the way that Wales is similarly a presence in the background of the second tetralogy, alluded to as a potentially unsettling space on the periphery of the “sceptered isle.” Such marginalization can be read in a broader sense outside of Shakespeare’s *Henry IV*

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Of course, this erasure from the theatrical realm applies distinctly to the commercial playhouse. It is likely that women took part in performance in alternative spaces like inns, civic markets, and country houses (Findlay, Hodgson-Wright, and Williams 2000).
plays when made manifest in the doubly Othered Welsh woman on the English stage. However, despite Rackin’s critique of the absent cis-female body onstage, the double theatricality of Welsh women in the following plays moves them from the margins to the center of the dramatic action.

This chapter will address three case studies of performative female Welshness as seen in Lady Mortimer from Shakespeare’s *Henry IV Part One*; the Welsh Gentlewoman from Middleton’s *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*; and Gwenthyan from Dekker’s *Patient Grissil*. Although these characters represent considerably different social classes, their staged use of the Welsh language suggests hypermarginalized performance of ‘atypical’ femininity marked by Welshness. Just as Shakespeare characterizes the untamable nature of Welsh fields and mountains in *Cymbeline*, these characters exhibit extreme theatrical qualities borne from their birthplace. Each of the women is marked by her ethnicity, which is made theatrically manifest in the actors’ bodies through speech. By constructing women as the physical embodiments of Wales in these three plays, male English characters try to dramatically tame and negotiate their anxieties about the border country and its citizens simultaneously with their anxieties about women. Kathryn Vomero Santos (re)conceptualizes the early modern notion of translation as “two prepositional states: ‘out of’ a foreign tongue and ‘into’ the host language” and notes the comic potential of suspending dramatic action between these two states. In the cases of the three female characters in this chapter, men onstage replace that suspended state with their translations of female Welsh speech linguistically and somatically. The Welsh women discussed in this chapter displace that suspended action between Santos’s ‘out of and into’ process of translation, making their bodies the site of translation instead. The process cyclically reinscribes

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234 Santos (2014) 63.
their gender and nationality into their bodies and reinforces Welsh female alterity, despite theatrical ruptures of female assertions of agency in the dramatized patriarchal spaces. In the playing space, the women’s language becomes the public affair around which the Englishmen rally to regulate.

*The Henriad* was written under the rule of Elizabeth I, a monarch who expertly manipulated her political persona with theatrical precision. Her most frequently analyzed speech about her own gender role play was her address to the English troops at Tilbury before the Spanish Armada was reported to invade the coast. Her address closes, “I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England, too.” Throughout her reign, the queen emphasized her power within the contemporary, conventionalized female framework, fluidly shifting through roles of matriarch, wife, or virgin. The “Virgin Queen” figuratively feminized the nation, consequently causing men to be constructed as sons of the Kingdom of England and “Englishmen became united in their common relationship to her feminized space, despite the difference in status among them.”

The public rhetoric of mother England then gestures back to medieval chivalric literature and led to an ideology of an English masculinity performed as protector of one’s motherland (among many other ‘ideal’ qualities). Despite the queen’s privileged position allowing her to performatively slide between ideological markers of gender in the sixteenth century, her female subjects were typically more strictly bound by the patriarchal society’s notions of gender.

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235 Vanhoutte (2003) 19
236 Hertel (2014) 196.
Throughout the sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries, the ancient Greek Galenic “one-sex” model of gender was still the most prevalently understood standard for categorization of the sexes. The single-sexed theory posits that men and women are biologically the same, however the hotter male body causes his body to have external genitalia as compared to the cooler, wetter female body, which keeps her genitals internal.\footnote{237} Therefore in early modern society, sex was a sociological category: “To be a man or woman was to hold a social rank, a place in society, to assume a cultural role, not to be organically one or the other of two incommensurable sexes.”\footnote{238} Thomas Laqueur likens the theory to “corporeal theatrics” as he explains the rhetoric around sex and gender in early modern London such that “the metaphorical and the corporeal are so bound up with one another that the difference between the two is really one of emphasis rather than kind.”\footnote{239} Naturally, the playhouse, already a center for carnivalesque gender play, became a locus to merge body and metaphor in mimesis to explore differences between genders.

The humours provided further understanding of the biological body in Galen’s model. In the contemporary understanding of the humours, four elements governed the body’s health and temperament: fire was represented by choler in the gall bladder; air by way of blood resided in the heart; water in the form of phlegm was located in the stomach or brain; and earth manifested itself as black bile or melancholy in the spleen.\footnote{240} While choler and blood were representative of

\footnote{237}{In contemporary portraits of the Virgin Queen, she is often shown holding a sieve that does not leak, inspired by the Vestal Virgin Tuccia. Paster (1987) 54.}
\footnote{238}{Laqueur (1990) 8.}
\footnote{239}{Ibid 190.}
\footnote{240}{Smith (2000) 13.}
masculinity and the “weaker” and wetter melancholy and phlegm were consigned to effeminacy, moderation of all elements was seen as ideal for both English masculine and feminine bodies. This can be linked to Gail Kern Paster’s concept of women’s bodies on the early modern stage (and more specifically city comedies) as “leaky vessels” that exhibit an excessive production of fluids.²⁴¹ In this discourse, Paster and, later Laura Gowing, link a lack of women’s bodily control and autonomy to the patriarchal ideology of containing and controlling them.

While there are multiple extant references to female incontinence on the stage (one instance in *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*), the leaky vessel epitomizes both literal and figurative images of the female body’s permeability. Bodily fluids such as breast milk, menstrual blood, tears, and the humoral fluids were all associated with the sixteenth century female body. Female virginity represents an enclosed vessel but “once maidenhead is lost, women’s boundaries are unsustainable, and men’s knowledge and self-control constitute both a telling contrast to the female body and a way of managing it.”²⁴² This can then be exported to speech as well. Peter Stallybrass points out, “Silence, the closed mouth, is made a sign of chastity. And silence and chastity are, in turn, homologous to woman’s enclosure within the house.”²⁴³ In each of the forthcoming examples of feminine Welshness, the Welsh language accompanied either by theatrics (tears, song, or an eruption of emotion – or all three) creates a rupture of the normative space causing male anxiety about the uncontainable female linguistic leak (or leek).

²⁴¹ Paster (1987) 44. Following Mikhail Bakhtin’s literary study of *Rabelais and His World* and Margrit Shildrick’s bioethical critique *Leaky Bodies and Boundaries*, Paster’s theory traces dramatic articulations of the “leaky” woman as the weaker sex.


²⁴³ Stallybrass (1986) 127.
These three exceptional characters are also presented as Laura Gowing’s classification of “common bodies.” Gowing describes the term as it applies to women in early modern England as follows:

Unchastity made a woman’s body free to one man but the property of none, and left it unguarded. Other women – lawful wives, virtuous single women – are protected and possessed; owned by one man, their bodies are private property. Except that they were not. The female body was a public affair, the target of official regulation, informal surveillance, and regular, intimate touch by women and men.²⁴⁴

Nominally, Lady Mortimer and Gwenthyan are wives theatrically navigating the limits of the men who possess them. On the other hand, the Welsh Gentlewoman in A Chaste Maid in Cheapside is prescribed a perceived “free” nature as a sex worker still sees her negotiating between her male English counterparts who discuss her sexual, marital, and personal value openly. All three characters are disrupting the discrete borders of their feminized bodies with the eruption of incomprehensible Welsh, which stokes the fire of early modern male anxieties.

Notions of gender on the early modern stage are particularly flexible as the understood sex of a character often depends solely on self-fashioning. Indeed, the entire plot of The Roaring Girl depends upon Moll Cutpurse’s surrounding characters’ tacit ability to accept her disguise as a man based entirely on her doublet. The sumptuary laws regulated apparel based on class, so the fluid nature of masking one’s identity in costume created anxiety throughout London, causing many anti-theatrical pamphleteers to rebuke the theatre for the perceived sinful nature of

cross-dressing. Contemporary polemicist Stephen Gosson writes the following in one such pamphlet:

The Law of God very straightly forbids men to put on women’s garments, garments are set downe for signes distinctive between sexe and sexe, to take unto us those garments that are manifest signes of another sexe, is to falsify, forge and adulterate, contrarie to the expresse rule of the words of God. Which forbiddeth it by threatening a curse unto the same.\(^{245}\)

Anti-theatrical prejudices often targeted drag performances of young men in woman’s clothing, but there were multiple dramatic and theatrical choices to consider when men were performing along a feminine spectrum. Bruce Smith points to gender in Shakespeare’s drama as “a matter of contingency, of circumstances, of performance”\(^{246}\) just as constructions of Englishness and Other symbiotically complete the process of nationalizing within a theatrical context. In *The Merchant of Venice*, for example, Portia and Jessica diverge in their processes of constructing femininity according to their social status and circumstances. This can be applied to markedly gendered Welsh characters as well. Lady Mortimer, the Welsh Gentlewoman, and Gwenthyan all speak their mother tongue onstage actively nationalizing themselves against hegemonic English characters.

\(^{245}\) Gosson (1582) Third action.

In 1817 playwright Elizabeth Inchbald famously wrote that *Henry IV Part One* is “a play which all men admire and most women dislike.”⁴⁷ Although her critique is generalizing, her slight is not entirely unfounded. Shakespeare follows Henry Bolingbroke to his reign as Henry IV and his contentious relationship with the carousing heir Prince of Wales, Hal. The main action of *Henry IV Part One* revolves around the king and his council; Prince Hal and his antics with Falstaff in an Eastcheap tavern; and an assembly of English and Welsh rebels led by the impetuous Hotspur. The plays are dominated by plots of patrilineal succession, soldiers, and male-dominated politics, but within this narrative lies the most potent example of the intersection of female marginality and Welshness in Shakespeare’s works. The dearth of women’s history recorded in medieval and early modern historical accounts necessitates that many representations of female characters in history plays are creative manifestations of the playwright’s mind.

There are no female characters at King Henry IV’s court. The only references to the queen occur in the Eastcheap tavern, one of the only two spaces women are found to inhabit in these plays. When Prince Hal is deep in his improvised play, Mistress Quickly enters to tell him of a messenger. His response is simply, “Give him as much as will make him a royal man and send him back again to my mother.”⁴⁸ Whether referring to Henry IV’s first wife and his mother, Mary Bohun, or his stepmother, the queen, Joan of Navarre, Hal mentions her only in passing in her role as mother, diminishing her royal status. Indeed, in this instance, Hal quips to give the messenger enough money to make him a “royal man,” therefore raising the messenger to the status his mother holds. In fact, Jean Howard and Phyllis Rackin point to *Henry IV Part One*

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as Shakespeare’s play with the fewest lines assigned to female roles with three characters who total only 4 percent of the dialogue.\(^{249}\) This calculation is based only on extant written dialogue, however. Lady Mortimer’s single appearance onstage offers an interruption to the otherwise quantifiable assessment of female dialogue and the normative English, male-dominated world of *Henry IV Part One*. Despite the limited appearance of female figures in the text, the characters’ short times onstage are often notable for their novelty and dramatic variety.

Any reading of Lady Mortimer’s status in the play must be within the context of the very first mention of Welsh women in the play. In the opening scene, the King asks Westmorland for an expositional report about civil war battles. Henry IV conceives of England as a feminized country, stating, “No more the thirsty entrance of this soil/Shall daub her lips with her own children’s blood;/No more shall trenching war channel her fields,/Nor bruise her flowerets with the armed hooves/Of hostile paces.”\(^{250}\) Westmorland’s reply addresses action in the Marches:

> My liege, this haste was hot in question, 
> And many limits of the charge set down 
> But yesternight, when all athwart there came 
> A post from Wales, loaden with heavy news, 
> Whose worst was that the noble Mortimer, 
> Leading the men of Herefordshire to fight 
> Against the irregular and wild Glendower, 
> Was by the rude hands of that Welshman taken, 
> A thousand of his people butchered, 
> Upon whose dead corpse there was such misuse 
> Such beastly shameless transformation, 
> By those Welshwomen done, as may not be 
> Without much shame retold or spoken of.\(^{251}\)

\(^{249}\) Howard and Rackin (1997) 23.  
\(^{250}\) 1.1.5-9.  
\(^{251}\) 1.1.34-46.
This speech anticipates the “irregular and wild” Glendower, but the final four lines allude to a graphic passage in *Holinshed’s Chronicle*. The chronicle recounts an act of “shameful villanie” that Welsh women reportedly implemented against dead English soldiers on Welsh soil. Westmorland follows Shakespeare’s source here, which can be seen when Holinshed tries to evade revealing the gruesome details and instead writes that the event “was such as honest eares would be ashamed to heare, and continent toongs to speake thereof.” It is significant that Holinshed tries to keep the details secret from “continent toongs,” the implication that the grisly detail would be trumpeted forth.

However, Holinshed later deems it acceptable to relate the brutal imagery in his “mother toong.” The account describes how Welsh women “cut off [the soldiers’] privities and put one part thereof into the mouths of every dead man, in such sort that cullions hoong downe to their chins; and not so contented, they did cut off their noses and thrust them into their tailes as they laie on the ground mangled and defaced.” The “beastly shameless transformation” is a thorough emasculation of English soldiers, a gruesome act of ridicule against the soldier’s failed masculinity in battle. This is about as ruthless an introduction to Wales as possible. Especially because it is fortified by historical legend, Welsh women are framed as barbaric from the start. Yet Shakespeare subverts this imagery when the audience is transported to the physical site of the mythologized malicious activity as he presents a multifaceted performance of female Welshness.

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253 Ibid 3.528.

Act Three Scene One transports the action to Wales. The scene shows grandiloquent Glendower and rebels Hotspur and Mortimer examining a map of England and Wales to divide their “right/According to [their] threefold order ta’en.” While Holinshed places such a meeting in Bangor at the Archdeacon’s house, Shakespeare dramatizes the meeting at Glendower’s home, crafting this as one of the few domestic scenes in the play. Therefore, the only representation of Lady Mortimer shows her enclosed in her father’s domicile. Glendower and Hotspur bicker over land boundaries, while Mortimer tries to keep the peace between his Welsh father-in-law and the quarrelsome Northerner. However, when he introduces his daughter to the stage, the linguistic space is unfastened and Lady Mortimer’s mother tongue replaces the map as the object of the English characters’ parsing.

Shakespeare’s dramaturgy implicitly sets up a binary between the English and Welsh performances of femininity by having Kate Percy enter at the same time as Lady Mortimer. Unlike her father who “was trained up in the English court,” Lady Mortimer speaks only Welsh. As a substitute for any lines, the first quarto and all subsequent publications replace her dialogue with the four following stage directions:

Glendower speaks to her in Welsh and she answers him in the same. (3.1.193)
The Lady again in Welsh. (3.1.199)
The Lady speaks again in Welsh. (3.1.207)
Here the Lady sings a Welsh song. (3.1.240)

255 3.1.68-9.
256 Hotspur, a character that is “governed by his spleen,” and Glendower, a conventionally bombastic stage Welshman, are a naturally conflicting pair.
257 3.1.119.
This is the only case in any of Shakespeare’s works where a foreign tongue is not recorded and substituted with a stage direction. The vague blueprint left in the place of Lady Mortimer’s dialogue gives rise to a variety of questions regarding original performance practices and the significance of her dislocated voice on stage. In the context of the play, Welsh is the language of the monarch’s enemy, but Shakespeare frames the language as an instrument of love, beauty and mourning.\textsuperscript{258} The scene has no historical precedent and Lady Mortimer does not specifically further the plot, yet from her entrance to the end of the scene, her very incomprehensibility and excessive emotion takes focus and demands our attention.

Welsh is codified as grandiose speech in the play up to this moment. In the lines leading to the women’s entrance, Glendower pompously brags about his power by claiming,

\begin{quote}
...Give me leave
To tell you once again that at my birth
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
The goats ran from the mountains, and the herds
Were strangely clamorous to the frightened fields.\textsuperscript{259}
\end{quote}

Hotspur quips back, “I think there’s no man speaks better Welsh,” to elide Glendower’s mystical bravado with Welsh nonsense. Not a hundred lines later, while the men quarrel about their division of the kingdom, Hotspur again teases Glendower: “Let me not understand you, then; speak it in Welsh.” When Lady Mortimer enters, before she even speaks, Mortimer laments, “This is the deadly spite that angers me:/My wife can speak no English, I no Welsh,” which assigns him as interlocutor for the non-Welsh speaking spectators. Glendower responds, “My

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{258} Howard and Rackin (1997) 172.
\item \textsuperscript{259} Shakespeare 3.1.33-37.
\end{itemize}
daughter weeps. She’ll not part with you./She’ll be a soldier too, she’ll to the wars.”

The Lady’s tears – a leak in her body – accompany the spring of incomprehensibility of her language, which provokes the English-speaking players onstage to attempt to contain her bodily outbursts. This exchange sets the mechanics for the rest of the scene: Mortimer reinforces the incomprehensibility of Welsh words, while Glendower – historically the last Welshman to claim the title Prince of Wales – translates her language.

While some literary critics have noted the mystical power Shakespeare instills in his invented Glendower, none have pointed to the character’s tacit corroboration of his own Anglicization through his interaction with his daughter. Glendower’s reading of his own daughter here follows, “She is desperate here, a peevish self-willed harlotry./One that no persuasion can do good upon.” This misogynistic criticism in the text calls for Glendower to consistently undermine his daughter’s speech in translation. Indeed, he renders her masculine request to join her husband in the wars to “self-willed harlotry,” a punishing reading of anomalous femininity reasonable to an Elizabethan audience. Mortimer’s reading of his wife similarly challenges her requests as he teaches the English-speaking audience how to interpret her Welsh: through her body.

Phyllis Rackin refers to Lady Mortimer’s speech simply as “meaningless sounds” to the men onstage with her. Of course, the sixteenth century actor may have reinforced this reading with a poorly imitative Welsh language, but if authentic or approximate Welsh were spoken, the

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260 3.1.48; 3.1.117; 3.1.190-1.
261 3.1.196-7.
audience may have been divided between understanding her dialogue, and waiting for translation. Shakespeare helps bridge this divide by mobilizing practical theatricality within the mediation of her “alien” sounds. Mortimer’s first response to his wife in the text is, “I understand thy looks. That pretty Welsh/Which thou pourest down from these swelling heavens/I am too perfect in, and but for shame/In such a parley should I answer thee.” This poetic metaphor, which likens her eyes to her heavens and her tears to her language, illustrates how inherently theatrical the communication must be between those who cannot understand one another’s language. However, Mortimer’s speech here is also a shadow of Hotspur’s previous jibe to Glendower that his boastfulness is his Welsh. Here Lady Mortimer’s Welsh is metonymic for the sixteenth century conceit of conventionally female overabundance of emotion embodied by tears. The rest of Mortimer’s speech here follows:

I understand thy kisses, and thou mine,
And that’s a feeling disputation,
But I will never be a truant, love,
Till I have learn’d thy language, for thy tongue
Makes Welsh as sweet as ditties highly penn’d,
Sung by a fair queen in summer’s bow’r
With ravishing division, to her lute.  

Mortimer renders Welsh as analogous to music – her language is feminized as a sweet ditty accompanied by the lute.

This passage is critical to recognize the gravity of the political significance of this marriage. As Howard and Rackin note, this scene mirrors Katherine’s language lesson in *Henry*...
Lady Mortimer’s Welsh is similarly only readable in and through her body. *Henry V* shows Katherine anatomizing and translating her body into English by learning the English words for “hand,” “finger,” and “arm” among others. The repetition of her bodily language lesson also actively rewrites the male actor’s body as feminine, calling specific attention to the boy actor’s own hand, finger, and so forth. In the final scene, wherein the King attempts to woo the princess in French, Karen Newman suggests he “systematically denies Katherine’s difference and fashions her into an English wife…refashioning the other as the same.”

*Henry IV Part One* inverts this dynamic because it is Mortimer in this instance who is declaring his desire to conform to his wife’s native language, while simultaneously refocusing the attention to her uncontainable body. This construct is distinctly different from the Welsh scene, since Katherine and Harry switch into one another’s language, attempting to communicate in dialogue. Marjorie Rubright points to what she calls Katherine’s “presumptive monolingualism” which typically leads to scholarship about the content of the translation between Harry and Katherine, rather than the significance of the hermeneutics therein.

Unfortunately, because Lady Mortimer’s lines are effaced from record, there is less room to assert the function of the translation scene here. To non-Welsh speakers, her dialogue rests in the suspended moment between translation out of Welsh and into English, a moment that is only read through theatricality.

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The use of Welsh aurally reminds the audience that, despite the agreement signed by the three rebels moments earlier, England and Wales are not in political harmony. The rebellion being staged in *Henry IV Part One* – if successful – would place Mortimer on the throne as Richard II’s chosen heir and, therefore, part of the kingdom would have a Welsh queen. Of course, a sixteenth-century London spectator would most likely be aware of the rebellion’s failure, yet Lady Mortimer’s monolingualism is a dual symbol of her resistance to submit to her English male counterparts as much as it is a blatant marker of the seductive mystery found beyond the Severn. In Glendower’s final translation on behalf of his daughter, he relates that Lady Mortimer wants to sing a Welsh song to her husband before he goes to the wars: “She bids you on the wanton rushes lay you down/And rest your gentle head upon her lap./And she will sing the song that pleaseth you/And on your eyelids crown the god of sleep.” The translation is fundamentally sexual, inviting the audience to objectify the character as she sings. Glendower continues, “And those musicians that shall play to you/Hang in the air a thousand leagues from hence,/And straight they shall be here: sit, and attend.” The Lady’s song – again not printed – is a dramatically powerful moment in which she is assigned an extralinguistic mode of expression. The shift from speech to song crystallizes Lady Mortimer as the center of attention and suspends the action to force the other players onstage to become audience. Yet, at the same time, this isolation heightens audience awareness of the woman’s own difference which forces her communication into a medium which emphasizes her linguistic exclusion. Glendower’s

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268 3.1.208-211.  
269 3.1.219-221.  
introduction of the song infuses her performance with Welsh mysticism. Hotspur twists Glendower’s boast into his own fodder after the stage direction “The music plays,” as he jokes, “Now I perceive the devil understands Welsh, and ‘tis no wonder he is so humorous” as if Glendower has called upon the spirits to play. Still, although Lady Mortimer is rendered exotic songstress, this coda temporarily privileges what has been repeated time and again as unseemly, un-English femininity.

Hotspur and Kate act as a relief to the sentimental Mortimers, their wordplay an enhanced sexual model of the Welsh lady and her struggling husband. Before the song begins, Kate tells her husband, “Lie still, ye thief, and hear the Lady sing in Welsh,” to which he responds, “I had rather hear Lady, my brach, howl in Irish.” Their physically playful relationship and mutual mockery of the action before them gestures to the English ideal of feminine fortitude to support a husband’s military ambitions. While the Mortimers are the only example of sentimental romantic love in the play, as deciphered from the Percy’s English perspective, this could be easily tied to Mortimer’s downfall. The Welsh Lady embodies and exudes a dangerous femininity that saps Mortimer’s will to the wars. Indeed, the scene closes in on Mortimer’s hesitation to leave upon hearing the song. Howard and Rackin contend, “Shakespeare’s Wales is inscribed in the same register that defined the dangerous power of women.” Mortimer is not even shown onstage during the battle sequence. However, the

272 3.1.231-2. Jean E. Howard notes that this quip points to the possibility of Wales as a displaced image of contemporary Ireland and Tyrone’s rebellion (597).
274 Ibid 168.
bantering Percys solidify the characterization of unsentimental Englishness. This is one of Hotspur’s least sympathetic moments. Still, while audiences can empathize with the grieving Welsh woman, they can also become complicit with Hotspur’s commentary on her stage appearance through comic relief.

Lady Mortimer’s inclusion in *Henry IV Part One* is noteworthy as it highlights the homogeneity of the otherwise male Anglocentric chronicle of the Lancastrian dynastic struggle. Lady Mortimer’s onstage moment shows her resisting English, and, by the end of the scene, flooding the playhouse in a Welsh song, dramatically enveloping the audience within her alterity. The Welsh language and song leak from Lady Mortimer’s body blurring any clear lines of translatability and her ability to be domesticated by those who share her stage. With the Welsh text effaced, Lady Mortimer’s absence from the textual archive also encapsulates a broader issue of the Welsh being represented solely from an English perspective on the early modern stage even in this one case in which an authentic Welsh voice may have had the opportunity to take center stage. While Hotspur comments on Lady Mortimer’s speech for comic relief, it is quite clear, even with missing text, that her enigmatic monoligualism fractures the character into a multifaceted stage presence. Mortimer and Hotspur relegate the character to divergent forms of objectified exoticism and sexuality while again Mortimer and Glendower both condemn her as an overemotional woman. For the men, Lady Mortimer’s Welsh language is symptomatic of her untamable foreignness, however the force with which she continues in Welsh asserts a form of agency by indicating a real limit of English colonization.

Years later, Thomas Middleton’s 1613 comedy *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* offers a carnivalesque version of a Welsh woman. Lady Elizabeth’s Men first performed the play at the Swan Theatre, with a cast that may have been bolstered by the Queen’s Revels boys to help with
the numerous female roles. While Middleton does provide text for eighteen female roles, the play is steeped in the sexual economy of London, wherein male characters fail to regulate the actions and bodies of those women. *A Chaste Maid* follows various interconnected couples and their bawdy sexual exploits; not surprisingly Paster’s “leaky vessel” critique also springs from this play. The city comedy is affectionately satirical celebration of the passageways of London and of the female bodies who inhabit the capital. Imagery of water and fluids permeate the play. Act Three includes a scene that foregrounds female overabundance of fluid as a group of five female gossips wet themselves onstage and chase the foolish Tim to plant sloppy kisses on him. Puritans preach about the “wellspring of discipline that waters all the brethren” while there are many references to the channel in Cheapside called the “Pissing Conduit.” Not one to demur from vulgar imagery or farcical schemes, Middleton repeatedly presents scenes and images of the permeable female body as a focal point of the play.

*A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* opens with Maudline Yellowhammer in a shop admonishing her daughter for not finding a husband. “You are a dull maid o’ late; methinks you had need have somewhat to quicken your/green sickness. Do you weep? A husband.” The first stage image shows Moll weeping because of her virginity, and one of many plots follows the young woman in her overtly sexualized quest to find a man to cure her of the “green sickness.” Cheapside, the market district of London, frames the sexual and marital goals of the characters to equate the sale of goods with the sale of women. Indeed, Moll’s parents, the Yellowhammers, are most

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277 1.1.4-6.
concerned with Moll’s dowry, telling her she deserves “two thousand pound in lead to [her] marriage./And not in goldsmith’s ware.” The supposed Welsh Gentlewoman is a parody of the actually chaste (and chased) young woman, Moll. Her dowry of two thousand pounds translated to “two thousand runts.” The aptly named Sir Walter Whorehound takes the Welsh Gentlewoman from North Wales to use her as a bargaining chip in his courtship of Moll implying that her body, once opened for business, becomes public property.

The Yellowhammers have promised Moll to Sir Walter in exchange for his help in finding a suitable wife for their son, Tim, a typically witless university scholar. In anticipation of Sir Walter’s entrance, Yellowhammer relates that he has just seen the man with Tim’s intended in tow. He describes her, as “A proper fair young gentlewoman, which I guess/By her red hair and other rank descriptions/To be his landed niece brought out of Wales./Which Tim our son, the Cambridge boy, must marry” There are no traces of conventionalized physical traits of the stage Welsh, but the fiery red hair was suggestive of sexual looseness meant as an in-joke to the audience about her true character. The woman’s identity is crystallized in the name given in the dramatis personae, as she is simply known as “Welsh Gentlewoman.” The character is never named for she is concisely definable by her dramaturgical function and true background as a sex worker. Jean Howard describes how city comedies “all in some way negotiate the presence of

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278 1.120-1.
279 4.1.194.
280 1.1.41-44.
281 Woodbridge fn42.
non-native Londoners and non-native commodities within the space of the city.”

In this instance, the Welsh Gentlewoman is both the non-native Londoner and the commodity that is being introduced into the seedy underbelly of Cheapside. Her only countryman in the play, Davy Dahumma, named phonetically for the Welsh phrase “dewch yma,” which means “come hither,” is a go-between for Sir Walter’s sexual exploits and economic opportunism. Davy is afforded much more autonomy than his female counterpart as a male denizen.

Upon the trio’s first entrance, Sir Walter Whorehound says, “Now, wench, thou art welcome/To the heart of the city of London” she replies, “Duw cato whee,” phonetic Welsh for “God be with you.” He chastises her for using her native tongue and says, “You can thank me in English, if you list.” Her English is recorded without any hint of conventionalized dialect or broken English, as she replies, “I can, sir, simply.” Her Anglicization is akin to a sexually transmitted disease here as Sir Walter replies,

Twill serve to pass, wench;
’Twas strange that I should lie with thee so often
To leave thee without English; that were unnatural.
I bring thee up to turn thee into gold, wench,
And make fortune shine bright like your trade…

Sir Walter indicates that he has turned her to gold by thoroughly Englishing her. He sets the scheme for her to “pass for a pure virgin” even though “she lost her maidenhead in

283 Woodbridge footnote 1.100.3
284 The proper Welsh spelling is “Duw gyda chi,” but the phonetic rendering is a close approximation of the pronunciation.
285 1.1.101-103.
286 1.1.104-108.
Brecknockshire,” but he believes the only way she can pass as virtuous is by keeping silent.\footnote{1.1.113-14.} The connection he makes between language and chastity is clear: if she speaks in her mother tongue, the citizens of Cheapside will read her as unchaste. Obeying Sir Walter’s command, the Welsh woman remains onstage as he boasts to Yellowhammer that she is “heir to nineteen mountains” and as Touchwood Junior looks on he likens her to a “ewe-mutton.”\footnote{1.1136; 144.} This phrase echoes a scene from Peele’s \textit{Edward I} performed almost 40 years before \textit{A Chaste Maid in Cheapside}. In a short scene in \textit{Edward I}, the Friar has a moment alone with a Welsh woman named Guenthian that follows:

\begin{quote}
Friar Hugh: Wench to passe away the time in glee,  
Guenthian set downe by me,  
And let our lips and voices meete,  
In a merrie country songe.

Guenthian: Friar I am at beck and baye,  
And at thy commaundement to sing and say,  
\end{quote}

Lluellen interrupts the “other sports” to ask: “If mutton be your first dish, what shall be your last service?”\footnote{Ibid 410.} In both cases, these women’s bodies are graphically objectified and grafted onto the image of the Welsh animals, as wild and untamed. Just as Lady Mortimer’s language is inscribed into her boundless body, the Welsh Gentlewoman’s silent, closed body provides a cipher of exotic, but untouched, sexuality. Despite her fluency in both English and Welsh, Yellowhammer and Touchwood Junior dissect her value through her association with Wales.
While the Welsh Gentlewoman is a pawn in the play of sexual capital throughout a performance, she does not enter again until the first scene of the fourth act. The scene opens on a lengthy affected Latin conversation between Tim and his tutor, the content of which leads to the syllogism that they are fools because they are man (a point that has already been made numerous times in the comedy). However, as the two are “reasoning about a fool” Tim asks Maudline how she defines a fool and her response, “Why, one that’s married before he has wit.” Middleton’s long punch line to this set up comes in the form of a medley of languages that overwhelm Tim as he tries to court the Welsh woman moments later. The scene is stage managed by his mother as she withdraws with the Tutor and locks the “North-Wales gentlewoman” in a bedchamber with the thoughtless scholar. As the Welsh Gentlewoman penetrates his space, Tim reflects, “’tis boldly done of her/To come into my chamber, being but a stranger.”

Much like the in Henry IV Part One, the burden of incommunicability is placed on the Englishman who is unable to have a conversation with his female counterpart. Indeed, in these plays, barriers in communication are filtered through a male lens. This burden is what often forces the English men to translate female Welshness within and through their bodies, or through other linguistic means. In the distorted mirror image of Lady Mortimer and Mortimer, A Chaste Maid in Cheapside shows Tim trying to speak to the woman in Latin:

Tim: *Salve tu quoque, puella pulcherrima; quid vis nescio nec san curo*, -- Tully’s own phrase to a heart!

Welsh Woman: *[Aside]: I know not what he means: a suitor quoth a?/ I’ll hold my life he

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291 4.1.32-33.
292 4.1.103-104.
understands no English.

Tim: *Fertur, me hercule, tu virgo, Wallia ut opibus abundus maximus.*

The translations of his Latin are, “Save you too, most beautiful woman; what you want I do not know, nor truly do I care” followed by “It’s said, maiden, by Hercules, that you’ve great riches in Wales.” While his dismissal of the lady’s intentions is obviously a laugh line – an opportunity to balk at his incompetence in wooing and in Latin – it also underlines the fact she is merely acting as a minor player in the sexual game put in motion by her English proprietor. Tim’s primary interest in the woman as a rumored heiress emphasizes her function as a commodity. Unable to work with the Latin spoken to her, the character searches for English homophones as she asks the audience, “What’s this *fertur* and *abundundis*? He mocks me sure, and calls me a bundle of farts,” a clear example of macaronic wordplay.

With no Glendower to translate between the two, Middleton ekes comedy out of homophones and malapropisms. The cycle continues, and the fool tries again to win the Welsh woman’s affections with a rambling Latin passage. He addresses her supposed dowry in this English translation of his speech, “Again, I say, you abound in great riches, in mountains and fountains and, as I may call them, in ‘runts’ (using an invented word ‘rontibus’); yet truly, I am a little man by nature and at the same time a bachelor by training, really not prepared for the marriage bed.” Even in the same speech as he admits to being a sexual amateur, he speaks of

293 Woodbridge footnote 4.1.103-113.
294 Woodbridge footnote 4.1.107-113
296 Woodbridge footnote 4.1.118-121.
her Welsh mountains and sexual source of fountains as woven within her economic value. She replies in (phonetic) Welsh, “A fedrwch chwi Cymraeg? Er duw, cog fo gennyf?” which translates to “Do you speak Welsh? By God, is he pretending with me?” Tim tries the same tactic as his scene partner, making sexual puns with the English homophones he hears in her foreign tongue: “Cog foggin? I’ll cog with her; I’ll tell her so too in a word near her own language: Ego non cogo,” which is translated as “I won’t come together with you.”

Again, she answers in Welsh, musing on cheese and whey, as her conversation drifts to the reductive Welsh traits of dramatic convention. Again, like Mortimer, Tim celebrates his paramour’s linguistic road block and assumes that his intended bride must be a “good scholar” since she “has the tongues plain.”

Maudline interrupts the reluctant courtship and reveals that the Welsh woman can indeed speak English and directs her son to kiss his intended. Tim exclaims, “O, delicious! One may discover her country by her kissing; ‘tis a true saying: ‘There’s nothing tastes as sweet as your Welsh mutton.’” In parallel with Sir Walter’s Englishing-by-intercourse, again Middleton gestures towards communicable nationality and linguistic skill, however, it is the Welsh Gentlewoman who switches permanently to English from this point in the play. Tim then puns further upon calling her mutton by suggesting, “It was reported you could sing.” The prompt to sing again works doubly as a nod to the Welsh tradition of singing and as a pun for sex, since

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297 4.1.124-125.
298 4.1.129-130.
299 4.1.141.
300 4.1.161.
“to ‘sing’ was to copulate.” Following the shape of the Welsh scene in *1 Henry IV*, the Welsh woman figuratively (and perhaps physically) takes center stage to perform her refrain. The first printing of the play from 1630 includes the stage direction “*Musicke and a Welch Song*” followed by the text for the bawdy song “Cupid is Venus’ only joy.” Tiffany Stern contends that the point of such a song, if one was indeed included in the original Jacobean performances, is simply to further demonstrate the woman’s Welshness. She writes, “He may have decided to rid his original play of an obscure Welsh lyric, because the joke of an inexplicable song was of necessity unrevealing of anything beyond itself.” However, a Welsh tune here would also be the woman’s swan song in her mother tongue, one last public sounding of her nationality.

A Welsh song could also further reinforce and remind an audience of Shakespeare’s dramaturgy for Lady Mortimer. However, the extant 1630 text explicitly eroticizes the action in English. Just as Lady Mortimer begs her beloved to lie on the wanton rushes to listen to her song, the Welsh Gentlewoman’s verse relates the following tale:

```plaintext
Cupid is Venus’ only joy,
    But he is a wanton boy
A very, very wanton boy;
    He shoots at ladies’ naked breasts,
He is the cause of most men’s crests,
    I mean upon the forehead,
Invisible but horrid;
    ‘Twas he first taught upon the way
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301 Woodbridge footnote 4.1.161
302 “Cupid is Venus’ only joy” was not an original song for *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*. Middleton used the song in his 1614 play More Dissemblers and the similarly titled “Cupid is an ideal toy” appears in the now lost Masque of Cupids from 1613. Stern (2012) 72.
To keep a lady’s lips in play.\(^{304}\)

Shot by Cupid’s arrow, or rather manipulated by the Sir Walter and his economic ambitions, the lady’s lips speak only English after the song.\(^{305}\) The 1630 print uses Shakespeare’s blueprint for the Welsh love scene but makes even more plain the sexuality that is bubbling beneath the surface at Glendower’s home. Although we do not know what occurred in original performance, this English translation makes the Gentlewoman’s wild Welsh sexuality explicit. Within the confines of an English song, the Welsh Gentlewoman is doubly speaking her English counterparts’ language: not only English, but blatant bawdy imagery. However, if this song is used in performance, this marks a moment of transformation wherein the Welsh Gentlewoman is tamed and Englished, a foreshadowing of the character’s domestication for the rest of the play.

Lady Mortimer’s Welsh song transgresses the normative aural space, but the Welsh Gentlewoman’s song indicates her incorporation into English society. At the close of *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, the Welsh Gentlewoman’s identity is exposed but Tim resigns himself to “prove/a whore an honest woman” and she replies, “There’s a thing called marriage, and that makes me honest.”\(^{306}\) Although the Welsh Gentlewoman begins as a threat to the English men in the play as an unmanageable foreign sex worker, her ability to pass as a virtuous, English-speaking woman advances her position (in sixteenth century terms) to that of an English wife. The play’s consistently ironic tone shows that such a life is riddled with extramarital affairs and

\(^{304}\) 4.1.167–175.

\(^{305}\) Although Tim is the wanton boy who leaks (“shoots”) at the sight of naked breasts. Like Mortimer, he is feminized by association.

\(^{306}\) 5.4.102; 111.
unwanted children. However, the woman’s incorporation into Cheapside shows that her Welsh body and nature can be muzzled and manipulated into a picture of Englishness.

*Patient Grissil*, written in collaboration by Thomas Dekker, Henry Chettle, and William Haughton offers a similar transformation from brash, disobedient female Welsh character to a champion of marriage. Written in 1599, about two years after *Henry IV Part One*, the play includes the most recorded Welsh dialogue in any extant early modern play, much of it by the obstreperous Welsh widow Gwenthyan. The play is a dramatic treatment of the Griselda story, a folktale first published in Boccaccio’s *Decameron* in 1353 and the myth became hugely popular in England. Chaucer includes the narrative in “The Clerk’s Tale” in *The Canterbury Tales* and there are five records in the Stationers’ Register that mention Griselda in the 1560s. The plot inspired by the titular Grissil follows Gwalter, the Marquess of Salucia, as he marries the young peasant girl and then puts her through several dreadful trials to test her resolve with an added benefit of simultaneously testing his ingratiating courtiers. In this iteration of the tale, Dekker, Chettle, and Haughton widen the net to include two original plots to provide alternative views on marriage. The first focuses on three suitors as they pursue the Marquess’ sister Julia who has sworn off marriage, a narrative that is quite reminiscent of Haughton’s *Englishmen for My Money*. The second, wholly comic, plot is based around the tumultuous courtship and marriage of Gwalter’s cousin Gwenthyan and the Welsh knight Sir Owen ap Meredith, a relationship that reads like a Welsh recapitulation of Katherina and Petruchio. The Welsh plot of *Patient Grissil* sheds relief on Gwalter and Grissil, as it is Gwenthyan who puts Owen through a series of obstacles to prove his loyalty to her. However, Gwenthyan’s tactic for testing her husband is to

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act ‘stereotypically Welsh’ by acting wildly in opposition to Owen’s wishes, which is manifested theatrically most through her Welsh speech.

Although the action takes place in Lombardy, the Italian-cum-English setting includes Owen and Gwenthyan as the outsiders. Allison Outland calls the couple a “surprisingly sane corrective to the main characters’ ‘model’ marriage while their ethnic identity keeps them safely bracketed ‘beyond the pale.’”308 Although the Welsh couple begin the play with tempestuous arguments and overabundant performative emotions, they prove to be just as ‘worthy’ of their joyful ending as the protagonists. While Gwenthyan’s insistence to be a self-governing wife may register as a feminist inversion of the Grissil and Gwalter relationship to a 21st century audience, her name is bandied about simply as shrew that must be tamed. Much like for Gwalter, Gwenthyan’s disobedience is revealed to be a test of her husband’s devotion. However, the Welsh widow’s intentions are not explicitly stated at the start so the audience spends the entirety of the play watching as Sir Owen attempts to take control of his dominant wife. Gwenthyan’s antics are doubly mischievous in their original sixteenth century context, since “Widows shared many experiences with other female adults who were without men: they were more likely to be poor, to be objects of suspicion, and were under pressure to live under male governance.”309 Gwenthyan rejects this pressure, however Gwalter’s Sisyphean efforts to govern the widow are theatricalized with the rhetoric and stage props representative of violent enclosure: he speaks frequently about bridling the woman (with double meaning here for “bridle” and “bridal”); hanging Gwenthyan with a noose; and they share a scene that revolves entirely around a rebato,

308 Outland (2011) 302.
a lace collar which was “stiffened so as to stand up around the back of the neck.”

Rice (an Anglicized and phonetic rendering of Rhys) is the first nationalized Welsh character introduced in the play. The embodiment of the wily servant type, Rice is Sir Owen’s man who uses short Welsh phrases but his speech is otherwise recorded in the same manner of English as the other players. Sir Owen and Gwenthyan, however, both speak in the conventionalized theatrical Welsh dialect. This speech pattern semantically feminizes the speaker since one of the most repeated speech tags is the pronoun “her” as a way for the nationalized Welsh character to refer to oneself. Rice’s first task is mainly expositional to inform the audience of the initial conflict for Gwenthyan’s hand between his master and a foppish English visitor. Much like the Sir Hugh and Caius pairing in *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Sir Owen has a clownish enemy in Emulo, a man who “reade[s] no booke but a looking glass” and uses “fustian outlandish phrases” to set up a linguistic battle with the Welshman. Emulo challenges Sir Owen to a duel that is reduced to linguistic fencing, again much like Sir Hugh and Caius:

Emulo: Not so tempestuous sweet knight: though to my disconsolation, I will oblivionize my love to the welch widdowe, and doe heere proclaime my deliquishment, but sweet Signior be not to Diogenicall with me.

Sir Owen: Ha ha is knowe not what genicalls meane, but Sir Owen will genicall her, and tag her genicalling Gwenthyan.

The Italian prototype of an Englishman is practically the inkhorn controversy embodied; his

312 2.1.111-16.
dialogue is a smattering of neologisms and pretentious malapropisms. However, Sir Owen’s misunderstanding solidifies the Welsh woman to a homophonic play on “genitals” before she even enters the stage. Homonyms of English-sounding foreign words is exploited again for Sir Owen and Gwenthyan’s substantial passages of phonetically written Welsh.

Sir Owen immediately switches to Welsh upon Gwenthyan’s entrance. He asks, “Belly the ruddo whee: wrage witho, Manda gen y Mon du ac whelloch en wea awh” which is a phonetic rendering of “Ble ‘roeddech chwi, wraig weddow? Mae’n dda gen i, myn Duw, eich gweld chwi yn wir iawn.” (“Where were you, widow woman? I’m glad, by God, to see you indeed.”)³¹³ It is unknown who provided the Welsh text, yet whether it was one of the playwrights or a Welsh-speaking player, the text provides an adept balance between authentic Welsh content with plentiful opportunities for punning in English.³¹⁴ Philip Schwyzer characterizes the nature of the play’s Welsh:

“Although these passages might be fully intelligible only to a small portion of the London audience, they were also calculated to flatter and amuse the larger body of English speakers. Even if some of the more grotesque errors in the play’s Welsh can be laid at the door of the scribe or compositor, there is clearly an intention to make comic hay of the language, for instance by making the Welsh words sound like English terms for body parts.”³¹⁵

³¹³ Hoy (1980) 158.
³¹⁴ While Dekker uses minimal Welsh in Satiromastix and Northward Ho, the scenes between Gwenthyan and Sir Owen reflect a writer with a deeper understanding of the language than he displays in the other plays.
³¹⁵ Schwyzer (2014) 49.
This kind of anatomy via homophone is a familiar trope, but it is also a bold use of the convention since the passages stray from the normative quick phrases. Still, the comedy is never dependent upon the content of the Welsh language, but instead on the ‘incomprehensible’ sounds of her speech. Indeed, the perceived discord of her language spills over into her other overtly theatrical characteristics.

The Welsh widow’s reply to Sir Owen’s greeting translates, “Sir Owen, many thanks. Gwenthyan, she is glad to see you content in the same way”\textsuperscript{316} Even though Sir Owen begins the linguistic shift to the characters’ native tongue, Farneze implores, “oh my good widow gabble that we may understand you, \textit{and have at you}” which marks her language as the only barrier between her body and the men who surround her.\textsuperscript{317} Farneze implies that Gwenthyan must switch to an English register before her body can become a fully public entity, which can be read as the reverse of the Welsh Gentlewoman’s Englishing-through-intercourse. The proud Welsh knight rebuts, “Have at her: nay by Cod is no have at her to, Is tawge in her prittish tongue, for tis fine delicates tongue, I can tell her. Welsh tongue is finer as greeke tongue” simply for Farneze to mock the language entirely, “A bakte Neeates tongue is finer then both.”\textsuperscript{318} Again, like the comparison of the Welsh Gentlewoman to “ewe-mutton,” Dekker uses animal anatomy to sexualize and debase her language and body all at once.

Sir Owen stands up for the language, but he similarly complains about Gwenthyan’s speech specifically and mimics Farneze’s jibe by likening his wife to a “mad bull.”

\textsuperscript{316} Hoy (1980) 158.  
\textsuperscript{317} 2.1.169-170  
\textsuperscript{318} 2.1.171-4
consistent metonymic repetition of the word “tongue” to represent the language emphasizes the bodily and sexual resonance of her nationality as well. In 3.2, Sir Owen complains to the Marquess that his wife “has a tung goes jingle jangle, jingle jangle, petter and worse then pelles when her house is a fire.”

Gwalter suggests that the Welsh knight set out to tame his wife, such that he acquires a wand to beat her. Gwenthyan’s brash response upon seeing the prop follows, “What shall her doe with wands? Peate Gwenthyan podie? And mag Gwenthyan put her finger in me hole: ha, by God by God, is scradge her eies out that tudge her, that tawg to her, that loog on her.” Her revenge is served in the form of a rather raucous dining scene.

Act four shows Rice “like a Cooke” and his lady preparing for a feast for her husband, the Marquess, and various honored guests. However, before the diners arrive, Gwenthyan offers for a company of beggars to sit at her table and partake in the feast. She is the veritable Lord of Misrule in performance as she explains, “Sir Owen has anger her Lady, and therefore her Lady is anger Sir Owen.” She shirks the wifely duty of hospitality and revels in the chaos of the scene before her, which continues as a particularly amusing stage direction: “A drunken feast, they quarrel and grow drunke, and pocket up the meate, the dealing of Cannes like a set at Maw.”

Gwenthyan’s explanation to her husband is laid out as an active dismissal of the role of wife, “you teare her ruffes and repatoes, and pridle her, is her pridled now? Is her repatoed now? Is her
The ensuing quarrel is peppered with Welsh dialogue in a scene written to be riotous, but is also a forceful resistance to his attempts at taming his wife. A number of guests try to mediate the conflict, but the character’s Welsh language erupts into threats at her husband to overtake the acoustic space. Dekker, Chettle, and Haughton objectify the woman’s character through her language and nationality through imagery of animal meat. This scene externalizes the grotesque caricature made tangible in the intersection of gender, ethnicity, and language. As before, the anatomized animal imagery grafts onto her performative Welshness to compare her character to the wild Welsh women described at the start of *Henry IV Part One*.

It is not until the very end of the play that Gwenthyan exposes that her actions have been a ruse. She apologizes to Sir Owen and then retires the use of her Welsh to praise the virtues of marriage in English:

> Know you that discord’s mag good musicke, and when lovers fall out is soone fall in, and tis good you knaw: pray you al be maried, for wedlock increases peoples and cities, awl you then have husbands that you would pridle, set your hand to Gwenthians pill, for tis not fid that poore womens should be kept always under.\(^\text{324}\)

This conclusion relocates the undomesticated character within the patriarchal hierarchy as she reinforces the ideals of marriage. Her emphasis on potential population growth due to marriage perpetuates an English colonial project: the more English-speaking families, the more likely the Welsh will remain a passive part of the nation. However, there is still a glimmer of independence as she implores the women in the playhouse not to be “kept under.” The subtle feminist rally

\(^{323}\) 4.3.70-1.  
\(^{324}\) 5.2.287-292
here is muted when compared to the staging of Patient Grissil’s obedience during her tyrant husband’s tribulations.

Significantly, Sir Owen delivers the final speech of the play to ask forgiveness for his impatience, closing the play: “God save you all. Man gras wortha whee, Man gras wortha whee. God night Cozens awl.”325 A final homophonic English line in Welsh (‘My grace is to you’) closes the play after Sir Owen endorses Gwenthyan’s performance of the disobedient wife only after she has integrated herself into the Anglicized ideal resolution. Gwenthyan’s performance of over-the-top Welshness exposes clichéd theatricalizations of Welsh women, however, of the three characters discussed in this chapter, she resists Anglicized, male influence by forcing communication in her mother tongue. This is done under the safety of play acting within the comedy: her reveal at the end of the play that her violence towards Owen was an act. However “Man gras wortha whee” can be read a final wink to the audience that Owen and Gwenthyan will not continue to be subjugated by the English speaking characters onstage, or the audience.

While the audience of Shakespeare’s Henry IV Part One are exposed to an enigmatic Welsh figure of marital ‘love’ and exotic mysticism, Lady Mortimer also invokes the kind of anxiety created by the very real historical disappearance of Glendower. Just as the myth of Glendower was fortified by his mysterious disappearance, so too is the Lady’s missing dialogue made more noteworthy in its absence. Lady Mortimer is forced to take her English husband’s name and the character (and audience, both on and off stage) necessarily relies upon her father to lace English within her Welsh text. Her monolingualism helps reify the map in the scene to bring Welsh alterity to the fore in an otherwise English patriarchal play.

325 5.2.312-13.
Dekker, Chettle, and Haughton’s *Patient Grissil* demonstrates another kind of Elizabethan English anxiety about the female Welsh figure. Gwenthyan’s purposeful disobedience of her husband and his normative patriarchal ideals is amplified by her deliberate choice to use the Welsh language. Although she is finally integrated into the English society, here represented as Salucia, she relies on the Welsh language as one act of resistance to activate the male characters’ anger. Performed fourteen years after *Patient Grissil*, Middleton’s *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* may reflect a shift towards a more fluid understanding of the foreign, and especially Welsh, denizen in London society under James I. The Welsh Gentlewoman is adept at switching between faultless English speech and her mother tongue and the comic fault is placed on the Englishman who is unable to access her language. Still, yet again, the Welsh Gentlewoman is “harmoniously” assimilated into the English patriarchy, her spoken Welsh a remnant of her rebellious spirit. These Welsh women transgress the male spaces they enter through bodily excess against patriarchal prescription of silent and enclosed female body. However, there is a delicate (im)balance between the performed female leaks of language, song, and noncompliance, which cannot overcome the parsing of their bodies. The space that hinges between a translation ‘out of’ and ‘into’ is inherently theatrical, and in the cases of Lady Mortimer, the Welsh Gentlewoman, and Gwenthyan, the burden of incommunicability is placed on their staged bodies.
Chapter Four

Modern Performances of Welshness

In 2013, I presented a paper called “Ephemeral Dialect in the Absence of a Sonic Archive” at the Canadian Association for Theatre Research in Victoria, British Columbia. In the paper, I discussed some nascent ideas about the enigmatic traces of Lady Mortimer’s dialogue and the puzzling practical problem of staging her absent lines. In the public discussion of my work, an academic from Dalhousie University offered an anecdote that when she directed Henry IV Part One, she casually picked up a pamphlet for the university’s cafeteria and translated the material into Welsh. Lady Mortimer’s “pretty Welsh” spoken through tears was merely advertising for local restaurants, and by her account, the audience was none the wiser. With so few Welsh speakers in the world, and in North America specifically, such incongruous dialogue and embodiment has little effect on an audience (when performed convincingly, of course).326

While the nuance of a Welsh accent may be familiar to a UK audience, North Americans are typically less successful in performing or even identifying regional dialects from the United Kingdom. In the previous chapter, I wrote about the rhetorical and theatrical power of Lady Mortimer’s monolingualism, however such a covert disjunctive representation of Welshness opens further questions for all modern performances of Welsh language and dialect work.

326 In the 2013-2015 results of the Welsh government survey of Welsh language use within the country noted that only 11% (310,600) of the population could speak Welsh fluently (Jones and Sion 4). Although there was a rise in Welsh learners and speakers in 2000, the numbers have been consistently dwindling as detailed in John Wynburn’s article “Media pressures on Welsh language preservation.” The shift downward has also inspired a project by the Welsh government called “Cymraeg 2050” in which there is a 30-year plan to reach one million speakers in the world. The 2011 UK Census also lists Welsh speakers, but does not account for how many of those Welsh speakers live throughout the UK. The study simply states, “Nearly three quarters of the population in Wales had no Welsh skills” (Potter-Collins 7).
In his analysis of early modern representations of Welsh, Philip Schwyzer astutely asks, “Is speech in Welsh to be understood as language or rather as a form of physical behaviour, comparable to entrances, alarums, and excursions?” How can theatre practitioners today translate the textual idiosyncrasies of written dialect, grammalet, or the Welsh language into a comprehensible theatrical language? The extant texts signify all potential performable meanings so it is not until the plays are actualized onstage that performance constructs a convention from the printed archive. In this chapter I address how the Welsh language and dialect is marked for original performance and how some editors have annotated this dialogue. Then, I examine modern productions of Henry IV Part One, Henry V, and The Merry Wives of Windsor, to uncover how practitioners in Canada and the UK have staged Welsh dialects and language in major theatrical companies. For this research, I mainly turned to large canonical theatre companies like the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Stratford Festival to evaluate how performers tackle this performative issue for mass audiences. Because there have been so many productions of Shakespeare’s works, I will move through the plays one at a time to trace performance patterns and developments in Welsh representations.

In the production analysis, I begin by outlining Lady Mortimer’s performance history to set modern productions within her theatre history context. As I examine some ‘solutions’ to staging the Welsh woman’s dialogue, I will address questions about the interpretive nature of staging a scene wherein the dialogue has been erased. At what point can body language and other characters’ English translation replace or enhance dialogue within the ‘foreign’ tongue? If the audience is made up of many (or all) non-Welsh speakers, how can the scene sustain an

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327 Schwyzer (2014) 47.
Anglophone spectator’s attention? Lisa Hopkins attributes Lady Mortimer’s dialogue omission as a sign of Shakespeare’s reverence of the language. However, the silence in the text could also be read as a complete removal of the character’s dramatic importance. What are the stakes of writing Lady Mortimer out of the scene versus providing the space for the Welsh woman to speak and sing at a critical moment in the play?

After my analysis of Lady Mortimer in performance, I move to critique performances of Fluellen in modern productions of *Henry V*. As discussed in the first chapter, the Welsh soldier is superficially an archetypal Stage Welshman with his short temper and conventional dialect-inflected speech which is often mined for comedy. However, his loyalty to Henry can be read as a symbol of an idealized pre-Roman Britain which gestures to archipelagic unity. These qualities are difficult to balance in performance, and this chapter addresses the ways in which modern dialect work can contribute or puncture such characteristics. The extant Welsh dialects in early modern plays exist as orthographic divergences, and the very fact that Welsh accents are recorded as exceptional speech in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries indicates concomitant distinctive performance practices. Of course, this approach makes assumptions about the accuracy of recording performance by the extant texts. The differences between the Quarto and Folio editions immediately present complications in close textual analysis. The mysterious method of compilation exemplifies simply how elusive recreating original conditions can be, especially when working with the ephemeral orality of one performative instantiation. If a modern actor is to perform the text in dialect as it is written, from whose spelling and phonetic reinterpretation is he or she working? Does a faithful performance of such a dialect belong in original practice experimentation if the extant text is indeed a memorial recreation of one player’s interpretation of the accent? For modern practitioners, Welsh dialect in the script necessitates original practice research. As Jeremy Lopez contends, “Original practice…is not
really about nailing down the specificity of actual historical practice, but simply the quest itself
for this kind of information – and the infinitude of the quest…suggests that finishing it, actually
finding what you’re looking for, is neither necessary nor desirable.” 328 This work is also a quest
with the understanding that there is no one answer, but an exploration of varied approaches to the
“original” material. Dialogue attributed to Fluellen is idiosyncratic, but actors sound strange
when they take each letter as authoritative and unchangeable.

Still, dialects affirm the importance of actors’ voices and dramatists’ assertion of control
over their speech and delivery. Classical oratory and rhetoric influenced vocal virtuosity in
drama. Latin was the international language of advanced study throughout Western Europe so
the privileged educated citizens of early modern England were highly conscious of Ciceronian
teachings of rhetoric and oratory. 329 John Astington explains, “The acquisition of proper
pronunciation, clarity of enunciation, vocal emphasis and control, respect for rhythm and pitch,
and the accompanying ‘action’ of facial expression and bodily stance and gesture, then, were all
regarded as appropriate educational attainments in the mastering of oratory.” 330 While this
practice began with Latin and Greek recitations, in the fifteenth century grammar schools
gradually incorporated texts in vernacular English.

The rules for ‘proper’ speech then translated to the stage. This is seen in a straightforward
manner through the imposing rhetoric of Hieronimo in Kyd’s The Spanish Tragedy, for example,
or quite conversely, as it is subverted by clowns and fools who use classical oratory conventions

329 Barber (1997) 43.
to use an alternate register. Performances outside of the established rhetorical norm, whether as simple as a switch from verse to prose, or an extreme like nonsensical dialect, provide a musical quality to speech. It is not insignificant that dialect diversifies the entertainment potential through differentiated vocal qualities; dialect implicitly dictates changes in pitch, volume, and rhythm. Welsh accents and speech diversify the sounds onstage, which can focus interest or increase the entertainment value of a dramatic piece.

**Part One: Welsh Dialogue in *Henry IV Part One***

Again, Lady Mortimer and Glendower’s dialogue offers the most opportunity for theatrical interpretation of any of the plays studied in this dissertation. When theatre practitioners approach the text, they must first decide if they will include the scene. If so, what should Lady Mortimer say? What can or should be added to ‘complete’ the play? Does it matter if the actor speaks authentic Welsh or Welsh-sounding gibberish? We do not know the origin of the original Welsh text in the play. The boy who originated the role of Lady Mortimer may have spoken Welsh (although there is no indication of a native Welsh player in the Lord Chamberlain’s Men in the late 1590s).\(^{331}\) It is possible that Hugh Holland, a Welsh poet who contributed a commendatory poem to the First Folio, could have consulted with Shakespeare. However, the actor may have just played at an approximation of what Welsh sounded like to the ears of a sixteenth-century London audience. Schwyzer explains, “Although few of the city’s English speakers made an effort to learn Welsh, most would have been acquainted with its sound, and

\(^{331}\) Schwyzer (2014) 50.
would have known someone to approach should they require translation in to or out of the language.”  

Again, while this may have been the case for spectators in newly cosmopolitan London, Welsh is unfamiliar to most spectators in North America today, such that the scene poses a production challenge to theatre practitioners.

Editors mainly abstain from adding dialogue or performance interpretation for Lady Mortimer. In *The Riverside Shakespeare* edition, Herschel Baker simply leaves the text as it is written in the 1598 Folio with the enigmatic stage directions:

*Glendower speaks to her in Welsh and she answers him in the same.* (3.1.193)

*The Lady again in Welsh.* (3.1.199)

*The Lady speaks again in Welsh.* (3.1.207)

*Here the Lady sings a Welsh song.* (3.1.240)

In David Scott Kastan’s Arden edition of the play, there is an exhaustive performance history provided; however, for the Welsh scene he merely notes that the play requires two actors who can speak “passable” Welsh. Kastan also proposes that in the original production, the English characters may have been outfitted in contemporary dress of boots and doublets, but posits that Glendower would have worn robes akin to the Archbishop’s costume.  

In the 2016 *New Oxford Complete Works* edit, Anna Pruitt introduces the historically accurate Welsh spelling of Glyndŵr, but merely posits that the character may be “set apart by his distinctive Welsh garb and/or signs of real or supposed supernatural power such as robes or a staff.”  

Her suggestion at the entrance of Kate Percy and Lady Mortimer is that “Mortimer’s wife often enters upset,

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332 Schwyzer (2014) 49.
334 Pruitt (2016) 3.1.0
sometimes crying. She may also attempt to speak Welsh to him. In some productions, original lines are written for the speakers to perform in Welsh.” That an edition as recent as 2016 states that the actress “may also attempt to speak Welsh” shows just how often the part is reduced or completely erased.

These various emendations and marginalia gesture toward possibilities of performance, but, of course, practitioners must make a concrete choice. Unfortunately, for upwards of the four hundred years after its presumed 1597-8 debut, productions have not readily given Lady Mortimer her due consideration or stage time. Despite the play’s constant popularity, for many years directors and actors have simply erased the character from performance history. Thomas Betterton’s production in 1700 staged the debate between Glendower and Hotspur, but ended the scene immediately before Kate Percy and Lady Mortimer enter to avoid the “Welsh problem” entirely, even with a multitude of Welsh people living in the city. A text version of the play printed in 1773 omitted the entire scene calling it “a wild scene...which is properly rejected in the representation.” Even well into the nineteenth century, English-only editions of the play were being published and performed for theatrical convenience. In 1864 Samuel Phelps’ Drury Lane production was praised for including Lady Mortimer’s part, but there is no record of the

335 Pruitt 3.1.186.1

336 The Henry plays are some of Shakespeare’s most produced plays consistently since their first productions. Even during the Interregnum snippets of Falstaff’s scenes from the quarto were stitched together as The Bouncing Knight, or The Robbers Robbed. When the theatres opened again, the play was performed three times in 1660 alone. Kastan (2002) 81.


338 Ibid.

text that was used. One reviewer concluded the production was “distinguished” because the “Glendower scene, hitherto omitted, was supplied.”340 While this demonstrates the general ease with which the play can work smoothly without the Welsh scene, it also emphasizes the need to investigate why this scene is included at the top of the third act and how contemporary productions can write Lady Mortimer back onto the stage.

**Recent European Production History**

Philip Schwyzer calls attention to the fact that the first production in the twentieth century to leave a full record of its Welsh dialogue was a 1912 German-language production directed by Max Reinhardt for the Deutches Theatre in Berlin. Austrian-born Reinhardt directed ten of Shakespeare’s plays in this season “partly as a propaganda effort aimed at showing the capacity of the German nation to rise above national differences where art was concerned.”341 Soon after the emergence of Realism and just a year after the first production of German expressionism, Reinhardt’s approach to Shakespeare’s plays at the Deutches Theatre created their own visual languages with geometrical sets on otherwise empty stages. Broadly speaking, German theatres were also much more open to experimental Shakespeare productions than their British and American counterparts in the beginning of the twentieth century. The perfect storm of tolerance for experimentation, character-focused production values, and the idealized projection of Germany’s acceptance of other nations’ art created an ideal stage for the reinsertion of Lady Mortimer’s scene. However, it is still striking that the German-language production included Welsh as opposed to an equivalent neighboring language like Dutch, Danish, or Italian.

341 Kennedy (2001) 58.
Reindhardt commissioned original Welsh dialogue from Edward Anwyl, a professor of Welsh at the University of Aberystwyth. Max Forster, a linguist at Leipzig University, later published Anwyl’s text in 1924.\textsuperscript{342} The Welsh dialogue created for this production, although quite lengthy, has remained a standard source for professional theatres in the UK throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, including Royal Shakespeare Company productions and Richard Eyre’s recent film adaptation in \textit{The Hollow Crown}. The text as it was published in 1924 reads:

Glendower: Bydd resymol a dewr; nid oes dim arall yn bosibl i ni: rhaid i’r milwyr fyned ymlaen, a bydd i ti a’th fodyb Percy ganlyn gyda myfi; a chei weled Mortimer drachefn.

Lady Mortimer: Mae fy nghalon yn torri; nis gallaf ei ollwng oddiwrthyf. I’r rhyfel yr â, a pwy all ddeweyd y caf ei weled eto. Fyn had, gadewch i mi fyned gydag ef: nid oes arnaf ofn na dychryn.

Glendower: Be reasonable and brave; nothing else is possible for us: the soldiers must go on ahead, and you and your aunt Percy will follow with me, and you will see Mortimer again.

Lady Mortimer: My heart is broken; I cannot let him depart from me. He goes to war, and who can tell whether I shall see him again. My father, let me go with him. I have neither fear nor dread.\textsuperscript{343}

The scene continues in similar colloquial prose with content reflective of Glendower’s English translations. Written and spoken aloud, this is clearly in a style unlike Shakespeare’s blank verse that accompanies the unscripted Welsh. However, the length of Lady Mortimer’s dialogue here is striking and imbues the character with power the play as published does not provide her. Just after Hotspur’s short quips and Glendower’s bombastic bragging, Lady

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\textsuperscript{342} Schwyzer (2014) 52. See Schwyzer for a complete examination of the written transmission of the dialogue between Anwyl and Forster’s texts.\textsuperscript{343} Ibid 53. This is just an excerpt of the text Schwyzer includes in his chapter “The Lady speaks in Welsh.” For a full analysis of this particular text, see his analysis in \textit{Interlinguicity, Internationality, and Shakespeare}, 2014.
\end{flushleft}
Mortimer’s lengthy prose calls for a pause in the male-centered scene as she aurally interrupts the English space.

The Welsh translations are written in an early twentieth-century style, which Schwyzer describes as “lifted from the pages of a rather racy Edwardian novel.” Yet, despite the now antiquated style of the Reinhardt, Anwyl, and Forster collaboration, the text has come to be accepted as an authoritative dialogue for many practitioners in the UK. Although most directors and actors cut the German-Welsh collaborative material to a manageable size, those who use the text are still depending on genuine Welsh dialogue, often acted by people with no Welsh background for people with no Welsh language skills.

In 1964, the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford-upon-Avon reconstructed this text into verse under the direction of Peter Hall, John Barton, and Clifford Williams. Part of the four-hundredth anniversary commemoration of Shakespeare’s birth, the staging was spectacular with an ensemble of eighty actors. The Welsh actor Hugh Griffith played Falstaff and Roy Dotrice played Hotspur, as one reviewer noted, “as a kilted, raw-boned Scot, moved to war by sensual ecstasy and whose cumulative rages suggest the mentality of an amiable psychopath.” In this same review, William Squire was said to be “thundering as the mage” Glendower, but the Welsh text offers a warmth to the character not usually seen in his English lines. Below are the two lines that follow the two above, but edited for the 1964 RSC production:

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344 Schwyzer (2014) 55.
345 Ibid 53.
346 Times (1964) 18.
Glendower: Na, nid lle I wragedd yw rhyfeloedd, fy ngeneth i. 
   Rhaid i ti aros a chanlyn gyda mi.

Lady Mortimer: Nis gallaf aroshebddo. 
   Mae’n rhaid i mi gael mynd, a chaiff neb fy ngwahar dd chwaith.

Glendower: No, wars are no place for women, my little girl. 
   You must wait and follow me.
Lady Mortimer: (I cannot remain without him. 
   I must go, nor can anyone prevent me.)\(^{347}\)

As Schwyzer points out, this is not in iambic pentameter in English or in Welsh, but the verse indicates that the person who wrote this section was trying to mirror the literary structure of the surrounding dialogue.\(^ {348}\) In these lines, the imagery is pared down compared with the Reinhardt and Forster text.

However, while Lady Mortimer’s language could be read here as an unwavering, feminist command, the English line provided by Shakespeare to follow this insert is “She is desperate here, a peevish self-willed harlotry / One that no persuasion can do without.”\(^ {349}\) No matter how the actress delivers this line, the English text demands that Glendower undermines and overtakes her plea, translating her assertion of theatrical agency wherein she performs strength in the face of her husband and father into helplessness. As mentioned in the last chapter, Shakespeare’s expert dramaturgy here codes Lady Mortimer’s implicit lines through Glendower’s translations in a way that mirrors the language lesson between Katherine and Alice in Henry V. Marjorie

\(^{347}\) Schwyzer (2002) 54.

\(^{348}\) Ibid 56.

Rubright points to Katherine’s language lesson as a dual-purpose theatrical moment wherein she is Englishing herself, but also teaching the English audience French in turn. So too, does the revival of the Welsh woman’s speech in twentieth-century productions motivate a feminist attempt to give the male-dominated play one more female voice, one that also teaches an Anglophone audience about sounds beyond the English borders. As Phyllis Rackin states, “although we cannot afford to ignore the history of women’s subjugation, we cannot afford to rest in it either. Overestimating past repression can easily slip into a dangerous complacency about present progress.”

The simple act of providing Lady Mortimer with lines in her foreign tongue – even if diluted and regulated by Glendower and Mortimer – proves both of Rackin’s points. Lady Mortimer is obviously a representation of women’s oppressive history but her performance of self-willed dialogue shows a strong challenge to the English patriarchy written into that history. Therefore, providing Lady Mortimer with agency – by taking up space with her Welsh language – forces an audience to listen to the woman’s voice and attend to her performance.

The most recent production to use the Anwyl and Forster source was in a television film version of the play, which creates a bridge in this theatrical history of the United Kingdom. In 2012, Hollywood and theatrical director Sam Mendes produced Shakespeare’s second tetralogy for the BBC in a series called *The Hollow Crown*. Filmed to air simultaneously with the London Olympiad, the four-part series cast some of the United Kingdom’s most recognizable talent to embody its past kings. Ben Whishaw adroitly played a nimble Richard II while Jeremy Irons

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appeared as the usurping, but measured, Henry IV. Tom Hiddleston performed in three episodes as the audience follows his transformation from the giddy Prince Hal to militaristic King Henry V. As a part of Britain’s project to perform a united nation to millions around the world, the series expands Gaunt’s image of the “precious stone set in a silver sea” to present the four nations that make up the United Kingdom. Notably, director Thea Sharrock cut the scene of international conflict in Henry V between Gower, Jamy, Fluellen, and MacMorris as he pleads, “What is my nation?” The telling omission indicates that British in-fighting had no place in the narrative being presented to the global audience in 2012. On the other hand, Richard Eyre’s adaptation of Henry IV Part One adapted Max Forster’s 1924 Welsh text for Alex Clatworthy’s Lady Mortimer and Robert Pugh’s Glendower.

The casting for The Hollow Crown shed light on regional difference that is not often emphasized in North American productions. While on the page Lady Mortimer’s (lack of) lines are the only rupture of the King’s English, in The Hollow Crown, Robert Pugh’s natural Welsh accent transcended the oddities of stage Welsh. Similarly, real-life father and son acting duo Alun and Joe Armstrong played Worcester and Hotspur, respectively, with strong Northern accents deepening the linguistically accurate representation of the regional registers within archipelagic English. Eyre’s direction in the scene skillfully deals with the interlinguistic play between the Mortimers. Lady Mortimer is given two speeches of uninterrupted Welsh dialogue, but perhaps just when an Anglophone spectator’s attention may drift, he intercut Mortimer’s

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354 Schwyzer (2014) 52.
English dialogue over and within her text, providing the effect of a musical duet in which the man’s perspective is foregrounded. However, Clatworthy portrays the heartbroken woman with vitality. The content of her Welsh is comprehensible through her delivery: the tone and the urgency with which she speaks her lines allows space for her heartfelt emotion, despite the commentary of her husband and father. Eyre also provides a moment for the audience to meditate on her extralinguistic means of communication during the song at the close of the scene.

Since there is no record of the original song performed in the sixteenth century, directors have used traditional Welsh or Celtic songs, sounds of the harp, or contemporary pop songs.\textsuperscript{355} In \textit{The Hollow Crown}, Alex Clatworthy performs the Welsh folk song “Lisa Lân” (“Fair Lisa”) beautifully, and the camera hangs on her for a moment. However, soon after establishing her action, the camera leads the audience’s attention to Hotspur and his wife as they giggle furtively and mock the scene before them. Still, as generously as Richard Eyre directed the Welsh scene, Shakespeare’s text complicates any straightforward performance of Welshness here. Before the song begins, Kate tells her husband, “Lie still, ye thief, and hear the Lady sing in Welsh,” to which he responds, “I had rather hear Lady, my brach, howl in Irish.”\textsuperscript{356} However, in \textit{The Hollow Crown}, Alex Clatworthy’s musical coda is used as soundtrack to follow Hotspur and Kate into their bedchamber as they embrace for a steamy farewell.

\textsuperscript{355} Phyllida Lloyd’s 2014 all-female production of both parts of \textit{Henry IV} gave the song to Kate Percy instead, as she sang Glasvegas’ “Daddy’s Gone” to the tune of a lullaby

\textsuperscript{356} 3.1.231-2.
It is notable that the rebels are the only characters with wives in the play. Whereas Lady Mortimer is portrayed as an emotional hindrance to Mortimer’s claim to the throne, Kate can also be read as a distraction to Hotspur’s success. The Welsh song becomes a lingering reminder of the sentimentality of the Mortimers while simultaneously highlighting the playful, but combative relationship of the Percys. Lady Mortimer’s inclusion in The Hollow Crown is noteworthy as it highlights the otherwise male Anglocentric chronicle of the Lancastrian dynastic struggle. The teleplay showcases the accurate Welsh language within the United Kingdom for a global audience, making clear the distinction between Englishness and Welshness from the time of original performance to the twenty-first century.

Canadian Production History

In examining Canadian production histories, I worked specifically with promptbooks and video recordings from the archives at the Stratford Festival in Ontario. Promptbooks are the master scripts kept by stage managers which hold blocking information; lighting, sound and acting cues; and most importantly, script changes. My research was focused on Stratford productions partly due to access, but also because of the repertory nature of the Festival. Shakespeare’s plays are repeated with institutional memory, sometimes using the same actors in the same plays (with different roles) years later, which reveals a palimpsest of performance practices within one theatre company. Promptbooks from the archives at the Stratford

357 Although there have been plenty of English and American celebrities on the festival’s stages, in the company’s sixty-five-year history, the Stratford Festival has been lauded as “an important part of Canadian history” and “heritage” and as an authoritative institution of distinctly Canadian theatre. Davies xiv-xv.
Festival reveal rehearsal processes and the origins of different Welsh inserts written for *Henry IV*. To date, the Stratford Festival has staged *Henry IV Part One* six times, in 1958, 1965, 1979, 1984, 2001, and 2006.\(^{358}\) Surprisingly, the Welsh scene has been included in each of these productions.

Unfortunately, there is no promptbook available for the 1958 or 1965 productions, but the promptbook for the 2006 production directed by Richard Monette points to the elusive stage history. The 2006 script includes a five-page document with some of the Welsh content used in their production, with the note “Provided by Robertson Davies for the 1965 Stratford Festival production of *1 Henry 4*.”\(^{359}\) Novelist and academic Robertson Davies, who was born to Welsh parents in Canada, provided Welsh dialogue with accompanying translation and phonetic pronunciation in 1965, which was used again in 2006. The layout of the document indicates clearly that the actors in the 2006 production who played Glendower and Lady Mortimer (Raymond O’Neill and Laura Condlln) learned the lines phonetically.

At the top of the first page, there is a pronunciation guide of letters in Welsh, roughly translated to English:

**Sounds**
- ‘dd’ = ‘th’ (voiced)
- ‘f’ = ‘v’
- ‘y’ = ‘uh’ except in a word after the first syllable, then ‘y’ = ‘ih’
- ‘ff’ = ‘f’
- ‘u’ = ‘u’
- ‘w’ = ‘oo’
- ‘th’ = soft, unvoiced ‘th’

\(^{358}\) On the other hand, *Henry IV Part Two* has only been staged twice, renamed *Falstaff* in conjunction with *Part One* for the productions mounted in 1965 and 2001.

\(^{359}\) Stage manager *Henry IV Part One* 2006.
‘ll’ (‘LL’) = soft lisp behind front teeth.\textsuperscript{360}

While this is generally correct, the “u” in Welsh, is more accurately pronounced “ee,” but this superficial guide would work for a modern Welsh language learner.

The next section of the insert seems to be written specifically for Raymond O’Neill’s portrayal of Glendower as it includes all of Glendower’s lines transcribed phonetically in one block of text:

Beev vower vemether  
Kile veelin un vun  
Oval ee Gooda veedrib  
Pearcee ahveeam eeron.  
V weiled du vortimer  
Anuril etow

Need llae ee gragev  
You Threlloyv, v meth  
e. Ride ceee aross  
ah ranglang gooda vee

Tarooch dantee, quee (order for music)  
Dellinorion naev.\textsuperscript{361}

Bizarrely, this section is written in verse with no punctuation and little care for the meaning or timing of the lines. Even stranger still, the cue script transcribed on the following pages contradicts this phonetic pronunciation.

The prompt script for the scene begins:

\textbf{Act 3, scene 1}

[Hotsp] “…take our leave’

[Lady Mort] (entering weeping)

\textsuperscript{360} Gonsalves, \textit{Henry IV Part One} Dir. Richard Monette, Promptbook insert (2006) 1

\textsuperscript{361} Gonsalves 1.
The way the lines are structured, with the phonetic lines bolded, shows that either Davies or the actors privileged pronunciation over meaning. The Welsh lines have some spelling errors, which may be due to transcription, since this freshly preserved document is clearly from 2006 as opposed to an original from 1965. The text for “ar y hrwyn” is most certainly “ar y brwyn,” which translates as “on the rushes.” Also, because the lines were originally written in 1965, the Welsh sounds archaic to a modern Welsh speaker.

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363 “Hrwyn” does not translate to anything in Welsh.
In the record, the scene continues like a prompt script for three more pages of Welsh, phonetic, and English dialogue. The master script of the play includes four pages that indicate that Monette must have consulted someone to update and fix the Welsh lines provided in 1965, and in this part of the script it shows that the optional lines were included. In the updated scene, Glendower’s improved first line reads: “Bydd ddewr fu merch, gall ddilyn fu chwaer Kate/ A fuam iawn fu weled dy fortimer annwyl eto” (with the changes bolded here). The lines clarify some of the possible transcription errors, but make others foggy (the shift from “fy” to “fu” is simply a dialect switch, for instance). In the accompanying video recording of the production, Laura Condlln speaks hurriedly through her Welsh lines, while Raymond O’Neill lingers on his Welsh lines with gravitas, which is in line with his general performance.

Before the song, there is a section labeled as “Optional” wherein Lady Mortimer’s lines translate to “I will sing you a song I sang just now/That brings sleep and longing in its wake.” Laura Condlln does include these lines in the production, which shows that the director did place value on the Welsh scene by lengthening Lady Mortimer’s lines. Indeed, in one review of the production, Craig Barrow writes, “The only time I felt time hang heavy in the production was in Laura Condlln’s singing in Welsh near the end of 3.1. Her voice was good, but the song and Welsh dialogue seemed to go on too long.” The song she sings is only eight lines long, and is again transcribed in Welsh and then written phonetically:

364 Gonsalves, *Henry IV Part One* Dir. Richard Monette master script (2006) 47A. These better translated, main pages that are added to the main script are also presented in the three stages: Welsh, phonetic pronunciation, and English translation.
365 Gonsalves 48.
O heddiw death gwynt dwym y gwanwyn
O heh theeyou daheth gwint doowim uh gwan win
(O today came wind warm of spring)

Heddiw death blas blodau ‘r haf
Heh theeyou daheth blas blodier haf.
(Today came scent of flowers of summer.)

Mae gofal gaef un diflannu,
My gahval gayav uhn dihvlanee,
(My cares of winter are vanishing.)

A’mae’r awyr wych a braf.
Ah mir ahweer weech ah brahv.
(And the air is healthy and strong.)

Mae dael a deryn yn ymddangos
My dial ah derrin uhn um thang os.
(The leaves and the birds are singing.)

Mae gan moliant yn y dwr.
My kahn moliant uhn uh door.
(The song sweet in the water.)

Mae gan molian yn y dwr Mire aythin melin wholl go goniant.
(The gorse yellow in all its glory.)

Fy’nghalon yn y neffoedd cwrt.
Vu(n)g halon uhn uh
(My heart is in the heavenly courtyard.)

The Welsh lines provided in the promptbook are semantically accurate, but do not match any traditional songs, so it is possible that someone involved in the production translated the text from another language, or simply wrote the entire song. The sentiment of this song is strange


368 In 1979 Peter Moss directed Henry IV with the bare minimum of Welsh lines, and the promptbook includes a page for the musical score of Lady Mortimer’s song “Suo Gân.” The lines of the song are bookended by the notes “a Welsch [sic] song, and I don’t know that beautiful language” and “if somemore [sic] is needed, I will do it…This must be about 30 seconds…” Moss (1979) score.
for the content of the scene that just unfolded, but Laura Condlln sang the tune mournfully, which sold the narrative of the plot rather than the content of the song.\textsuperscript{369} Another strange anomaly of the transcription included above is that the final line is not fully drawn out phonetically: “neffoedd cwrt” is not given a vocal guideline leaving one to wonder if the Welsh expert did not know the accurate pronunciation or if the absence is just human error. Overall, Monette’s production deals gingerly with the speech and song, offering as close of a Welsh experience he could provide to his Canadian audience. However, Barrow’s impatient critique of the performance indicates that some Anglophone listeners may still have not been impressed with the amount of space Monette gave to Lady Mortimer in the production.

Tracing back to the 1984 production of \textit{Henry IV Part One} at the Stratford Festival, the promptbook includes the Welsh lines in their English translations, with loose sheets of the Welsh dialogue, pronunciation guide, and music strewn throughout the archive. Under Michael Langham’s direction, the two Welsh characters are costumed in the convention of long brown robes. There is no indication of who provided the Welsh script here, but Davies’ pronunciation guide is included at the bottom of the dialogue page. Glendower begins the Welsh here: \textit{“Paid a wylo fy merch annwyl. Byddi di ar arglwyddes Percy/Yn dilyn eich gwywr cyn gynted ag y bo modd.”}\textsuperscript{370} The accurate Welsh translates to “Do not weep, my dear daughter. You and Lady Percy/shall follow your husbands as soon as possible.”\textsuperscript{371} The line is nearly a word-for-word translation of Mortimer’s plea to his wife just before in the scene. Maggie Huculak as Lady

\textsuperscript{369} Monette (2006) \textit{Henry IV Part One}, Stratford Festival Archive DVD.
\textsuperscript{371} Ibid.
Mortimer speaks three short lines that are implicit through the English translations: “Oh my Lord, my husband please do not leave me./I am afraid I will never see you again.” In this version, the Welsh dialogue was structured in verse to imitate Shakespeare’s meter, but it does not align as easily as in English. However, unlike the 1965/2006 guide, the English translations for the 1984 production are straightforward and colloquial.

Whoever provided the Welsh for this production kept close to the extant text, merely using Glendower and Mortimer’s readings of Lady Mortimer’s absent text as cues for her speech. The most theatrical point of the scene in Langham’s iteration is the ending when Huculak sang “Hiraeth,” a traditional Welsh folk song from the 1930s. The term hiraeth is a slippery word, which is hard to translate directly into English. Kaori O’Connor describes the term as “an intense longing for home and place, an attachment so strong it can cause physical pain.” The song worked beautifully as a finale to the scene, since Lady Mortimer is not able to surpass her father’s translation, the densely poetic meaning of the song transcends the English that envelops the Welsh lady.

The Welsh scene provided for the 2001 production under the direction of Scott Wentworth is written in a much more ornate manner than the others, albeit with some unusual translation issues. In the promptbook for this iteration, the script does not provide phonetic pronunciation for Sara Topham or Stephen Russell’s Lady Mortimer and Glendower, but the English translation is provided underneath each Welsh line. Lady Mortimer speaks on her

372 Ibid.
373 O’Connor (2009) 92.
374 Of course, with the caveat that most Canadian spectators do not understand the literal meaning of the song.
The translation provided under these lines is “Go not to these wars, my love, go not to the senseless slaughter of a love that is young and green as youth itself. Go not to these wars!” While this is a close translation, the person who provided the lines made some poetic adjustments to the prose since “Paid mynd” is more contemporary than “go not,” the phrase is more accurately translated to “do not go.” The scene continues as follows:

(Do not fret, daughter. Yourself and your sister in marriage will follow your men.)

Lady Mortimer: Dilyn? I’r rhyfel?
(Follow? To the wars?)

Glendower: Cewch fod gyda nhw i’w diddanu a’i hanog yng nghanol y frwdyr.
(You shall be by their sides to comfort them and urge them on to battle fury.)

Lady Mortimer: Cenedl ydym yn gwastraffu ein bywyau i’n meistri mewn rhyfelodd ofer, mewn tiroedd nad oes gennym hawl arnynt, gyda dynion nid ydym yn ei casau.
(We are a people wasting ourselves in fruitless battles for our masters. In lands to which we have no claim, with men for whom we feel no hatred.)

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376 Ibid 57.

377 I am indebted to Gwndaf Jones and Marc Haynes for their assistance in the translation of these texts.

Again, there are some inconsistent English translations provided for the actors: “chwaer-yng-nghyfraith” is more accurately “sister-in-law” rather than “sister in marriage” and Glendower’s second line urges them on “in the midst of” battle, rather than within “battle fury.” As per usual, Glendower stalked the stage in a “spectacular cloak and wig for Stephen Russell's intimidating version of the Welsh magician/warrior.” Stratford’s productions all recycle similar costuming for the Welsh duo, with Glendower bedecked in a long wig and gown akin to Gandalf and Lady Mortimer in matching long locks and feminized gown. As Lady Mortimer, Sara Topham over enunciated each Welsh word, and drew the scene out even longer than the text would suggest. These overtly stylized English lines raise the question: for whom was this Welsh scene written? Clearly, the person who provided the lines was trying to manufacture an air of sophistication, perhaps to imbue the text with a gravitas worthy of Shakespeare’s original text. Still, a Welsh speaker would notice the cumbersome speech transition.

The next two pages show charts which expose the different methods and theatrical effects of the Welsh dialogue assigned for Lady Mortimer and Glendower on the Stratford stage.

|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------|

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Welsh</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do not weep, my dear daughter.</td>
<td>O fy arglwydd, fy ngwr paid am gadael. Mae arnarf y'n dy weld di byth.</td>
<td>Oh my Lord, my husband please do not leave me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You and Lady Percy shall follow your husbands as soon as possible</td>
<td>Paid mynd i ryfela, f'anwyld, paid mynd I gyflaen ddisynnwyr a ladd gariad ieuanc sy mor ddirodres a ieuenctic ei hunan. Paid mynd ryfela!</td>
<td>Go not to these wars, my love, go not to the senseless slaughter of a love that is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not fret, daughter. Yourself and your sister in marriage will follow your men.</td>
<td>Ni allaf aros hebddo. Mae’n rhaid i mi fynd. O fy nghriad i, paid â’m gadael. Fe deithiaf gyda ti i’r rhyfelodd. O fy nghalon, dof gyda th. Merch i filw wyf. Nid oes arnarf ofn.</td>
<td>I cannot stay without him, I must go. O my darling, do not leave me. I will</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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I am afraid I will never see you again. young and green as youth itself. Go not to these wars! journey with you to the wars. O my heart, I will come with you. I am a soldier’s daughter. I am not afraid.

Each of these performances creates significant space for the woman’s Welsh speech and song, which rewrites an important moment back onto the stage. However, Anglophone audiences may celebrate the performance of Welsh in some productions obliviously while their Welsh-speaking counterparts have a completely disjunctive experience when Lady Mortimer speaks in mistranslated or antiquated dialogue. The above are all examples of scenes which faithfully represent Glendower’s English translations. There are ways in which directors could rewrite the scene for a competent-speaking Welsh audience for Lady Mortimer to speak against those translations as well. Still, if a linguistically accurate representation of Welsh language and song is not comprehended by an audience, the very inclusion of the scene is a feminist and political act. Lady Mortimer is the one of the only anti-war voices in the play, and her sentiment resounds despite the language barrier, but directors must include her dialogue to characterize her essential dissenting female voice. As Megan Lloyd states, “Welsh is not subordinate in 1 Henry IV. Not succumbing to the customary theatrical treatment of the Welsh, so often ridiculed, sullied, made comic for comedy’s sake, Shakespeare celebrates the language.”³⁸⁷ While Lady Mortimer’s Welsh scene is certainly more than just a celebration of the language, the scene as frequently performed today affords the language space and consideration. However, turning to modern

³⁸⁷ Lloyd (2010) 73.
productions of *Henry V*, performances of Fluellen often tend to revert to Welsh made “comic for comedy’s sake.”

Part Two: Welsh Dialect on the Modern Stage

Numerous registers of Irish, Scottish, and English accents have permeated North American culture through diasporic immigration and mainstream media, yet the variants of Welsh speech have not had the same exposure. When it comes to dialect work, while UK productions typically cast a Welsh actor for Welsh roles, many North American actors only use the extant text as a performance guideline rather than any research into an real Welsh register or cadence. The anachronistic and manufactured stylization of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century dialect stands apart in productions as a calcified remnant of the era in which it was written, which may not even be suggestive of original practice performance. Actors who portray Fluellen to the letter play the character with an unrecognizable early modern conventional specificity for twentieth and twenty-first century audiences.

*Henry V* is one of Shakespeare’s most-produced plays on the stage, television, and film. Fluellen is certainly Shakespeare’s most performed Welsh character and his role as a confidant to the king provides more varied interpretations than his wholly comic counterpart, Sir Hugh Evans from *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Textually, Fluellen’s dialogue is written in dialect similar to that of Evans, and in the UK, Welsh and English actors have embodied the role imbuing the soldier with regionally-specific Welsh accuracy. In text, editors tend to keep the extant textual variants of the conventionalized Welsh dialect attributed to Fluellen with little commentary. Rory Loughnane’s edition included in the *New Oxford Complete Works* changes the character’s
name to Llewelyn much like Anna Pruitt’s spelling of Glyndŵr in the same collection. Loughnane also notes, “Llewelyn is often played by an actor with intimidating physical attributes (or one conspicuously small).”\textsuperscript{388} An interesting note, either of the casting choices indicate the Welsh soldier should be exceptional in appearance, which is not implicit in the text – apart from the leek in his attire. As Loughnane’s suggests, an imposing figure could instill the Welsh character with menace in his conflicts with Pistol and Gower. His pedantic hang ups about the “disciplines of war” and bombastic bragging could read as comic if embodied by a particularly diminutive man. Either staging works to highlight the character’s hot-headed fierceness against the French and against his ‘countrymen.’

\textit{Henry V} is an inherently political play, of course, which gives attention to both the French and the English throughout the war. Therefore, many directors and theatre companies stage the play as a political act. At the Royal Shakespeare Company, Peter Hall and John Barton’s 1964 production criticized the Vietnam War. Terry Hands’s 1975 production for the RSC’s centenary season mimicked the anti-war stance of the 1964 mounting, however facing budget cuts, “the goal of the production was to condemn war while keeping the play’s celebratory, even patriotic aspect.”\textsuperscript{389} Emrys James played the Chorus in this iteration: “A short, balding, round-faced Welshman in neat but casual modern black clothes…as enthusiastic and engaging.”\textsuperscript{390} Although Trevor Peacock’s performance of Fluellen seems to have been unremarkable, framing the narrative of the English history in a Welsh voice strengthens and

\textsuperscript{388} Loughnane (2016) 3.2.18.1
\textsuperscript{389} Loehlin (1997) 50.
\textsuperscript{390} Ibid 55.
echoes Henry’s claim, “For I am Welsh, you know, good countrymen.” Similarly, Adrian Noble’s 1984 rendition of the play staged Scottish actor Ian McDiarmid as the Chorus, which brings Jamy’s lines into relief. However, Sion Probert as Fluellen, although Welsh, looked like a caricature dressed ornately with a huge plumed hat and robes – a jarring difference to the military garb worn by his fellow soldiers.

While the Stratford Festival does not typically showcase experimental theatre, directors have made some uncharacteristically bold choices for their Henry Vs. In 1989, director John Wood set his production in World War I with Brechtian influence. At the opening of the play, the back wall of the Avon Theatre was open, which exposed the scene shop and various actors as they walked to and fro backstage. However, apart from the Chorus working on the audience’s “imaginary forces” this metatheatrical gesture was never repeated. Instead, the audience saw an odd early twentieth-century rendition of the English-French combat which manifested mainly on lounge chairs, while women with parasols meandered through the background. William Dunlop played Fluellen with a manner of speech that was not quite accent, but high-pitched squeal. Jamy was cut entirely from the play, and Robert King’s Macmorris seemed like he had accidentally wandered onto the stage from another world. The bourgeois setting made the archipelagic characters stand out doubly as linguistic foreigners and as the representations of actual combat in a play otherwise devoid the embodiment of a “warlike Harry.”

In 2001, Jeanette Lambermont’s production on the same stage made the Chorus’s role completely superfluous, as there was a projection screen at the back of the stage which played

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still and moving images projecting the location of each scene.\footnote{Lambermont (2001) \textit{Henry V}, Stratford Festival Archive DVD.} Again, the English soldiers in this production were costumed in World War I fatigues, but the French were attired in pastel blue Renaissance pantaloons with feathers in their caps. The actors playing nationalized characters were correspondingly cavalier with their dialects. Wayne Best as Fluellen used an inconsistent Welsh accent, which at times sounded passable, but ultimately broke down throughout the production. Each Stratford production of \textit{Henry V} seems to just scratch the surface of the international conflict at the heart of the play.

For example, Des McAnuff directed \textit{Henry V} for the Festival Theatre in 2012, and subtlety was scarce in this production.\footnote{McAnuff (2012) \textit{Henry V}, Stratford Festival Archive DVD.} McAnuff bookended the play with Canadian iconography: the first Chorus was performed by various members of the company in their plain clothes; one wore a CBC Broadcasting shirt, another a Maple Leafs jersey, which pointed directly to quotidian patriotism. In the final moments of the curtain call, a huge Canadian flag flew upstage to confront the audience with the ways in which we all pledge allegiance to nation today. However, this framework also reinforced the Canadianness of the production, putting the dialect play in sharp, inconsistent relief to its surroundings. The court scenes took place in front of a huge St. George flag, and the costumes were blatantly encoded by nationality. Again, the French all wore blue, but spoke in their natural Canadian accents. Katherine, played by Bethany Jilliard, had her English lesson center stage in a bathtub, poking each body part out of the tub methodically renaming her naked body in English.
As Fluellen, Ben Carlson veritably rewrote Fluellen’s part as a clown with an unstudied Welsh accent that grated on the ears. As reviewer Charles Isherwood puts it, “Ben Carlson’s surly but loyal Fluellen is also a standout, although his thick accent sounded — bizarrely — more Indian than Welsh to my ears.” There was also a moment at the English camp at Agincourt in which Carlson dropped the accent, and performed a rallying song simply as himself (whether the character was dropped purposefully or not is hard to discern). Carlson is known for his comic roles at Stratford, playing Feste, Petruchio, and Benedick, among others, and he applied a comic approach Fluellen, which received easy laughs, but lost significance. After he barks “If you can mock a leek, you can eat a leek” to Gower, he stuffs a leek in the English soldier’s mouth and loudly imitated satiated eating noises as “om om nom nom nom.” Although played to roaring laughter, this small choice deflated Fluellen’s authority and unraveled the Welsh soldier into a kind of clown character.

As discussed in the first chapter, dialect comedy contributes to Fluellen’s complex character within the play. Pistol is a conventional Il Capitano or braggart soldier while Fluellen is his comic foil, a Pantalone, or a more pedantic version of Il Capitano himself. However, there is a tendency in modern North American productions to favor an overtly comic rendering of the character, potentially due to the orthographic Welsh dialect as written. Despite the moments of violence and loyal integrity to the English cause exhibited by Fluellen in the play, the character’s Welshness often countermands his other characteristics through one-note accent work. Christopher Highley suggests that, “Fluellen figures the colonial subject who has internalized

English values and subordinated his own provincial loyalties to service to the English nation-state.” Even when the text touts Fluellen as the expert on the disciplines of war, the dialect reminds the audience of his status as an outsider. Significantly, a verisimilar Welsh accent allows for a more complexly layered reading of Fluellen as a captain to the English throne, a loyal and honorable soldier, but also a fiercely proud Welshman.

The textual idiosyncrasies of Welsh speech have given rise to a hybrid fictionalized representation of Welsh dialects in North America. While UK actors often stick to the pluralization and eccentric speech patterns, they tend to do so with either a genuine Welsh accent or an approximate imitation of the sounds of native Welsh speakers. When Welsh actors embody these roles, there is a strange tension since in each instance, the surrounding characters mock their nationality and speech, repeating the anachronistic stereotypes of “inferior” Welshmen. However, in the hands of North American actors, many who embody Hugh Evans, Glendower, and Fluellen serve to deepen the ignorance of Welsh sounds across the pond. While Anglo-Welsh relations may not be an inflammatory issue today, the mainstream perpetuation of inarticulate Welsh characters using ignominious accents imbued with the canonical authority of Shakespeare not only weakens the representation of the Welsh, but also the complexity of the characters on the modern stage.

397 Highley (1997) 147.
Conclusion

In 1967, Parliament passed the Welsh Language Act which finally reinstated the legal use of Welsh in the courts of the United Kingdom. The act begins,

Whereas it is proper that the Welsh language should be freely used by those who so desire in the hearing of legal proceedings in Wales and Monmouthshire; that further provision should be made for the use of that language, with the like effect as English, in the conduct of other official or public business there; and that Wales should be distinguished from England in the interpretation of future Acts of Parliament.\(^{398}\)

Almost 400 years after Henry VIII stifled the Welsh language, this Act only began the process of reintegrating Welsh back into the mouths of its citizens. The above legislation notes that Welsh will have “like effect as English” in the courts, but does not support or enforce equality of the Welsh language to that of its colonizing tongue in public sectors. It was not until 26 years later that Parliament established the Byrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg (the Welsh Language Board) to promote the public use of the language in the Welsh Language Act of 1993. In this more extensive legislation, the Welsh language is finally provided equal footing with English. The Act states that “the English and Welsh languages should be treated on a basis of equality.”\(^{399}\) Since the passing of both Welsh Language Acts, there has been a movement to revive the language, beginning at schools in Wales.

Such legislation was obviously a positive step in the progress of reinstituting the language. However, the Welsh Language Acts also remind us of the sinister nature of the English erasing a language, and then producing entertainment parodying those who fail to speak their

\(^{398}\) Welsh Language Act 1967.

\(^{399}\) Welsh Language Act 1993.
new language with perfect clarity. I am not arguing that the intent of playwrights staging Welsh dialects in early modern drama is necessarily malicious, but that the mockery is rooted in and responsive to systemic governmental oppression. There is an easily traceable progression of ethnically-based dialect jokes revolving around broken English and ‘funny’ accents from Aristophanes’ *The Birds*, commedia dell’arte straight to Hugh Evans and the three Welshman in *For the Honour of Wales* to characters now from Monty Python’s oeuvre to *The Simpsons*.

Indeed, in just the last year, Indian-American comedian Hari Kondabolu produced a documentary entitled *The Problem with Apu* in which he interrogates the infamous accented Apu character from *The Simpsons*. On the long-running show, Apu Nahasapeemapetilon is an Indian immigrant who runs a convenience store and voiced by the white, American actor Hank Azaria. Kondabolu best describes the performance as “a white guy doing an impression of a white guy making fun of my father.” While there are many differences between Apu and the early modern stage Welshman, there are some very similar conventions at play reliant upon the comedy of Otherness. Significantly, the long, ‘difficult’ names like Nahasapeemapetilon or Eldred’s Welsh disguise as ‘Reese ap meredith, ap shon, ap lewellin, ap morris’ and the exploitation of their accents as comic fodder. Kondabolu argues that *The Simpsons*’ character’s perpetuation of Indian stereotypes led to an entire generation of people reducing Southeast-Asian people into a single archetype. When I began this dissertation, I thought I was exposing a very similar phenomenon for the Welsh in early modern London, but have found instead that there were many, often contradictory, ways that plays and performers create and recreate Welshness.

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However, in contrast, English and Welsh people are very similar in ethnicity and culture. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (and for much of the population today), language and accent are the most potent distinguishing features between the Welsh and English. Border towns culturally bleed into one another, but distinct languages are inherently theatrical in their representations. This dissertation shows trends of Welshness throughout the first few decades of early modern commercial London drama. The earliest extant instances of Welsh caricatured accents are from 1592 in *A Knack to Know a Knave* and *Summer’s Last Will and Testament* simply include brief encounters with parodies of Welsh speech. In its most basic theatrical function in these plays, Welsh dialect and *grammelot*, changes the musicality and intonation in performance. In the same year, Peele’s *Edward I* shows a pseudo-historical episode of the last native of Prince of Wales being overtaken by the English monarch. Despite the Welshman’s failure in the play, Peele imbued his Welsh prince with the same dramatic power as his dramatized English king.

Chronologically, Shakespeare’s plays follow and deepen the theatrical presentation of Welshness. *Henry IV Part One* (1596), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1597-8), and *Henry V* (1599) mark a time in Shakespeare’s career in which he includes prominently Welsh characters. Lady Mortimer and Glendower offer a distinct shift from their theatrical predecessors of voices of comedic diversity, to mysterious and empathetic characters evoked from their Welsh speech and song. The most performed early modern Welsh characters throughout theatre history, Sir Hugh Evans and Fluellen, borrow some of the conventional dialect tropes established by earlier plays, but also layer other archetypal characteristics onto the construction of Welshness.

More so than Scotland, Ireland, or England, Wales existed in early modern English culture as the seat of the British origin myth. Today, especially for a North American audience, the mythologies of Cambria, Wales, and an ancient ‘unified’ Britain are remote notions. There is
another distinct shift in displays of Wales on the commercial stage at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Soon after James I ascended the throne and even closer to the investiture of Prince Henry, *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman* (1608), *A Valiant Welshman* (1610), and *Cymbeline* (1610) reached back to ancient or mythological Wales to dramatize political alignment with the growing monarchical power of the archipelago. However, despite the surge of Romano-British narratives, the trope of the comic Welsh character continued in popularity, as evidenced by *Patient Grissil* (1600) and *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (1613). The latest play analyzed in this work is Dekker’s *The Welsh Embassador* (1623), a play which clearly indicates the lasting popularity of the comic archetype of the ‘stage Welshman’ speaking grammelot and broken English. Still, laughter does not necessarily malign its subject. Peter Burke asserts, “the harshest critics of a particular language are often the neighbours.”\(^{401}\) This is a practical reflection of proximity, but Burke’s comment also alludes succinctly to the comedy of superiority. However, such feelings of superiority can be reflexive. Performance and embodiment are powerful as well. As opposed to verisimilar imitation, exaggeratedly theatrical Welsh dialect can dehumanize characters.

Although Shakespeare’s plays have been performed almost without pause in England (and now globally), there was a vast change in dramatic taste after the Interregnum. As we have seen in the fourth chapter, the 18th and 19th centuries erased Lady Mortimer’s speech entirely. Many popular Restoration plays adapted commedia dell’arte archetypes into contemporary aristocratic character models, with names like Sir Fopling Flutter of Dryden’s *Man of Mode* and Mrs. Squeamish from Wycherly’s *The Country Wife*. As the theatres became spaces for the

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wealthy on and offstage, the new comedy of manners did not fit Welsh characters into its
dramatic world. Instead, many of the theatrical characteristics which were associated with Welsh
characters were translated to the archetypal country bumpkin. Today, there are still jokes made
between the English and Welsh, but they are typically mutual.

Of all the plays discussed in this work, it is Shakespeare’s that we see revived most often
today. The playwright’s cultural clout – especially in North America – sanctions his authority in
representing the Welsh. The popular reproduction of ‘Shakespeare’s England’ “has contributed
to the persistence of a myth of ‘England’ itself, coexisting as a fiction of unity and national
destiny alongside the reality of the socially divided political and geographical entity known
variously as Britain, Great Britain and the United Kingdom.”402 Due to the prevalence of
Shakespeare’s productions, his Welsh characters are especially powerful in perpetuating a
theatrical type of performative Welshness. English plays typically foreground broken English
and theatrical Welsh dialect as barriers to communication, rather than exercises in direct
translation. Marking the Welsh as Other is an iterative process made more tangible when
conventions are repeated in performance. Although the Welsh are not a particularly imperiled
nation today, the legacy of their annexation echoes in every performance of the plays included in
this dissertation. Each time a new actor plays Fluellen, or the Welsh Gentlewoman, or Lady
Mortimer on the modern stage, they are constructing a new performativity of Welshness for their
audiences. Whether a Welsh character’s linguistic performance is presented as an entertaining
embellishment or a stereotypical caricature, dialect performances change the texture of a scene.
The Welsh present playwrights and audiences alike with an exceptional case of national

402 Shaughnessy (2013) 3.
marginality, however modern performances can help to interpret and emphasize complex characteristics under the fixed extant texts.
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