

Rhetorical Delivery for Renaissance English: Voice, Gesture, Emotion, and the Sixteenth-Century Vernacular Turn

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In the sixteenth century, perceptions of the English language changed from one of barbaric inadequacy to that of rare eloquence. Accounts for this shift tend to focus on literary or textual production, but this essay shows how these very linguistic concerns were motivated by the nonlinguistic practices appropriate to Latin rhetorical delivery (pronuntiatio et actio). The emotional contagion, legitimization of the inarticulate, cultural contextualization, and overcoming of natural physical defects that all stand at the heart of delivery here situate vernacular uplift at the corporeal level. The essay ends with an illustrative reading of William Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus.

INTRODUCTION

THE HUMANIST REVERENCE for Latin in sixteenth-century England exacerbated a sense of vernacular inferiority that was driven not only by its comparable lack of standardization, but also by the idea that it was spoken by a barbaric culture.¹ Complaints about and self-recriminations for writing in English continued well into the last quarter of the century, yet it was also in this period that objections to a rebarbative mother tongue were eventually replaced by apologies for a language that could equal or even surpass Latin. Renaissance writers attributed this change of perception, and the rise of English, to the work of both poetry and rhetoric.² Until very recently, however, the scholarship that accounted for this piece of linguistic history was apt to focus on the narrowly textual practices associated with the aforementioned arts, despite the fact that poetry was seldom imagined for a silent reader, and delivery (the voice and gesture appropriate to persuasive speech) continued to occupy the pride of place among the canons of rhetorical aptitude,

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¹This situation has been described most recently in Keilen, 1–31; Mazzio, 19–55, 97–102; Rhodes, 2004, 118–48.

²See Jones, 178–90.

as the records of numerous sixteenth-century grammar schools make clear. Of special interest here is delivery, for its ancient written rules also point to what lies outside of discourse, to the “prone and speechless dialect / Such as move men,” for instance, that Claudio asserts of Isabella in *Measure for Measure* (1604).³ That is, while delivery is known historically through textual remains, its theory and praxis foreground nonverbal techniques and a sense of cultural relativism, aspects that would serve an emancipatory turn for a language so often weighed unfavorably against the Latin corpus. In studying delivery’s hitherto-neglected role in the refinement of English, then, this paper suggests that an emergent perception of a stable, written form, unbound from rife accusations of expressive deficiency, owes to its alteration not only the ornaments and drills of the pen, but also a form of embodied, nonlinguistic expression traced in Roman oratory and performed in Renaissance school halls.⁴

ROMAN ORATORY FOR ENGLISH MOUTHS

Although classical literature and rhetoric were taught in the Renaissance ostensibly to refine Latin, not English, the skills learned for one language were felt to be transferable to another. Elizabeth’s tutor, Roger Ascham (1515–68), holds his Latin translation methods “fittest, for the speedy and perfit atteyning of any tong,” the choice of proper schoolmasters “not onelie to serve in the Latin or Greke tong, but also in our own English language.” He goes on to say that the imitation of classical literature “would labor, as Virgil and Horace did in Latin [while imitating Greek literature], to make perfit also this point of learning, in our English tong.”⁵ Just so, Richard Mulcaster (1531/32–1611), headmaster of Merchant Taylors’ School, says that Latin learning “doth call for English, where by all that gaietie maie be had at home, which makes us gase so much at the fine stranger.” After all, he continues, Cicero — “our best patern now” — used Greek works to edify Latin rhetoric, and so too must English use Latin, “onelesse theie will avouch that which theie canot avow, that the praise of that labor to conveie cuning from a foren tung into a mans own,

³Shakespeare, 1987, 897 (*Measure for Measure* 1.2.171–72). In Shakespeare, 2008a, 101n181, Bawcutt observes that “prone” is used in “*OED*’s sense 7, ‘ready, eager,’” while “speechless dialect” refers to “what we should now call ‘body-language.’”

⁴The fullest description of delivery available to Renaissance readers was book 11 of Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria*. Wright, 212–13, offers a succinct definition: “For action is either a certain visible eloquence, or an eloquence of the body, or a comely grace in delivering conceits, or an external image of an internal mind, or a shadow of affections, or three springs which flow from one fountain, called *vox, vultus, vita*, ‘voice, countenance, life.’” Recent studies of the development of the English language and literature in sixteenth-century England point to eloquence achieved not in spite of but because of linguistic inferiority or inarticulateness: see Mazzi; Mann; Keilen. There yet lacks a description of delivery’s role in that line of causation.

⁵Ascham, 245, 283, 293.

did dy with them, not to revive in us.”⁶ Yet another route to this cross-pollination is put forward by John Brinsley (ca. 1581–1624), a headmaster in Leicestershire, who advises the use of English to train Latin oratory: “What they cannot utter well in Latine, cause them first to do it naturally and lively in English.”⁷

It is in this exchange of linguistic skill that one can first situate vernacular authorization in the context of delivery, for Renaissance schools awarded merit almost exclusively in terms of rhetorical performance. Among the many accounts of humanist textual exercises and woodcuts of students dutifully writing, it is easy to forget that halls of learning were also full of stirring sounds and sights.⁸ A schoolboy spent much of his time listening to and imitating his master’s voice, as well as engaging in a variety of performances designed to train delivery. The statutes for grammar schools such as Merchant Taylors’, Westminster, Norwich, and Harrow, all demand an eight-to-ten-hour day punctuated by up to seven oral performances, including prayers (“with due tact and pawsing”), the ten commandments, rules for rhetoric and grammar (to recite “a part of a speech and of a verb in its turn”), a passage of poetry, a translation of their own, a piece of classical oratory, a speech from a play, excerpts of a sermon, a dialogue, and, for higher forms, themes and declamations.⁹ The performance of declamations could occur between one to six times a week, taking up to an hour or more of each day, and it was also an event at which other schools might visit to judge the delivery skills developed elsewhere.¹⁰ All compositions were to be heard by the master, who would judge the “manner of Speaking and Gesture,” as the representative directions for Ruthin’s school make clear:

A Theme shall be set forth or proposed . . . on Saturday at noon, on which subject they shall write in Prose, which they shall deliver to their Master on Monday, then they shall write Verses which they shall deliver to the Master Tuesday following. A theme shall be appointed to the same Classes Tuesday Evening [for delivery on Wednesday]. Thursday noon . . . he shall hear his Scholars rehearse an Act out of Terence’s Comedies or Plautus [and judge them] in the manner of Speaking and Gesture. . . . Friday [the students] shall rehearse after Dinner until three o’clock what they had learnt in that Week and after three o’clock they shall repeat what they had learned the same Week

⁶Mulcaster, 1925, 270–71.

⁷Brinsley, 212. See Rhodes, 2004, 25.

⁸In fact, the physical features of the Elizabethan grammar school were not conducive to writing; rather than desks, a typical schoolroom had only long wooden benches: see Alexander, 198.

⁹See the 1560 and 1561 statutes for Westminster and Merchant Taylors’, respectively: quotations from Draper, 246; Leach, 507.

¹⁰See, for example, in Watson, 94, the 1611 statutes for Charterhouse: “Boys to go on election days to Westminster or Merchant Taylors’ School to hear exercises.”

between the Hours of 4 and 5 o'clock. . . . Saturday . . . at ten of the clock in the Morning two or three of the Boys being thereunto appointed 8 days before by the Master shale with great Silence be heard declaiming on some subject.¹¹

Keith Thomas suggests that Tudor schools were “dominated by the hourglass, the clock, and the bell.” However, given the prominence of rhetorical training in the curricula, it may be more accurate to say that the sights and sounds of Tudor schools were dominated by the passionate performances of both boys and masters.¹²

Even though these classroom performances were meant to benefit Latin pronunciation, some grammar schools clearly intended them to serve the vernacular. By the late sixteenth century, it was not uncommon to find boys using the skills of classical delivery to offer plays in English, either at court or for a paying public.¹³ A training in Latin delivery served English because it served Latin in return. Such linguistic trade invites a reading of contemporary defenses of the academic stage in terms of the effect of delivery on both Latin and English. William Gager (1555–1622), for example, maintains that the purpose of the academic stage is to “honestly . . . embolden owre pathe”; its speeches “trye their voices and confirme their memoryes; to frame their speech; to conforme them to convenient action.”¹⁴ William Malim (1533–94), headmaster of Eton, agrees, declaring that “nothing is more conducive to fluency of expression” than drama.¹⁵ A more explicit connection to the vernacular is made by Thomas Heywood (ca. 1573–1641), who claims that the English language, “which hath been the most harsh, uneven, and broken language of the world . . . is now by this secondary meanes of playing, continually refined, every writer striving in himself to adde a new florish unto it.”¹⁶ Heywood’s mention of a “writer” here

¹¹Sylvester, 113–14. This is also common advice in works of education reform; Brinsley, 177–78, for example, says that schoolmasters should require each student to “pronounce his Theam without book; you in the meane looking on that which is pronounced, & examining each fault . . . this will be great furtherance to audacitie, memory, gesture, pronuntiation.”

¹²Thomas, 6. A thorough discussion of the grammar school training of delivery may be found in Enterline, 2012, 33–61.

¹³See Wagonheim, 38–75, and, for example, the plays of John Lyly and John Marston written in English for boy players. Between 1561 and 1573, Mulcaster’s boys made a habit of staging plays in the Merchant Taylors’ Hall for a paying public: minutes of court, 16 March 1573, quoted in DeMolen, 154. This practice seems to have been rare rather than unique, for it appears Hitchin School in Buckinghamshire had a similar stage for its scholars: see Enterline, 2006, 179. The interdependence of oratory and acting has been treated at length in other studies of Renaissance education and theater. See, for example, Enterline, 2012; Joseph; Rhodes, 1992, 12–19; Roach; Smith.

¹⁴Quoted in Boas, 235–36.

¹⁵Lyte, 157.

¹⁶Heywood, F3^r.

should complement rather than occlude “playing,” on the one hand because there is no clear distinction between writing and performance in the Renaissance, and on the other because one of his justifications for this venue of linguistic refinement is based on the outcomes of a training in Latin delivery. Earlier in the treatise, and recalling his education at Cambridge, Heywood notes that the performance of Latin plays “not onely emboldens a scholler to speake, but instructs him to speake well . . . to fit his phrases to his action, and his action to his phrase, and his pronuntiation to them both.”¹⁷

Latin delivery was engaged with vernacular development in another, somewhat-accidental way, namely in terms of what good English was supposed to (or not supposed to) sound like: on 16 August 1562, Sir William Harper (1496–1574) and Edmund Grindal (1519?–83), the lord mayor and bishop of London, respectively, came with three others to assess Merchant Taylors’ School. Their evaluation would rest almost entirely on how well the children delivered a series of speeches from the Latin tradition, with the officers of the Merchant Taylors’ Company thus anxious to confirm that their appointment of Mulcaster to the headmastership was justified. For his part, Mulcaster had preferred on the day to “lay sick in his bed”; yet, as the visitation’s report implies, he was in a sense very much present. Following a day of hearing lessons, the examiners reported to the company that although the boys had “moche p[ro]fyted” under its schoolmaster’s care, too many northern accents were heard, and therefore the students “did not pronounce so well as those that be brought up in the scholes of the south p[ar]tes of the realme.”¹⁸ The school and its students, of course, did not hail from the north, but their Carlisle-born schoolmaster did. In trying to resurrect Cicero, the children instead revived Mulcaster delivering Cicero.

The Merchant Taylors’ visitation suggests that in an age of increasing curricular standardization, a schoolmaster’s influence was most idiosyncratic at the level of sound and action, in this case ironically exemplifying Cicero’s own caution for teachers to take great care “to avoid anything in style of action or speaking which can be made absurd by imitation.”¹⁹ Delivery is, as James Fredal puts it, a “form of tacit and practical knowledge passed from body to body not

¹⁷Ibid., C4^r.

¹⁸The account is found in the minutes of court for the Merchant Taylors’ Company; I quote from Draper, 13. Edmund Spenser (ca. 1552–99) was then a schoolboy at Merchant Taylors’, and would later caricature Grindal as Algrind in *The Shepheardes Calendar* (1579).

¹⁹Cicero, 1962, 193 (*Brutus* 62.225). Forms of this advice were ever present in Renaissance manuals of rhetoric and courtesy. See, for example, Wilson, 48. Perhaps Beaumont, 66, is acknowledging just such a physical influence when he gives the following lines to the Citizen’s Wife: “How it behaves itself, I warrant ye, and speaks, and looks, and perts up the head! — I pray you, brother, with your favour, were you never none of Master Monkester’s scholars?” (*The Knight of the Burning Pestle* 1.93–97).

unlike that of a mason, knowledge that remains, in important respects, outside of conscious discourse and resists textualization.”²⁰ Certainly it is through a schoolmaster’s body that the scant textual cues of ancient delivery are reborn in sixteenth-century England, and as such they are embroiled in contemporary anxieties about the capacity of English to register the linguistic and literary greatness associated with Latin antiquity. Refining the vernacular became a matter of civilizing the barbaric under the auspices of delivery, as George Puttenham (1529–90/91) outlines: “There is no greater difference betwixt a civil and brutish utterance than clear distinction of voices, and the most laudable languages are always most plain and distinct, and the barbarous most confused and indistinct.”²¹ For this reason, the examiners of Merchant Taylors’ were concerned that the students should deliver their speeches in the more civilized accent of the south — as heard within sixty miles of London, according to Puttenham — a desire that echoes an apprehension about language and locale seen on the macroscopic level with respect to England’s position relative to Rome. The issue was made acute not only by the religious separation from Rome during the Reformation, but also by contemporary geohumoral theory, which held that qualities of incivility, stupidity, and muscular rigidity increased as one inhabited regions ever closer to the arctic pole.²² The idea was still current in 1712, when Jonathan Swift (1667–1745) declares that “the same Defect of Heat which gives a Fierceness to our Natures, may contribute to that Roughness of our Language, which bears some Analogy to the harsh Fruit of colder Countries.”²³

The importance of a “clear distinction of voices,” or correct sounds, raised by Puttenham was felt not only by schoolmasters and examiners, but also by the sixteenth-century orthographers (most of whom taught in the schools and universities) who felt strongly that the surest way to refine English was to establish rules for standardized spelling, more or less according to the sounds of English voices. The stakes for proper delivery were high. John Hart (d. 1574) called Quintilian’s rhetoric an “*orthographi*,” because its guidelines for oratory are preempted by foundational assertions (in book 1) about how “the use of letters is to keep safe sounds entrusted to them . . . and to restore them faithfully

²⁰Fredal, 3.

²¹Puttenham, 163. Anxieties about English dialects, and in connection with Puttenham’s ideas, are discussed by Blank, 69–125.

²²For a study of classical geohumoralism in Renaissance England, see Floyd-Wilson. In *Of Education* (1644), John Milton (1608–74), 974, writes that “we Englishmen, being far northerly, do not open our mouths in the cold air wide enough to grace a southern tongue, but are observed by all other nations to speak exceedingly close and inward — so that to smatter Latin with an English mouth is as ill a-hearing as law-French.”

²³Swift, 4:13 (“A Proposal for Correcting the English Tongue”).

to readers.”²⁴ Such a project was germane to the principles of Hart’s *Orthographie* (1569), which seeks “to use as many letters in our writing, as we doe voyces or breathes in speaking, and no more,” thereby mending the “confusion and disorder” currently plaguing English.²⁵ Even though Hart’s phonetic alphabet was not taken seriously, the idea of a written language shaped by sound abides in all the orthographies of the period, even when sound is deemed “tyrannous,” as it is in Mulcaster’s *Elementarie* (1582).²⁶ Indeed, despite qualifying Quintilian’s comments to work in favor of custom, or usage (Quintilian is the most cited authority in both Hart’s and Mulcaster’s orthographies), Mulcaster goes on to admit that “those characts which both signify and sound be called letters, & concern both the substance and deliverie of our sounds.” For this reason, his table of corrected spellings is modeled “generallie after an English ear,” and he defends inkhorn terms by acknowledging the “benefit of the foren tung, which we use in making their termes to become ours, with som alteration in form, according to the frame of our speche.”²⁷

Finally, the caliber of English oratory in the sixteenth century is part of what authorizes existing spelling customs: “Such a period in the Greke tung was that time, when Demosthenes lived, and that learned race of the father philosophers: such a period in the Latin tung, was that time, when Tullie lived, and those of that age: Such a period in the English tung I take this to be in our daies, for both the pen and the speche.”²⁸ Later, Mulcaster repeats this justification, but omits the “philosophers” and “those of that age”; it reads, simply, “Demosthenes his age is the prince of Greece, Tullies age the flour of Rome.”²⁹ The significance of paying tribute to these particular authorities is that it ties vernacular greatness to a quality of rhetoric, and specifically — with the mention of Demosthenes — delivery, the fifth canon. Indeed, Demosthenes’s name was synonymous with *pronuntiatio et actio*, and it is rare to find him mentioned without recourse to an anecdote about its importance. Thomas Wilson’s explanation of delivery in *The Art of Rhetoric* (1553), for instance, begins with the commonplace: “Demosthenes, therefore, that famous orator, being asked what was the chiefest point in al oratory, gave the chief and only praise to pronunciation, being demanded what was the second and the third, he still made answer,

²⁴Quintilian, 1:197 (*Institutio Oratoria* 1.7.31). Quintilian’s work — which devotes just over three sections of book 1 (5–8) to issues of spelling — is called an “*orthographi*” in Hart, O3^r–P2^v.

²⁵Hart, B3^r, A3^r. For illustrations of Renaissance English written or printed according to various accents and dialects, see Crystal, 125–29.

²⁶Mulcaster, 1925, 75.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 121, 246, 173.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 83.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 177.

‘Pronunciation,’ and would make none other answer till they left asking.”³⁰ Mulcaster recounts the story — derived from what was then assumed to be Plutarch’s *Lives of the Ten Orators* — as he is laying out the principles of his orthography: “And the eloquent Demosthenes being demanded, what was the chief point that did belong to an orator, answered to gestur well, & dubbed the point.”³¹

Mulcaster’s sense that writing or spelling reform was driven by the performance of English speech follows from years spent evaluating work primarily in terms of its delivery, with respect to both external examinations and everyday practices. Since each exercise was heard and appraised according to voice and gesture, considerations of action were fused with, or even gave inspiration to the act of composition. Such a connection is made plain by John Bulwer (1606–56), who counsels that “the gestures of the Hand must be prepar’d in the Mind, together with the inward speech, that precedes the outward expression.”³² In this, Renaissance writers followed classical precedent, which taught that literary style should be “full of moral and emotional overtones, and thus dictating the form of the delivery.”³³ Erasmus’s sixteenth-century recommendation for reading poetry aloud, for example, is based on an understanding that, in classical antiquity, “voice, expression, and posture were adapted to the sense. It was in this way that Virgil, Horace, and Pliny recited their work to the public”; consequently, he says, “the poet can be said to ‘form boys’ mouths.”³⁴ The growing awareness of an English language able to express greatness of feeling and thought may be attributed to the addition of literary ornament necessary to produce emotion, but that endeavor was itself motivated by delivery and the grammar school yoking of composition and performance. It is significant, therefore, that in Abraham Fraunce’s (1558–92) *Arcadian Rhetorike* (1588), English literature was for the first time placed alongside classical literature in terms of having the elements necessary to produce a score for delivery. For instance, according to Fraunce, and amid paradigms from Homer and Virgil, Sir Philip Sidney’s (1554–86) “O Deserts, Deserts, how fit a guest am I for you?” (a line from *The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia*) is an example of a mind in “anguish and griefe,” and therefore indicates the performance notes of “a hollow voyce fetcht from the bottom of the

³⁰Wilson, 241.

³¹Mulcaster, 1925, 20–21.

³²Bulwer, 142. Commenting on Bulwer’s work, B. L. Joseph, 29, notes that, “not only the sound, but also the gestures, could be imagined at the moment when thoughts were turned into language in the mind.”

³³Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1:441. See also Quintilian, 5:117–19 (*Institutio Oratoria* 11.3.62, 64); Cicero, 1959–60, 2:169–70 (*De Oratore* 3.213).

³⁴Erasmus, 421, 371 (*De recta pronuntiatione*).

throat.”³⁵ Writing in this period was not an activity isolated from the sound and movement of the body, and if the fortunes of English were amended by “playing” and each striving “writer,” as Heywood claims, it was because both players and writers shared concerns about infusing language with proper voice and gesture: “I hold all the rest as nothing,” he writes, “A delivery & sweet action is the glosse and beauty of any discourse that belongs to a scholler.”³⁶

ENGLISH PATHOS AND THE CONTAGIOUS PAST

Fraunce’s 1588 justification of a delivery sourced from English is a far cry from statements made earlier in the century, when it was felt that the language lacked the vocabulary to adequately express the inner life. Looking back on *The Governour* (1531), for instance, and needing to defend his choice to write in English, Sir Thomas Elyot (1490–1546) reflects that “my booke, which I named the Governour, in the redyng therof . . . I intended to augment our Englyshe tongue, whereby men shoulde as well expresse more abundantly the thyng that they conceived in their hertes (wherfore language was ordeined).”³⁷ Although delivery is not usually associated with neologisms (one of the things Elyot means by “expresse more abundantly”), a demand for excellence in *pronuntiatio et actio* also drove efforts to heighten the expressive capacity of the English language. Crucial here, of course, are the emotions, since their textual encoding provided the score by which readers, writers, and players alike could imagine or reimagine performance. As Cicero puts it, “the whole of a person’s frame and every look on his face and utterance of his voice are like the strings of a harp, and sound according as they are struck by each successive emotion.”³⁸ The idea of the emotions striking the body like fingers on a harp resonates with the intensely physiological understanding of the passions current in the Renaissance.³⁹ Yet there is another related aspect to delivery’s pathos that held special promise for English. Along with the impetus for adhering an inner state to linguistic expression, delivery’s theory of the emotions indicated a way to embody a venerated past for present use, an enterprise that would be particularly attractive for a language compared adversely with the Latin of a remote past. As will be made clear, one of delivery’s effects on English was to narrow or reconfigure the corporeal, temporal, and geographical discrepancies perceived to account for the language’s inferiority.

³⁵Fraunce, 116–17. There is a long tradition connecting poetry and delivery in this way. See Aristotle, 405–25 (*Rhetoric* 3.11–12).

³⁶Heywood, C4^r.

³⁷Elyot, A3^r.

³⁸Cicero, 1959–60, 2:173 (*De Oratore* 3.56.216). See also Aristotle, 345–51 (*Rhetoric* 3.1).

³⁹See Paster, 4.

Cicero argues that the fifth canon, more than any other part of rhetoric, had the “most effect on the ignorant and the mob and lastly on barbarians; for words influence nobody but the person allied to the speaker . . . whereas delivery, which gives the emotion of the mind expression, influences everybody.”⁴⁰ The way to “influence everybody” with emotions, as Quintilian advises, is first to be “moved by them oneself,” which means, as Wright affirms in 1600, that “we move because by the passion thus we are moved, and as it hath wrought in us, so it ought to work in you.”⁴¹ As to the method for stirring the necessary emotions, Quintilian instructs orators to form in their mind “what the Greeks call *phantasiai* (let us call them ‘visions’), by which the images of absent things are presented to the mind in such a way that we seem actually to see them.” He goes on to relate that by imagining the past sufferings of others he has been moved “to the point of being overtaken not only by tears but by pallor and by a grief which is very like the real thing.”⁴² As Joseph Roach explains, “Quintilian’s line of thinking is founded . . . in the Latin axiom, *Fortis imaginato generat causum* — ‘a strong imagination begets the event itself.’” “At such moments,” he continues, “feigned emotion becomes indistinguishable from genuine feeling.”⁴³ In the rhetorical understanding of passionate expression, the emotions cross time and space to authenticate their expression and ensure their contagion. This idea influenced Renaissance performers and writers in myriad ways. In *Julius Caesar* (1599), Antony looks upon the face of Octavius’s servant and declares, “Passion, I see, is catching, for mine eyes, / Seeing all those beads of sorrow stand in thine, / Began to water.”⁴⁴ But Ciceronian pathos was seen to serve other, nondramatic ends as well. So, for example, *An Essay on Drapery* (1635) has the following advice for clothsellers: “perswading his Customer to the liking of his commodity, hee must put on the same liking himself; for putting on the same passion hee would stir up in others, he is most like to prevaile.”⁴⁵

Professing “genuine” what is or started as “feigned” is the emotional aspect of a process of imitation learned in the Renaissance classroom. Imitation through double translation (translating a passage into English, and then retranslating it back into its original language) was the prime means by which pupils acquired

⁴⁰Cicero, 1959–60, 2:179 (*De Oratore* 3.59.223). Quintilian, 5:91 (*Institutio Oratoria* 6.2.26), writes that voice and gesture appeal to “the two senses by which all emotion penetrates to the mind.”

⁴¹Quintilian, 3:59 (*Institutio Oratoria* 6.2.26); Wright, 214.

⁴²Quintilian, 3:61, 65 (*Institutio Oratoria* 6.2.30, 36).

⁴³Roach, 25.

⁴⁴Shakespeare, 1987, 690 (*Julius Caesar* 3.1.286–88). Ciceronian pathos has been described by Rebhorn, 87, as a “process of ‘contagion,’” whereby a speaker’s passionate display “directly affects the feelings of the listener, spreading from one to the other like a . . . disease.”

⁴⁵Scott, E5^f. I am grateful to Derek Alwes for alerting me to this reference.

composition skills in the Renaissance grammar school. “This remarkable experience,” as Leonard Barkan explains, “enforces complex relations between replication and originality: students keep inventing as they travel across the language barrier until they achieve a text that is at once their own voice and the re-creation of a pre-existing model.” In the course of retranslating texts back into Latin, Barkan continues, students were asked “to place themselves in hypothetical situations, sometimes historical, sometimes mythological, and to create their own Latin text. The resulting exercises . . . amounted to dramatic impersonations.”⁴⁶ Such impersonations, or *ethopoeia*, however, did not remain on the page only, as Charles Hoole (1610–67) counsels in his pedagogical treatise: “I would have them translate the Fables and Themes [from Aphthonius’s *Progymnasmata*] into pure English, and to repeat them (being translated) in both Languages, that by that means they may gain the Method of these kinde of exercises, and inure themselves to Pronunciation.”⁴⁷ Thus, in imagining themselves in situations once experienced by others but now made their own, students would discover “at once their own voice and the re-creation of a pre-existing model” of an English tongue that had incorporated the beauty of Latin.

These very methods of appropriation were at work in resolving one of the main controversies of vernacular reform in the sixteenth century: whether the English language should better itself by enfranchising, or borrowing, words from foreign languages. Although some reformers decried the incorporation of foreign words because they diluted the purity of English, others found the distinction trivial, or perhaps even naïve about how vocabularies naturally develop in any given language. So, for example, while Wilson berates those who “seek so far for outlandish English that they forget altogether their mother’s language,”⁴⁸ Mulcaster recognizes the matter of enfranchisement as one of custom: “Now all this variety of matter, and diversity of trade, make both matter for our speech, and mean to enlarge it. For he that is so practised, will utter that, which he practiseth in his natural tongue, and if the strangeness of the matter do so require, he that is to utter, rather than he will stick in his utterance, will use the foreign term, by way of premunition, that the country people do call it so, and by that mean make a foreign word, an English denizen. . . . Thus much at this time concerning the right writing of foreign words, when they become ours to use, and attire themselves to the English complexion.”⁴⁹ Mulcaster’s idea of linguistic borrowing is conditional on a perception of English “complexion” (a word that

⁴⁶Barkan, 35–36. On double translation, see Ascham, 245; Brinsley, 115, 117; Rhodes, 2004, 63–68.

⁴⁷Hoole, 172.

⁴⁸Wilson, 188.

⁴⁹Mulcaster, 1925, 172–73. Mulcaster’s use of *premunition* here is in *OED*’s sense 1, “prior notification.”

denotes the particular balance of humors), and this union of language and body is further emphasized by the justification of enfranchisement through “utterance” in the “natural tongue.”⁵⁰ That the sound and complexion of English bodies would through their expression make a “foreign word, an English denizen” signals the importance of rhetorical performance in augmenting the vernacular.

As might be expected, Ciceronian pathos played an important role not only in justifying the incorporation of foreign words into English, but also in negotiating how the imitation of classical literature might serve to establish an English poetic tradition. One striking example of this process occurs in act 3 of Thomas Kyd’s (1558–94) *The Spanish Tragedy* (1587), when Hieronimo is asked to plead the cases of three citizens, even while his own claim for justice is ignored. Distracted from his duties, Hieronimo notices an old man nearby with “mournful eyes and hands to heaven upreared.”⁵¹ The emotions expressed by Don Bazulto (as the old man is later identified) fly instantly to Hieronimo, with Bazulto’s delivery of “muttering lips” and “sad words abruptly broken off” enabling the “selfsame sorrow” in Hieronimo.⁵² This is a conventional retelling of emotional contagion, but its significance to Kyd’s vernacular imitation of the Latin revenge tradition is that the transfer of “sorrow” stems from a moment of confused identity. Before receiving the imprint of Bazulto’s emotions, Hieronimo stares into the old man’s face and sees Horatio instead:

Sweet boy, how art thou changed in death’s black shade!
 Had Proserpine no pity on thy youth,
 But suffered thy fair crimson-coloured spring
 With withered winter to be blasted thus?
 Horatio, thou art older than thy father;
 Ah ruthless fate, that favour thus transforms!⁵³

Given that the scene begins with the reading of Seneca, that the play is indebted to Senecan motifs and arguments, and that Bazulto’s designation of “Senex” in the text is visually and phonetically evocative of Seneca (and his Senex figures), this moment of an elderly face becoming one’s offspring — through the imagination of Hieronimo (who is the playwright within the play) — illustrates the very manner in which *The Spanish Tragedy* emerges from the Senecan

⁵⁰“Complexion” (173, 176) and “hew” (161, 246) are Mulcaster’s preferred terms for an English language that maintains its national identity despite the incorporation of foreign words.

⁵¹Kyd, 97 (*The Spanish Tragedy* 3.13.68).

⁵²*Ibid.*, 101 (3.13.165, 166, 167).

⁵³*Ibid.*, 100 (3.13.146–51).

tradition.⁵⁴ That is, Kyd's play here dramatizes the way that a vernacular literary tradition is authorized through the translation and delivery of emotion from its Latin models. The play is distinct even as its action bears the mark of its father, a paternal relationship that is the analogy for successful imitation in the eighty-fourth letter of Seneca's *Epistulae Morales*.⁵⁵

Nevertheless, not all such processes of emotional transfer were seen as beneficial to the language. To return to Quintilian's advice to orators, there is some confusion, for example, as to where one should seek the *visiones* responsible for the self-inculcation of emotion. The dominance of classical texts and themes in the Renaissance classroom would seem to indicate that such *visiones* were drawn not from personal experience, but rather from examples in classical poetry, and certainly it is difficult to imagine where else boys might find inspiration to "put on" the grief of ravished women in the Latin corpus (as, on occasion, they were asked to). Successful emotional contagion in this respect depended on refashioning oneself by looking outside of oneself; thus the exercise of making the "feigned emotion" of a figure from the celebrated canons of the past "indistinguishable from real feeling" allowed for both an imaginative and physical alteration — however temporary — from English weakness to Roman greatness. On the other hand, this promise of a conduit to the classical tradition also had the potential to alienate speakers from their own culture, thereby only widening the perceived dichotomy of barbaric English and civil Latin. As Lynn Enterline offers, "one of the stranger aspects of grammar school practice is that [it] . . . produced rhetorically skilled subjects whose technical proficiency in evoking assigned passions . . . meant that a boy's connection to his own feelings might become tenuous at best."⁵⁶ Rather than an opportunity to invigorate a revered past in present language, to resurrect Troy (via Rome) in England, and to see England as the natural successor to classical antiquity, this aspect of delivery could instead reaffirm the notion — put forth by Elyot — that the English language was disconnected from English hearts.

In *Hamlet*, the play that in turn imitates *The Spanish Tragedy*, Hamlet observes a player enacting the grief of Aeneas and asks, "What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba, / That he should weep for her?"⁵⁷ Rather than a criticism of the feigned nature of acting, this question is an expression of regret that he cannot

⁵⁴According to Daalder, 251, Senex is Seneca, "particularly because the Senex figure is itself one which we know from Seneca's plays. . . . What Kyd appears to be doing is to introduce us to Seneca's thinking throughout the play."

⁵⁵Seneca, 2:281 (*Epistulae Morales* 84.8). Both Seneca and Hieronimo commit suicide with a knife: Tacitus, 5:317 (*Annals* 15.63). Mazzio, 94–141, discusses the staging of languages in act 4 of this play in relation to vernacular reform, but not with reference to delivery.

⁵⁶Enterline, 2012, 29. See also her discussion of boys playing ravished women, 85–88.

⁵⁷Shakespeare, 1987, 752 (*Hamlet* 2.2.560–61).

feel the same genuine emotion (of the actor) for his dead father (who, Hamlet believes, should provide a genuine emotion). Hamlet's anguished question demonstrates perfectly the stronghold of classical antiquity in providing the right indexes for emotion, in this case hearkening, perhaps, to a time before Fraunce's *Arcadian Rhetorique*, when it seemed impossible to register a vernacular example. Hamlet longs for the local inspiration of his Danish father, but instead discovers that only the Hecuba of a remote tradition provides the desired affect. Worse, it can only produce this desired affect in someone else. The play's presentation of Hamlet's desolation here draws on the potential of Ciceronian pathos to alienate rather than subsume its initiates (Hamlet is, after all, a university student who has quite a lot to say about delivery). That is, if delivery allowed English bodies to experience the greatness of an admired tradition, it could also make them suspicious that the inspiration carried by distant winds sounded through unique and probably inferior instruments, as the Merchant Taylors' examination of 1562 suggests. The issue might then be one of ameliorating language by refining the body.

RENAISSANCE SPEECH THERAPY

Classical guidance for delivery inevitably stresses the importance of physical exercise — advice that Mulcaster followed in *Positions* (1580) when advocating activities such as “loude, and soft reading,” “holding the breath,” “laughing, and weeping,” and “lowd speaking,” alongside other more traditional athletic activities like walking, running, and wrestling.⁵⁸ Mulcaster's *Positions* and *Elementarie* together make clear the connection between delivery, physical exercise, and the refinement of the vernacular. In the latter treatise, he writes that, “No one tung is more fine then other naturallie, but by industrie of the speaker.”⁵⁹ That by “industrie” Mulcaster has delivery in mind may be inferred by his subsequent example of “the peple of Athens,” who “bewtified their speche by the use of their pleading”; shortly thereafter he defends the use of Latin to refine vernaculars: “Howbeit there was nothing somuch learning in the latin tung, while the Romane flourished, as at this daie is in it by the industrie of students, thoroughout all Europe, who use the latin tung, as a common mean, of their general deliverie, both in things of their own devise, and in works translated by them.”⁶⁰ The key to a flourishing English lies in overcoming a cultural inferiority that is based on geography, and resolved through exertion: “Our tung is capable, if our people would be painfull . . . [where] the air more grosse, the labor must be greater, to supply that with pains, which is wanting in natur.”⁶¹

⁵⁸See Mulcaster, 1994, 65–113 (chapters 10–27).

⁵⁹Mulcaster, 1925, 267.

⁶⁰Ibid., 267, 268.

⁶¹Ibid., 275.

In *Positions*, Mulcaster states that such pains, or “labor,” include physical exercise, and its alignment with delivery (especially with respect to an emphasis on nurture over nature) is inspired by the figure of Demosthenes, whose fame derived from overcoming the physical defects inhibiting his speech. This feat is accomplished both because he submits to the instruction of an actor named Andronicus (he “put himself in the hands of Andronicus” after being “hissed out of the assembly”), and through physical exercise.⁶² According to Plutarch, Demosthenes was “lean and sickly,” and when he first attempted public oratory, he was ridiculed for “weakness of voice and indistinctness of speech and shortness of breath.” To correct these faults, he devised a list of exercises, such as “discoursing while running or going up steep places.”⁶³ Some versions of these stories appeared in Renaissance rhetorics, on the face of it to reinforce the importance of delivery to persuasive speech, though they also provided a model by which English speakers might remove the natural defects inhibiting the clear speech of their own language. For example, Mulcaster includes the exercise of “walking” in *Positions* because “Demosthenes strengthened his voice by it, pronouncing his orations aloud, as he walked up against the hill.”⁶⁴ So walking, Mulcaster claims, will help “deliver . . . long periodes,” and his somewhat bizarre recommendation to practice running while holding the breath is justified because it keeps the mouth from “distorsion or writhing.”⁶⁵ In a similar vein, Thomas Wilson argues — shortly after sharing the commonplace about Demosthenes — that “they that have no good voices by nature, or cannot well utter their words, must seek for help elsewhere. Exercises of the body, fasting, moderation in meat and drink, gaping wide, or signing plainsong, and counterfeiting those that do speak distinctly help much to have a good deliverance.”⁶⁶ Delivery, then, fuses both the literal and metaphorical meaning of “tung”; it does not distinguish between language and flesh, and its “labor” — reinforced through its repeated practices in the classroom — could refine an English perceived as naturally impoverished partly because of the physiology of its speakers, and partly because of an “air more grosse.”

Even though narratives of composition, speech delivery, and famous orators often contain motifs of weakness overcome, it is also the case that the rhetorical

⁶²Pseudo-Plutarch, 419. Plutarch names the actor Satyrus in his *Lives*, though it is the Andronicus of the anonymous *Lives of the Ten Orators* that seems to be the most frequently cited in the Renaissance for the actor who taught the importance of delivery to Demosthenes. See, for instance, the title page of Bulwer; later this article suggests that the name evokes a similar rhetorical association in *Titus Andronicus*.

⁶³Plutarch, 7:9, 15, 27.

⁶⁴Mulcaster, 1994, 93.

⁶⁵Ibid., 97.

⁶⁶Wilson, 242.

rules for voice and gesture target nonlinguistic skills and, in a related sense, call attention to the eloquence achieved by linguistic failure. This paradox is manifest not only in exercises like Mulcaster's that engage laughter and weeping in the service of delivery, but also in the very structure of oratory. According to Fraunce, who follows Cicero and Quintilian, the beginning (or exordium) of an eloquent speech must be characterized by "feare and bashfulness" in the voice, accompanied by "modest" and "bashful" gesture.⁶⁷ So, in *De Oratore*, Antonius is praised thus: "ye Gods! — what an opening you made! How nervous, how irresolute you seemed! How stammering and halting was your delivery! . . . So, in the first place, did you prepare the way towards getting hearing!"⁶⁸ Here a failure to communicate linguistically is able even by virtue of its failure to produce what Quintilian calls the "soul" of eloquence: emotional arousal and transfer.⁶⁹ There is no question, of course, about whether Antonius was in full command of the performance: the "irresolute" opening is part and parcel of the modesty topos, and it also does for a speech what Prince Henry in *1 Henry IV* (1597) seeks to do for his public image when "he may be more wondered at / By breaking through the foul and ugly mists / Of vapours that did seem to strangle him."⁷⁰ The persuasive power of "bashfulness" in the rhetorical tradition encouraged Renaissance schoolmasters to take advantage of the natural infirmity of their students, and to make bashfulness the sign of "audacity."⁷¹ Hoole states that the academic stage was "an especiaall remedy to expel that subrustick bashfulnesse, and unresistable timorousnesse, which some children are naturally possessed withal."⁷² Yet the methods of learning audacity often included the performance of bashfulness: to be able to act bashful was, in effect, to conquer bashfulness and become bold. Modest and timid beginnings, besides being the appropriate method for starting a speech, also proved to the audience that the orator was in control of himself.

This aspect of rhetoric — the parts of an oration and their respective performance notes — offered English speakers a way to imagine their own natural verbal and physiological inferiority not only in terms of a narrative of overcoming, but also as a quality to be cultivated in the service of powerful expression. Sir James Whitelocke, reflecting on his education under Mulcaster, confirms Hoole's claim: "yearly he presented sum playes to the court, in whiche his scholers wear only actors, and I on among them, and by that meanes taught

⁶⁷Fraunce, 114, 128. See also Wright, 184.

⁶⁸Cicero, 1959–60, 1:347 (*De Oratore* 2.49.202).

⁶⁹Quintilian, 3:49 (*Institutio Oratoria* 6.2.7).

⁷⁰Shakespeare, 1987, 513 (*1 Henry IV* 1.2.198–200).

⁷¹See Heywood, C3^v–4^f.

⁷²Hoole, 142–43.

them good behaviour and audacity.”⁷³ That at least some of these academic plays — whose purpose was to train delivery — were in English may be inferred by the surviving titles of plays performed at court by the boys of Merchant Taylors; and that they capitalized on bashfulness to train audacity may be evidenced by the preference for stage plays about grieving pathetic heroines, such as “Timoclia at the sege of Thebes by Alexander” (a play based on Plutarch’s *Life of Alexander*), “Percius & Anthomiris” (from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*), and “A historie of Ariodante and Genevora” (from Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso*).⁷⁴

More broadly, the chief canon of rhetoric sanctions an impoverished vernacular because it focuses on and valorizes features that by themselves are considered inarticulate or nonlinguistic: the groans, sighs, or wails; the pitch and tempo of voice; and the expansiveness of gesture. In school exercises for delivery that privilege volume control over textual content, such as “laughing, and weeping” or “lowd, and soft reading,” nonlinguistic attributes are segregated from speech in order to better serve language on its return (in part because they are corrective of the body responsible for sounding speech). In his own treatise recommending exercise, *Toxophilus* (1545), Roger Ascham praises Demosthenes for not being “ashamed to learne howe he should utter his soundes aptly of a dogge,” which is an aid to show “howe a man shoulde order his voyce for all kynde of matters.”⁷⁵ If, as Carla Mazzio proposes, “departures from linguistic fluency” in the Renaissance “could designate other kinds of knowing, thinking, and feeling,” then delivery — normally associated with “humanist and Reformation ideals of eloquence” — advanced a paradigm for imagining a new vernacular identity outside the bounds of the prescriptive textuality of Latin, precisely because its rules in a fundamental way resist textuality.⁷⁶ That is, in a culture that did not see the mind-body relationship as a unidirectional inner-to-outer trajectory of influence, the refinement of the body — here through exercises in delivery — could work inward to the benefit of the soul (just as wretched actions could defile the soul), improving both intellect and virtue. This two-way model of influence therefore invites another way to consider delivery’s effect on the vernacular, because, in the early to mid-sixteenth century especially, a nationally inherent incivility and lack of judgment were discerned as prime contributors to the weakness of English.⁷⁷ Delivery offered

⁷³Whitlocke, 12.

⁷⁴Wagonheim, 45–53.

⁷⁵Ascham, 16. One use for such an exercise might have been the refinement of the English pronunciation of *r*, which Ben Jonson (1572–1637) calls the “Dogs letter” because it is made with “the tongue striking the inner palate, with a trembling about the teeth”: *English Grammar* (1640), quoted in Crystal, 47. As Crystal suggests, “think ‘grrr.’”

⁷⁶Mazzio, 214.

⁷⁷On the mutual causation of body-soul, see, for example, Wright, 215, and its discussion in Floyd-Wilson, 12–19, 60–66; Targoff.

a pattern for recycling cultural greatness, here with the use of vaunted Latin models to perfect physical skills, which in turn bettered the soul, whose expression in language was the measure of eloquence.

DELIVERING CULTURE

The foregoing account of emotional transfer and physical training points to the cultural relativism inevitable but mostly latent in theories of delivery. To be sure, as Neil Rhodes argues, a humanist education in general could further the notion that “the relationship between civilization and barbarism is unfixed, that the values associated with each are not polarized and are even interchangeable.”⁷⁸ And in stories of ancient Rome’s sense of inferiority to the Greeks, the English found, as Sean Keilen puts it, “the image of their own primitivism and barbarity that allowed English poets to recognize, ever more clearly, the Roman aspect of their vernacular writing.”⁷⁹ However, delivery’s unique contribution in this regard is to legitimize the sounds and gestures particular to any given culture, which explains why, despite the insistence on the primacy of this rhetorical skill, there are so few specific performance directions given, and why advice for invention, arrangement, style, and even memory, dwarfs that for delivery. Delivery, because of its dependence on performance, demands a lacuna in the written form, an absence felt somewhat ironically even in its origins — the long lost *Eleoi* (Pities) of Thrasymachus alleged by Plato and Aristotle to have been the first description of the kinds of voice and gesture appropriate for delivery.⁸⁰

While Quintilian offers the most thorough available description of appropriate voice and gesture, he is also quick to emphasize the relative nature of appropriate delivery, a conclusion he reaches in the midst of discussing fashion: “The ancients, for example, wore no *sinus* (‘fold’), and their successors very short ones. Accordingly, as their arms (according to Greek custom) were kept within their clothes, they must have used different Gestures from ours in the Prooemium. But I am speaking of present conditions.”⁸¹ Shortly after this passage, he reflects that “today a rather more violent form of delivery has come into fashion and is demanded of our orators.”⁸² Without their performed models, directions concerning volume, tone of voice, or gestural motion, inevitably resist specificity. When, for instance, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* advises a “calm and composed” voice in the exordium, and never to use “sharp

⁷⁸Rhodes, 2004, 119.

⁷⁹Keilen, 16.

⁸⁰See Plato, 123, 140 (*Phaedrus* 261c, 267d); Aristotle, 349 (*Rhetoric* 3.1.7). Diogenes Laertius, 1:499 (*Lives of Eminent Philosophers* 5.48), lists another work of delivery by Theophrastus (also nonexistent).

⁸¹Quintilian, 5:157 (11.3.138).

⁸²*Ibid.*, 5:183 (11.3.184).

exclamation,” obviously what counts as “calm” or “sharp” is culturally relative.⁸³ Earlier and contemporary writers sensed this inherent ambiguity; indeed, both Aristotle and Cicero are explicit that delivery cannot be reduced to a set of written rules.⁸⁴ The implication is that this inchoate and amorphous territory would be left largely to the refining touches of a teacher — a person who would necessarily filter his culture’s assumptions through to the vocal nuances and bodily gestures best used to express the sense of a speech and its required emotions. John Walker’s (1732–1807) eighteenth-century assessment of delivery may be considered definitive: “Whether the action of the ancients was excessive, or whether that of the English is not too scanty, is not the question: those who would succeed as English orators must speak to English taste.”⁸⁵

For sixteenth-century English speakers struggling to define their vernacular against the monuments of Latin culture, the innate relativism of delivery allowed for a sense of eloquence coming unstuck from its static classical past and adhering instead to English voices. To return for a moment to the problem of locating emotional indexes for *visiones*, it is not clear that these were sought only from classical sources. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that delivery imparted a skill that made “feigned” emotion “real” in a general way, regardless of source — personal experience or classical figuration — so that one should imagine the Latin rules for Ciceronian pathos as modeling self-expression rather than reinforcing a cultural divide. Quintilian’s discussion of emotions in oratory, after all, begins with a confession of intense grief for the death of his son rather than a figure from the Greek tradition.⁸⁶ And certainly, apart from any other personal circumstances, Renaissance schoolboys could draw for inspiration on their own experiences of terror and suffering at the hands of the master’s switch, accounts of which were ubiquitous in the period.⁸⁷

Accordingly, with respect to Hamlet’s question of inspiration (“what’s Hecuba to him?”), it is possible to consider the play a meditation on the discovery of

⁸³ *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 195 (3.12.22). Directions for bodily gesture held more promise — as found in Cicero and Quintilian, and then later with greater development in Cresollius’s *Vacationes autumnales* (Paris, 1620) — though illustrations did not emerge until the seventeenth century with Bulwer.

⁸⁴ Aristotle, 349 (*Rhetoric* 3.1.6–7); Cicero, 1959–60, 1:107 (*De Oratore* 1.34.156).

⁸⁵ Walker, 2:262.

⁸⁶ Quintilian, 3:9–17 (prooemium to book 6 of *Institutio Oratoria*). See Roach, 23–57, for a discussion of the relevance of this section to Quintilian’s advice for stirring the emotions.

⁸⁷ See Stewart, 84–121. Erasmus, 325 (*De pueris insituendis*), reported disdainfully that “schools have become torture-chambers; you hear nothing but . . . howling and moaning, and shouts of brutal abuse”; though given the ubiquitous use of impersonation and Ciceronian pathos to train little voices, it is not difficult to imagine that at least some of what one heard emanating from the schools was rhetorical exercise.

a locally inspired eloquence that arrives only when the speaker discovers in the rules for delivery a means with which to venerate the emotions, and hence the language of his own culture. Hamlet's "readiness is all" is a rejection of classical modes of revenge, a point at which the role of revenger passes from Hamlet to Laertes (and, hence, that of the Ghost to Claudius), though it is accomplished in part because two acts earlier the inspiration to act usually associated with formal, classical rhetorical modes is found to be no different than those occurring naturally, in true-to-life present circumstances (such as the "tow'ring passion" Hamlet experiences after observing a grief-stricken Laertes).⁸⁸ Hamlet's advice to the players, who will elicit the affect necessary to entrap Claudius, is to act naturally, though this advice matches exactly that given to orators, who supposedly act formally. Hamlet's insistence to "beget a temperance" in gesture, for instance, is the "comely moderation" of gesture recommended by Wilson in *The Art of Rhetoric*.⁸⁹

The distinction between formalistic (or rhetorical) and naturalistic acting no longer seems clear, or, rather, naturalistic acting develops not in distinction from theories of delivery, but because of them. Hamlet begins with the search for appropriate expression, a search whose explicit iteration occurs within the context of an academic play and in the directions for action that make the past available for present purpose. The play then ends with the impression that its story avoids consignment to oblivion only because Horatio — whose name intimates *oratio*, Latin for "speech" — puts off the "antique Roman" in order to "Truly deliver" to the "yet unknowing world / How these things came about."⁹⁰ A still more precise dramatic register of delivery's authorization of the vernacular would seem to occur in Shakespeare's earliest tragedy, *Titus Andronicus* (1592), which, as Jonathan Bate suggests, clears the way for English to register great stories such as Hamlet's.⁹¹

LAVINIA'S ALPHABET

The story of Lavinia's rape and mutilation in *Titus Andronicus* is an imitation of classical models that results in a character unable to speak and gesture. Like the

⁸⁸Shakespeare, 1987, 772 (*Hamlet* 5.2.168 and 5.2.81).

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 755 (*Hamlet* 3.2.7–8); Wilson, 243. The connection between Hamlet's advice, and that given to orators, is studied in detail by Plett, 435–53. Further complicating the distinction between the academic, or formal, and naturalistic modes is that advice similar to Hamlet's is found on the academic stage. One of the boys in Marston's *Antonio's Revenge* (acted by St. Paul's in 1600), for example, asks his fellow if he "would'st have me turn rank mad, / Or wring my face with mimick action; / Stampe, curse, weepe, rage, & then my bosome strike? / Away tis apish action, player-like": Marston, 79 (1.5.77–80).

⁹⁰Shakespeare, 1987, 774–75 (*Hamlet* 5.2.294, 339, 333–34).

⁹¹Bate, 83–117, esp. 112.

play itself, and like a Renaissance schoolboy's commonplace book, Lavinia has no single, primary source, and is rather an anthology of classical narratives — in her case those found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Seneca's *Thyestes*, Virgil's *Aeneid*, and Livy's *History*. Her name recalls the daughter of Latinus and mother of the Roman empire; her rape and revenge, Philomela and Atreus; and her death, Virginia, murdered at the hands of her father. The issue of what one may learn from texts, and specifically the Latin literature so prized by humanist educators, is of great import to the play, especially since it is clear that the perpetrators of Lavinia's ravishment are also well versed in the Latin tradition:

DEMETRIUS

What's here — a scroll, and written round about?

Let's see.

*'Integer vitae, scelerisque purus,
Non eget Mauri iaculis, nec arcu.'*

CHIRON

O, 'tis a verse in Horace, I know it well.

I read it in the grammar long ago.⁹²

Not only the killing of Lavinia by Titus, but also the much-maligned excess of violence throughout the play are parodic of Renaissance humanism because their occurrence is justified by the imitation of classical texts so crucial to sixteenth-century Latin learning, as well as by the related notion that such learning leads to a life of virtuous action. As Bate points out, the only thing Chiron and Demetrius seem to have learned from their education in the Latin classics is to remove Lavinia's hands as well as her tongue. Philomela, after all, had revealed a similar crime by weaving its story in a tapestry.⁹³

Bate's argument is that *Titus Andronicus* lays the groundwork for establishing an English literary tradition by destabilizing "the entire humanist project of learning from the exemplars of the past." Success, in this sense, is measured not by rote learning, but rather in performance, since "the play in the theatre gives the audience a creative knowledge in that it teaches them how to respond sympathetically to suffering."⁹⁴ However, it is also evident that this revision

⁹²Shakespeare, 1987, 160 (*Titus Andronicus* 4.2.18–23). The Latin lines are from a Horatian ode: "The man of unblemished life who is unstained by crime has no need of Moorish javelin or bow": Horace, 67 (*Odes* 1.22.1–2).

⁹³Bate, 107–08.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 112.

cannot be accomplished without recourse to the classical anthology that is Lavinia, since a new tradition that relies (for its perception, at the very least) on the literal and figurative dismemberment of a Latin corpus is still in a meaningful way contingent on this same corpus. “Shakespeare,” as Keilen claims, “cannot think of his vulgar eloquence apart from Roman violence.”⁹⁵ Along the same lines, Heather James contends that *Titus Andronicus* “invoke[s] and displace[s]” Latin authority, even while “Lavinia becomes a palimpsest bearing the literary and ideological inscriptions of Vergil, Ovid, Petrarch, and finally, Shakespeare.”⁹⁶ Delivery, on the other hand, displaces through invocation.

If the play gives the impression of pulling in two opposing directions at once — toward a dependence on canonical texts, on the one hand, and an apology for the immediacy of performance on the other — then it does so arguably because its impetus for vernacular innovation is shaped by a rhetorical tradition that both relies on and fundamentally departs from textuality. Indeed, that the concerns of delivery should be central to *Titus Andronicus* may be gathered from the patrilineal name of its titular character, shared as it is by the actor who taught voice and gesture to Demosthenes, as well as those of Chiron and Demetrius, which carry associations with, among other things, education and gesture (Chiron as tutor of Achilles, and also evocative of chironomy), and rhetoric (Demetrius as the purported author of a treatise on eloquence). Another clue may lie in the play’s abiding fascination with hands, whose connection with agency (or loss thereof, in Titus’s case) resonates with the rhetorical demand for appropriate gesture: “The casting of the right arme,” writes Fraunce, “is as it were an arming of the speech.”⁹⁷

Yet even more telling in this regard is the moment in the play when the crime against Lavinia is discovered, in spite of the lessons in cover-up taught by Ovid to Chiron. Finding her young nephew with a copy of the *Metamorphoses*, Lavinia sees a chance to reveal her predicament, and uses the stumps of her arms to turn to the story of Philomela. Nonetheless, although Lavinia’s appropriation of Ovid has revealed to her family what has occurred, she still has no way of communicating the names of her attackers. Marcus provides the means:

My lord, look here. Look here, Lavinia.
This sandy plot is plain; guide, if thou canst,
This after me.

⁹⁵Keilen, 133.

⁹⁶James, 44, 47–48.

⁹⁷Fraunce, 124.

*He writes his name with his staff, and guides it with
feet and mouth*

I here have writ my name

Without the help of any hand at all.
Cursed be that heart that forced us to this shift!
Write thou, good niece, and here display at last
What God will have discovered for revenge.
Heaven guide thy pen to print thy sorrows plain,
That we may know the traitors and the truth!

*She takes the staff in her mouth, and guides it with
her stumps, and writes*

O, do ye read, my lord, what she hath writ?⁹⁸

The first word Lavinia writes is in Latin — “*Stuprum*” — and the text of the *Metamorphoses* that exposes the defilement is from the Latin canon.⁹⁹ But rather than a humanist reaffirmation of the father tongue, the play insists that the Latin texts have been mediated by a mother.¹⁰⁰ When asked what book Lavinia “tosseth so,” the boy responds, “‘tis Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. / My mother gave it me,” and it is Lavinia who assumes this maternal role in the play: Titus assures the boy that “Cornelia never with more care / Read to her sons than [Lavinia] hath read to thee / Sweet poetry and Tully’s *Orator*,” while the boy admits that his “noble aunt / Loves me as dear as e’er my mother did.”¹⁰¹ The image, then, of Lavinia writing Latin with her mouth, of a father tongue indelibly marked by an incomplete or compromised mother tongue, resonates not only with the examination scene at Merchant Taylors’ School in 1562, but also with a rhetorical tradition that profits language by training imperfect mouths and hands to convey affect. Lavinia ties together the inarticulate with grief, and also the latency of the articulate within grief.¹⁰²

⁹⁸Shakespeare, 1987, 159 (*Titus Andronicus* 4.1.67–76).

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 160 (*Titus Andronicus* 4.1.77). Most editions of this play translate the Latin “*Stuprum*” here as “rape”: see Shakespeare, 2008b, 149n77.

¹⁰⁰Conversely, Kahn, 61–62, argues that Lavinia can only tell her story “in the revealingly mediated form of a citation from one of the master texts of Latin culture,” and therefore “she figures the cultural double bind of women, who must either speak in the language of the fathers or improvise some other means of communication in its interstices.”

¹⁰¹Shakespeare, 1987, 159 (*Titus Andronicus* 4.1.41–43, 12–14, 22–23).

¹⁰²Mazzio, 108, finds a similar trajectory in *The Spanish Tragedy*: “For when we begin to see the Latin oratio within ‘Horatio,’ we can see how often, when Hieronimo speaks of the loss of Horatio, he also unwittingly speaks to the fact that he has lost not only a son but also a tongue that he might call his own.”

In a move that resembles the mission of the sixteenth-century English orthographies, the words delivered by Lavinia are treated as unstable and ineffective until they can be made static.

TITUS

And come, I will go get a leaf of brass
 And with a gad of steel will write these words,
 And lay it by. The angry northern wind
 Will blow these sands like Sibyl's leaves abroad,
 And where's our lesson then?¹⁰³

This wind fits more with an English setting than a Roman one, and taking into account Titus's earlier desire to "wrest an alphabet" by reading the "dumb action" of his "speechless" daughter, it is possible to read this moment as Lavinia's alphabet — once mute, abused, inferior, and as ephemeral as a vernacular — achieving expressive capacity first by "action," and then by taking on the inscription that preserves memory as well as the marks of its mother.¹⁰⁴ Mulcaster writes that "if anie tung be absolute, and free from motion, it is shrined up in books," and "books give life" because they "preserveth tungs in their natural best from the first time that theie grew to account, till theie com to decaie, and a new period growen, different from the old, tho excellent in the altered kind, and yet it self to depart, and make room for another, when the circular turn shall have ripened alteration."¹⁰⁵ Inscription both directs and is shaped by the mouths of its speakers because it captures language at a given moment, and Mulcaster believes that sixteenth-century English is in its zenith, ready to eclipse the Latin and take on the written record of its greatness.¹⁰⁶ In the figure of Lavinia, and through the course of the play, *Titus Andronicus* presents this "circular turn," whereby language decays in the first half of the action, only to be reborn in a new context in the second half, the sign of its efficacy preserved in a "leaf of brass."

Delivery's intervention in this turn is prompted by the transmigration of eloquence implicit in its principles of cultural relativism and emotional contagion, as well as, of course, the commitment to nurture over nature described in its classical and Renaissance narratives. That *Titus Andronicus* renders this intervention dramatic is partly evident in the scene of Lavinia's revelation, when she overcomes her physical defects, but also on a larger scale in

¹⁰³Shakespeare, 1987, 160 (*Titus Andronicus* 4.1.101–05).

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 158 (*Titus Andronicus* 3.2.44, 40, 39).

¹⁰⁵Mulcaster, 1925, 177–78.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 178–79.

the sequence of its action. The story is of those who establish speech by mourning what is lost, and this mourning, the expression of which is the primary function of delivery, adheres the body to language. Typical of the play's overall tenor is Titus's opening speech, which binds together the language of grief with that of inspiration:

Hail, Rome, victorious in thy mourning weeds!
 Lo, as the bark that hath discharged his freight
 Returns with precious lading to the bay
 From whence at first she weighed her anchorage,
 Cometh Andronicus, bound with laurel bows,
 To re-salute his country with his tears,
 Tears of true joy for his return to Rome.¹⁰⁷

His subsequent apostrophe to the tomb of the Andronici reinforces this sense of productive lament, while adding the decidedly Renaissance humanist notion of a dead Rome as repository of greatness: "O sacred receptacle of my joys, / Sweet cell of virtue and nobility."¹⁰⁸ The epideictic rhetoric at the tomb, the pleading of Tamora for Alarbus, and the deliberative speeches of Saturninus and Bassanius on the Capitoline Hill render the stage of act 1 an "emblem of . . . Roman civic virtues," especially because — as S. Clark Hulse notes — it "invokes the Ciceronian oratory so fundamental to Roman virtue."¹⁰⁹

If the civic setting of act 1 is quintessentially Roman, then the woods of act 2 might best figure the vernacular anxiety of sixteenth-century England. It is here, in the forest outside the city, that Aaron advises Chiron and Demetrius to commit their crime, since "The Emperor's court is like the house of Fame, / The palace full of tongues, of eyes and ears, / The woods are ruthless, dreadful, deaf, and dull."¹¹⁰ In a place where language is removed from its Roman edifices, Lavinia is raped, and her ability to speak and to gesture violently eradicated. Rhetoric, generally, loses its efficacy, for in this same setting the desperate plea of Lavinia finds no purchase with Tamora, and Titus's petition for his sons falls on deaf ears.¹¹¹ This neat allegory does, however, break down at the level of rhetorical failure, since of course Tamora's supplication goes unheeded in the midst of the very monuments of classical oratory. There is the possibility that the northern queen, Tamora, rather than Lavinia, better epitomizes the interests of

¹⁰⁷Shakespeare, 1987, 143–44 (*Titus Andronicus* 1.1.70–76).

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 144 (*Titus Andronicus* 1.1.92–93).

¹⁰⁹Hulse, 108.

¹¹⁰Shakespeare, 1987, 150 (*Titus Andronicus* 2.1.127–29).

¹¹¹See Hulse, 109; Danson, 1–21.

an English vernacular pining against the deaf ears of a long-dead cultural colossus.¹¹² In this case, it may be significant that the restoration of order in Rome is accomplished through the compliance of an army of Goths, and Titus's lesson of revenge accomplished when a northerner dines on those whose names are associative of education and eloquence — a grotesque dramatization, perhaps, of humanist pedagogy when it recommended teachers bake cookies in the shape of letters as a reward to students learning the alphabet.¹¹³

On the other hand, the play's deliberate inversion or blurring of lines demarcating civilized Roman from barbaric northerner may be suggestive of a northern vernacular that is augmented not only because of its enfranchisement of Latin words, but also because of the work of performing Roman action in English bodies — making real in the present what started as a feigned past. So rather than disentangling the competing sympathies, the play merges Roman and Goth in a cycle of revenge that nonetheless has a speechless complainer at its center; and it is she who returns the gift of language through each "circular turn" because her provision of an alphabet sets the wheel in motion once more.¹¹⁴ "*Stuprum* — Chiron — Demetrius,"¹¹⁵ besides the disclosure of the crime, is a record of both the loss and gain of language, of articulation wrested from the inarticulate, and of the inspiration necessary to channel the action toward a restoration of civic order in the final scene. Yet this is a token restoration only, since the final lines of the play make apparent the inevitability of revenge, and of its repeating cycles of violence: "Her life was beastly and devoid of pity, / And being dead, let birds on her take pity."¹¹⁶ These lines about Tamora may as well refer to Titus, whose lack of pity in act 1 is the mainspring for the act of vengeance that incites his own, a scheme of repetition mimicked in the epiphora of "pity." And, of course, there is the army of Goths, whose presence at the end mitigates an impression of finality in the mingled fortunes of barbarian and Roman. *Titus Andronicus* continually undercuts the notion that the Roman has gotten the better of the northerner, for in her very conquering, she insinuates herself into and forever alters the narratives of both peoples.

This progression from separated to interlaced destinies (always with the possibility of renewed separation) in a play that so clearly engages with sixteenth-century concerns about language and humanist education suggests that it is shaped in an important way by theories governing voice and gesture. A training

¹¹²See Rhodes, 2004, 137: "If mastery of eloquence is a badge of civilization, then Tamora is part of the club."

¹¹³See Erasmus, 339 (*De pueris instituendis*).

¹¹⁴This would confirm Green's, 319, thesis that, "It is largely on and through the female characters that Titus is constructed and his tragedy inscribed."

¹¹⁵Shakespeare, 1987, 160 (*Titus Andronicus* 4.1.77).

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, 171 (*Titus Andronicus* 5.3.198–99).

in delivery, after all, strengthens the perception of a past and present combined through emotional contagion, which makes possible through performance a newly situated eloquence to emerge out of, yet remain contingent on, the remains of a venerated tradition — just as *The Spanish Tragedy* retains the signs of its father, and just as *Titus* both relies on and radically departs from its many Roman sources to proffer a definitively English literary moment. The success of the *Andronici* is marked by a series of emotional transfers that are notably absent at the beginning of the play. In the most crude sense, perhaps, Titus forces Tamora to taste the loss of offspring he has experienced by feeding her Chiron and Demetrius. But this is hardly contagion in the true rhetorical sense, since it does not differ at all from the way Tamora makes Titus pay for the slaughter of Alarbus by engineering the death of Titus's sons; this contagion is that of imitation by rote learning, which the play is openly critical of. Conversely, the Ciceronian pathos of delivery is both the instigator and mark of the action's resolution. Lucius, the eventual inheritor of the empery, is able to convince the Goths to join him when he goes "To beg relief among Rome's enemies, / Who drowned their enmity in my true tears / And oped their arms to embrace me as a friend."¹¹⁷

Nonetheless, it is Marcus who offers the most compelling statement of an inheritance of greatness passed from antiquity to the present through rhetorical performance. Reflecting on his family's tragedy alone does little more than produce in him "frosty signs and chaps of age, / Grave witnesses of true experience," which he knows "cannot induce" his auditors "to attend my words."¹¹⁸ However, when he asks Lucius to assume the storytelling duties, the imagined comparison of a speaker from antiquity telling sad tales enables him to experience the affect appropriate for present circumstances:

Speak, Rome's dear friend, as erst our ancestor
 When with his solemn tongue he did discourse
 To lovesick Dido's sad-attending ear
 The story of that baleful-burning night
 When subtle Greeks surprised King Priam's Troy.
 Tell us what Sinon hath bewitched our ears,
 Or who hath brought the fatal engine in
 That gives our Troy, our Rome, the civil wound.
 My heart is not compact of flint nor steel,
 Nor can I utter all our bitter grief,
 But floods of tears will drown my oratory
 And break my utt'rance even in the time
 When it should move ye to attend me most,

¹¹⁷Ibid., 170 (*Titus Andronicus* 5.3.105–07).

¹¹⁸Ibid. (*Titus Andronicus* 5.3.76–78).

And force you to commiseration.
 Here's Rome's young captain. Let him tell the tale,
 While I stand by and weep to hear him speak.¹¹⁹

The “ancestor” here is Aeneas, the same character whose delivery on stage ca. 1599 will produce the affect so desired by Hamlet for his murdered father. In the recycling of emotional self-inculcation and contagion, the *visiones* of Troy’s destruction that made Aeneas eloquent now also work to enhance the delivery of Marcus’s speech until his “frosty signs” turn to “floods of tears.” His eloquence — the purpose of which is to “teach you how to knit again . . . these broken limbs again into one body” — is achieved at the very moment when it is interrupted by the delivery of a classical narrative that becomes indistinguishable from the present; it is the transfer of emotion from the absent past that brings its eloquence into the mouth and countenance of a speaker for new contexts.¹²⁰ Aeneas’s Troy is now “our Troy, our Rome,” and, if so, for the actor and spectators putting on this same grief in the London theater in 1592, it is “our England” as well, the “*Troynouant*” of Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* (1590).¹²¹ Although a literal interpretation of the Brut myth was no longer tenable by the end of the sixteenth century, it still held imaginative power in holding out the possibility of an illustrious British heritage. But if England was cut off from Aeneas’s descendants historically and culturally, rhetorical delivery taught its speakers how to access antiquity not in order to reestablish the historicity of a legend, but rather to radically alter the perceptions of their mother tongue.

CONCLUSION

The story of English in the sixteenth century is commonly linked with the written eloquence of an emergent vernacular, though, as this paper suggests, a significant motivation for these very textual flourishes can be traced to the humanist methods for cultivating sound and gesture. While delivery was taught in the first place to refine Latin, it is clear by accounts of educational reform, school statutes, orthography, and apologists for the stage, that these skills — like those of the rest of the rhetorical canons — were recognized to cut across linguistic divides. Delivery’s unique contribution in this regard was to offer a performance-based strategy for assimilating and reworking the Latin canon, which means that unlike imitation at the level of writing, delivery targeted the verbal, physical, and geohumoral features that were felt to account for the deficiency of the English language. As a corollary, these skills engaged with two

¹¹⁹Ibid. (*Titus Andronicus* 5.3.79–94).

¹²⁰Ibid. (*Titus Andronicus* 5.3.69, 71).

¹²¹Spenser, 376 (*The Faerie Queene* 3.9.38).

contemporary ideas for refining the vernacular, namely by offering a system to adhere language to the emotions (for the abundance of expression), and, through its related guidelines for emotional contagion, a way to imagine the appropriate enfranchisement of foreign words, which would be spelled according to their English delivery. The fifth canon is thus both a mediator between performance and text, and a skill in eloquence that resists the hegemony of any one language, or even of language generally; it asks that inscription acknowledge a debt to the mouths and limbs of speechless complainers. Although *Titus Andronicus* is certainly not the only Renaissance play to reference the elements of delivery described above, its use as an illustration here is prompted by the specific and sustained manner in which it connects English authority to Roman *pronuntiatio et actio*. That is, in presenting the story of language broken in the wilderness and then restored in “our Troy, our Rome,” *Titus* dramatizes the process by which vernacular perceptions were altered by the sounds and movements appropriate to Ciceronian pathos, and learned by Shakespeare and his contemporaries when sobbing for Troy in the “angry northern wind” of England.

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