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"Many sorts of music": Musical Genre in *Twelfth Night* and *The Tempest*

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This paper sets out to explore some of the hidden transactions between dramatic genre and kinds or genres of music in two plays of Shakespeare. *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*, generally accepted as the last of the festive comedies, was probably written in 1600 or 1601 and had its first recorded performance on 2 February 1602 at the Middle Temple. *The Tempest*, probably the last of the romances and possibly the last of Shakespeare's plays, was written about ten years later, with documented performances in November 1611 and winter 1612-13.[1] Between them, these two plays represent not simply the passage of a crucial decade in Shakespeare's career, or the contrast between the dramatic configurations we choose to call comedy and romance, but a difference in Shakespeare's musical angle of vision that makes subtle use of important contemporary developments in Renaissance music.

Intervening between *Twelfth Night* and *The Tempest* is Sonnet 8 (published 1609), which raises a musical issue very much to the point here. At the heart of the sonnet is a meditation on musical sociality and musical aloneness:

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[1]On these commonly accepted dates for the plays see *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans and J. J. M. Tobin, 2nd ed. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), pp. 437, 1656. All quotations of the plays are from this edition. On the date of *The Tempest* and its position in the canon see further Stephen Orgel, ed., *The Tempest* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), pp. 62-64. For First Folio references I have used the Norton facsimile edition, *The First Folio of Shakespeare*, ed. Charlton Hinman, 2nd ed. (New York and London: Norton, 1996).

If the true concord of well-tunèd sounds,
By unions married, do offend thine ear,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singleness the parts that thou shouldst bear.
Mark how one string, sweet husband to another,
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering;
Resembling sire, and child, and happy mother,
Who all in one, one pleasing note do sing;
Whose speechless song, being many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee: "Thou single wilt prove none." (5-14)[2]

These two kinds of oneness—the "all in one" note formed by treble, alto or tenor, and bass joined in concord as opposed to the thin, insubstantial note produced by a single string—offer a revealing background against which to view the deliberately polyphonic texture of *Twelfth Night*, with its engaging mixture of many voices and "parts," and the tenuous, linear texture of *The Tempest*, where we and the inhabitants of Prospero's island are so often taken by the ear by a single voice speaking or singing.

The music of Shakespeare's plays has sometimes been analyzed in terms of the social and dramatic implications of high and low musical forms and instruments: the aristocratic art song versus the rough catch, Apollonian strings as opposed to Dionysian wind instruments.[3] Or it has

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[2]The text of the sonnets is quoted throughout from *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, ed. Stephen Booth (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977). Booth glosses lines 5-6 to mean "If polyphonic music is distasteful to you" (p. 145). On Sonnet 8 as an ironic rebuke to "marital and musical aloofness" see John Hollander, *The Untuning of the Sky: Ideas of Music in English Poetry, 1500-1700* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), p. 138. Hollander finds an allusion to the musical phenomenon of sympathetic vibration, used to evoke "the three-part polyphony of a familial unit" (p. 137). I am grateful to Lewis Lockwood for a further suggestion: given the different ranges of the three voices, the "all in one" note may allude to the replication of the "same" note in different registers, and thus to the "same but different" sound of one or two octaves formed by treble, alto or tenor, and bass (pers. com.).

[3]See, e.g., Lawrence J. Ross's detailed analysis of the symbolism of wind and string instruments in *Othello* ("Shakespeare's 'Dull Clown' and Symbolic Music," *SQ* 17 [1966]: 107-28) and Rosamond King's discussion of the social implications of Cassio's taste in music ("'Then Murder's Out of Tune': The Music and Structure of *Othello*," *ShSu* 39 [1986]: 149-58).

been viewed through the Renaissance understanding of *musica speculativa*, that highly evolved body of philosophical theory that resolves all matters into the contrast between harmony and dissonance. As the universe itself in its magnificent natural harmony was thought to resemble a carefully tuned instrument, so man was seen as an instrument that might be in or out of tune with the universe, society, and even his own soul.[4] But in addition to these time-honored social and philosophical categories, it seems fair to say that a subtle new dichotomy, cutting in a slightly different direction, was making an appearance.

The terms of this dichotomy—musical togetherness and musical aloneness—were by no means new. One of Shylock's besetting sins is his refusal to join in the social music that surrounds him. Iago's desire to "set down the pegs," destroying the "well-tun'd" harmony of Othello and Desdemona's marriage, marks him as another musical outsider (2.1.199-200). In a gentler spirit, there is Shakespeare's reproach to the young man of Sonnet 8: "Thou single wilt prove none"—a warning which will reverberate in surprising ways in the comic antics of *Twelfth Night*. In these examples and elsewhere musical singleness means many things, none of them good: miserliness, villainy, selfishness, or at the very least (as in the songs of Ophelia and Desdemona) profound alienation and distress.

Here we are still in the realm of *musica speculativa*, where musical aloneness is seen as a deliberate rejection of harmony. In this world the main premise is that we should and must make beautiful music together. How this earthly music was made was the province of *musica practica*, the focus of this essay. Unlike *musica speculativa*, with its unchanging eternal truths, *musica practica* dealt with the actual world of Renaissance music—not only with the passing fads and fashions parodied in the musical foppishness of *Twelfth Night*'s Orsino but with more momentous events such as the rise of the English ayre, a solo song accompanied by an instrument, most often the lute. Musicologists agree in suggesting that the ayre as it developed in England was indeed something new under the

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[4]On the universe and man as musical instruments see Gretchen Ludke Finney, *Musical Backgrounds for English Literature: 1580-1650* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1962), pp. 1-20 and *passim*; on *musica speculativa* and the distinction between speculative and practical music see Hollander, *Untuning of the Sky*, chs. 1 and 2.

musical sun, part of the evolution of "a new kind of musical structure, apposite to a new kind of experience."[5]

The rise of the ayre was part of a broader movement away from *musica speculativa* and toward a rhetorical, affective music described in detail by John Hollander, who sees Shakespeare's Viola as an early representative of the new values.[6] The ideas stirring in England were of a piece with the wider revolt against polyphony, partly neoclassical in inspiration, evident in such Continental writings as Count Giovanni de' Bardi's *Discorso mandato a Giulio Caccini* (*c.* 1580), a product of the Florentine Camerata. Baldassare Castiglione's *Il cortegiano* (1528), translated into English by Sir Thomas Hoby in 1561, contains an early spokesman for monody in the person of Sir Frederick: "Methink . . . pricksong [counterpoint] is a fair music. . . . But to sing to the lute is much better, because all the sweetness consisteth in one alone."[7]

It may be useful, then, to take a closer look at the musical lay of the land in the decade or so we are considering here, a period of time in which the bulk of the important surviving books of ayres were published.[8]

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[5]Wilfred Mellers, *Harmonious Meeting: A Study of the Relationship between English Music, Poetry, and Theatre, c. 1600-1900* (London: Dobson, 1965), p. 70. Morrison Comegys Boyd calls the ayre "an artistic creation not exactly paralleled on the Continent, and . . . an achievement of which the British people may justly be proud" (*Elizabethan Music and Musical Criticism* [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962], p. 127); Bruce Pattison describes it as "the first English song in which the accompaniment is . . . purely subsidiary to the solo voice" (*Music and Poetry of the English Renaissance*, 2nd ed. [London: Methuen, 1970], p. 113). For a definition and history of the form see *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 2nd ed., 29 vols. (London: Macmillan, 2001), s.v. air, sec. 2, "The English 'Ayre'" (I, 253-54); Boyd, pp. 2, 127-52; and Pattison, pp. 113-40.

[6]*Untuning of the Sky*, *passim*; for an interpretation of Viola's role as innovative, see pp. 159-61. On the rejection of polyphony see also Pattison, *Music and Poetry*, pp. 120-28.

[7]Quoted from Hoby's translation, *The Booke Named the Courtyer*, as excerpted in *Source Readings in Music History: The Renaissance*, ed. Oliver Strunk (New York: Norton, 1965), p. 94.

[8]Nigel Fortune succinctly notes that of the "some thirty volumes devoted wholly or partly to ayres" between 1597 and 1622, "all but half-a-dozen had appeared by 1612" ("Solo Song and Cantata," in *The Age of Humanism, 1540-*

The year 1597 was an *annus mirabilis* for music, witnessing the publication of both Thomas Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introdvction to Practicall Mvsicke*, the definitive handbook of polyphony, and John Dowland's immensely influential *First Booke of Songs or Ayres*—two events that look Janus-like backward to polyphonic values and forward to a new monodic freedom. If the ayre was a compelling new presence, instrumental polyphony remained an equally powerful force, just reaching its peak at about the time *Twelfth Night* was written. "When, around 1600, English chamber music had reached maturity," Ernst Meyer comments, "it was admired and imitated all over Europe because of its contrapuntal vitality and ingenuity."[9]

Shakespeare's writings of this period must thus be seen against the backdrop of a time of musical inventiveness that embraced both the continued refinement and popularity of instrumental polyphonic music, especially the "all in one" harmony of the viol consort, and the new vogue for the solo voice. Two vignettes suggest the importance of musical kinds to the wit and substance of the plays. In *Twelfth Night* the new ayre appears in a cameo role in the comic drinking scene in which Malvolio interrupts three raucous merrymakers, Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, and Feste, as they complete a spirited rendition of the paradoxically-entitled catch "Hold thy peace, thou knave":

> *Mal.* My masters, are you mad? Or what are you? Have you no wit, manners, nor honesty, but to gabble like tinkers at this time of night? Do ye make an alehouse of my lady's house, that ye squeak out your coziers' catches without any mitigation or remorse of voice? Is there no respect of place, persons, nor time in you?
> *Sir To.* We did keep time, sir, in our catches. Sneck up!
> (2.3.86-94)

Transposing Malvolio's rebuke about untimely revels into a slur on his ability to "keep time," Sir Toby retaliates by making certain inspired adjustments to the first two stanzas of a popular ayre of 1600, Robert

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1630, ed. Gerald Abraham, New Oxford History of Music, vol. 4 [London: Oxford University Press, 1968], pp. 200-01).

[9]"Concerted Instrumental Music," in *The Age of Humanism*, ed. Abraham, p. 583.

Jones's "Farewell dear love."[10] In his rendering, the ayre is dragged backward into polyphony—made, in effect, into another catch-like composition of the kind Malvolio has just objected to, with Feste as a harmonious second voice and Malvolio as a discordant third:

> *Sir To.* [*Sings.*] "Farewell, dear heart, since I must needs be gone."
> *Mar.* Nay, good Sir Toby.
> *Clo.* [*Sings.*] "His eyes do show his days are almost done."
> *Mal.* Is't even so?
> *Sir To.* [*Sings.*] "But I will never die."
> *Clo.* Sir Toby, there you lie.
> *Mal.* This is much credit to you.
> *Sir To.* [*Sings.*] "Shall I bid him go?"
> *Clo.* [*Sings.*] "What and if you do?"
> *Sir To.* [*Sings.*] "Shall I bid him go, and spare not?"
> *Clo.* [*Sings.*] "O, no, no, no, no, you dare not."
> *Sir To.* Out o' tune, sir! Ye lie. Art any more than a steward? (102-15)[11]

The fate of the ayre here is a clue to the musical values of the play and the importance it places on the interaction of multiple voices or "parts." More subtly, Toby's polyphonic romp is part of a broader pattern in the play of placing Malvolio in musical situations for which he resoundingly lacks the resources. It is not Toby but Malvolio (the joke goes) who lacks respect for "place, persons, [and] time" and is thus jarringly "Out o' tune," as Toby and Feste hint by their comical picture of a gentleman cringing before an officious steward: "O, no, no, no, no, you dare not."

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[10]On Jones's "Farewell dear love" see Peter J. Seng, *The Vocal Songs of the Plays of Shakespeare: A Critical History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 105-08, who notes that Shakespeare retains all four of Jones's "no"s despite the disruption of meter produced.

[11]I have followed the Arden edition (and indeed the First Folio) in omitting Riverside's stage direction indicating that the words "Out 'o tune, sir! Ye lie" are addressed to Feste rather than Malvolio. Toby is still smarting from Malvolio's earlier rebuke. To be out of tune here is to so far mistake place and persons as to call your betters "tinkers" when you yourself are merely a steward. Arden obscures the play on degree by emending line 115 to "Out 'o time" (*Twelfth Night*, ed. J. M. Lothian and T. W. Craik [London: Methuen, 1975], p. 50n.).

Malvolio is not only oblivious to the humor of his threat to be "round" with those singing a round or catch (95) but tone deaf to social "degree," a term also denoting the fixed intervals between the notes of a musical scale.[12] Behind the interlude lurks the famous opening scene of Morley's *Introduction,* where a young man's inability to read his musical part exposes him to the scorn of the company, who wonder "how [he] was brought up."[13] A gentleman's musical education is not only emphatically different from a steward's, it is by definition polyphonic.

In *The Tempest*, by contrast, it is the catch that makes a cameo appearance, again in a drinking scene. In a merry moment, full of pleasure over the plot to murder Prospero, Caliban begs Stephano and Trinculo to continue his own musical education: "Will you troll the catch / You taught me but while-ere?"

> *Ste.* At thy request, monster, I will do reason, any reason. Come on, Trinculo, let us sing. *Sings.*
> "Flout 'em and [scout] 'em,
> And scout 'em and flout 'em!
> Thought is free."
> *Cal.* That's not the tune.
> *Ariel plays the tune on a tabor and pipe.*
> *Ste.* What is this same?
> *Trin.* This is the tune of our catch, play'd by the picture of Nobody. (3.2.117-27)

If in the earlier vignette the ayre was dragged backward into polyphony, here the attempt at polyphony dissolves into a tenuous instrumental solo played by "the picture of Nobody." There could be no more dramatic demonstration of the new musical order. On Prospero's island the musical norm will be not an "all in one" note but the elusive sound of the solo ayre as rendered by Ariel, almost indistinguishable from the very "air" of an island full of "Sounds, and sweet airs" (2.1.47; 3.2.136).

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[12] *OED,* sb. 4a, 11a. On social "degree" in the play see, e.g., 1.3.110, 118; and esp. 3.4.77, where Malvolio imagines that Olivia treats him above his "degree."

[13] Quoted from *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music,* ed. Alec Harman (New York: Norton, 1973), p. 9. A similar allusion to musical upbringing appears in George Peele's *Old Wives Tale* (1595), ll. 72-76.

Even these brief sketches suggest the way in which the musical state of things affects not only dramatic texture but deeper themes. The music of *Twelfth Night* influences the conduct of the play not simply in a general way, as has often been supposed, but in precise ways related to the particular moment of musical history at which the play appeared.[14] The success of polyphony is inextricably tied up, as Sir Toby well knows, with an ability to "keep time." Morley's *Introduction* defines musical time as "a certain space or length wherein a note may be holden in singing" (p. 19). To be in time and in tune are not separate skills in Renaissance polyphony but horizontal and vertical aspects of the same phenomenon: if to be in time is to "hold" properly, to be in tune is to hold "*with*" some person or thing in such a way as to produce harmony.[15]

The musical act of holding bears a curious relationship to certain almost obsessive themes of *Twelfth Night*. In a sense the opening glimpse of Sebastian gracefully "hold[ing] acquaintance with" the waves (1.2.16), like the musician Arion charming the dolphin into saving him, provides a standard against which the rest of the play is measured. This emblem of the triumph of a certain kind of social music serves as a foil for other, less desirable ways of "holding": Sir Toby's capacity for drink and other

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[14]On the music of this play see esp. John Hollander, "Musica Mundana and *Twelfth Night*," in *Sound and Poetry*, ed. Northrop Frye (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957), pp. 55-82; "*Twelfth Night* and the Morality of Indulgence," *SR* 67 (1959): 220-38; and *Untuning of the Sky*, pp. 153ff. For an analysis of the clock-stopping strategies of Illyria based on a more general view of music see Barbara Everett, "Or What You Will," *EIC* 35 (1958): 294-314. Jean E. Howard uses the modern metaphor of orchestration to explore rhythms of restraint and release (*Shakespeare's Art of Orchestration: Stage Technique and Audience Response* [Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984], pp. 172-206). On the play's songs see John H. Long, *Shakespeare's Use of Music: A Study of the Music and Its Performance in the Original Production of Seven Comedies*, vol. 1 of 3 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1955), pp. 164-86; and Seng, *Vocal Songs*, pp. 94-130.

[15]*OED*, tune, sb. 3a, b stresses the "withness" of being in tune: "agreement in pitch, unison, or harmony (*with* something)"; "in or out of harmony *with* some person or thing" (italics in original). Older meanings of "hold" also reflect this social dimension: "To keep together"; "To perform (a particular part) in concerted music. *Obs.*"; "To sustain (a note, esp. in one part while the other parts move)" (*OED*, v. I.8a, b [a], [b]).

people's money, Olivia's hoarding of her carefully inventoried beauty, and Malvolio's miserly attitude toward the "treasure" (2.5.77) of someone else's time—to say nothing, at the other extreme, of Orsino's inability to hold more than briefly. It even informs the humor behind the musical incontinence of the drink-laden carousers, who loudly urge one another to "Hold thy peace" (2.3.65)—a bawdy double-entendre about the physiological difficulties of holding which enters also into Orsino's anxiety about the ultimate fate of what is swallowed.

These themes, which will be explored more fully below, reiterate in a lighter vein some of the most powerful concerns of the sonnets. Sonnet 65, among others, shows the poignancy and urgency that the word "hold" itself holds for Shakespeare:

> How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
> Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
> O how shall summer's honey breath hold out
> Against the wreckful siege of batt'ring days,
> When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
> Nor gates of steel so strong but time decays?
> O fearful meditation; where, alack,
> Shall time's best jewel from time's chest lie hid?
> Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back? (3-11)

The idea of holding is part of a rich tangle of ideas about time that pervades the sonnets. Again and again Shakespeare meditates upon the meager strategies available for confronting this irresistible force. The paradoxes are many: although holding or keeping time is the opposite of wasting time—itself both an arid waste and an avid waster—keeping time is by no means the same as hoarding time (or youth), which is in truth another form of wasting time.

Twelfth Night suggests that while it is impossible to "keep time" in the sense of holding things in a state of suspended animation, like a determined tippler, "cloistress" (1.1.27), housewife, or miser, it is possible and even delightful to "keep time" by holding your note the proper length of time with others. If we can't hold out, hold back, or even (frail vessel that man is) hold our peace, we can at least hold with, like beauty expostulating with time in the sonnet. The conversational, circular form of the catch is a seriocomic emblem of this attitude toward time—an effort to catch the uncatchable in which the pleasure lies purely in the

social pursuit. Like the catch or the clock, time in *Twelfth Night* goes around in a circle, as Viola implicitly recognizes when she sees time as the agent capable of untying the "knot" of the plot (2.2.41), as Sir Toby slyly reasons when he finds himself up so late as to be up early, or as Feste suggests when he describes time as a "whirligig" (5.1.376)—an instrument of torture used to twirl prisoners into repentance.[16]

It is difficult for modern readers to remember that the idea of playing a part, another basic theme in *Twelfth Night,* is not simply a dramatic metaphor but—much more vitally for this period—a musical one. The distinction is an important one, shifting the emphasis away from duplicity and the sexual "parts" the characters carry and play (although this is also an important element in the musical wit) and toward a more sophisticated awareness of how different voices interact to create dramatic texture. It was natural for the Renaissance to think of people as musical instruments, in the best tradition of *musica speculativa.* In Shakespeare this notion is pervasive, the basis alike for Hamlet's bitter rejection of Guildenstern's attempt to play him like a pipe (3.2.363-72) and Pericles's description of Antiochus's daughter as a "fair viol" whose string-senses, early corrupted, now play only harsh and hellish music (1.1.81-85).

If it was natural to think of people as instruments, it was also natural to think of them as musical parts, and conversely, to think of musical parts as people, as in Shakespeare's polyphonic family of "sire, and child, and happy mother" in Sonnet 8. In Bardi's *Discorso* this conceit is fleshed out in a wonderfully concrete way. Counterpoint, says Bardi, consists of "a combination . . . of the low, the high, and the intermediate, and of the various rhythms of the several melodies." He goes on to show these parts interacting with one another like characters in a little drama:

> . . . Messer Bass, soberly dressed in semibreves and minims, stalks through the ground-floor rooms of his palace while Soprano, decked out in minims and semiminims, walks

[16] *OED*, whirligig, sb. 2a; Feste neatly suggests that (as we would say) what goes around comes around. Cf. the repeated images of solipsistic circling in "Illyria": Olivia watering her chamber "round" daily with tears, Toby drinking until his brains "turn o' th' toe like a parish-top," the "giddy" Orsino, and Malvolio being pompously "round" with the revelers, a tendency mocked in the letter bidding him to "revolve" (1.1.28, 1.3.41-42, 2.4.33, 2.3.95, 2.5.143).

> hurriedly about the terrace at a rapid pace and Messers Tenor and Alto, with various ornaments and in habits different from the others, stray through the rooms of the intervening floors.[17]

The configuration here is reminiscent, perhaps not without cause, of the opening of *Twelfth Night*, with its companion pictures of Orsino and Olivia moving about in their separate courts. First comes the revealing self-portrait of Orsino, who is caught in the midst of an extended musical reverie:

> If music be the food of love, play on,
> Give me excess of it; that surfeiting,
> The appetite may sicken, and so die.
> That strain again, it had a dying fall;
> O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound
> That breathes upon a bank of violets,
> Stealing and giving odor. Enough, no more,
> 'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.
> O spirit of love, how quick and fresh art thou,
> That notwithstanding thy capacity
> Receiveth as the sea, nought enters there,
> Of what validity and pitch soe'er,
> But falls into abatement and low price
> Even in a minute. (1.1.1-14)

With this is juxtaposed an equally revealing portrait of the reclusive Olivia, relayed through Maria and Valentine to the infatuated Orsino:

> So please my lord, I might not be admitted,
> But from her handmaid do return this answer:
> The element itself, till seven years' heat,
> Shall not behold her face at ample view;
> But like a cloistress she will veiled walk,
> And water once a day her chamber round
> With eye-offending brine; all this to season

[17]Bardi's *Discorso* is quoted from the excerpt in *Source Readings*, ed. Strunk, pp. 103-04; the translations in this volume are by Oliver Strunk in collaboration with his father, William Strunk, Jr. Although Shakespeare would not have known Bardi's unpublished work directly, they share a Renaissance inclination to personify musical parts.

> A brother's dead love, which she would keep fresh
> And lasting in her sad remembrance. (1.1.23-31)

Orsino's description of a music-haunted "bank of violets," punningly suggesting as it does a "bench" of "little viols," subtly prepares the way for a scheme in which a Viola—both flower and instrument—will be central. The confounding of flower and instrument is complete in the synaesthesia of the passage: as violets give off delicious odors, viols give off sweet airs.[18] But Orsino's words have still deeper implications in this musical context. If Bardi's musical drama is any guide, we have in Orsino the uneasy, even comical phenomenon of a bass with a fear of falling. Among other things, his words reveal him to be preoccupied to an unnatural extent with the "dying fall" and the fact that everything so quickly "falls into abatement and low price." This is a bass who confuses bass-ness with baseness, lowness with a precipitous descent from something higher and more precious.

Orsino is a bass, moreover, who paradoxically admires the "quick and fresh" rather than the slow and long-held. His ability to hold is measured in brief "minute[s]" rather than in values more appropriate to the bass's traditional semibreves, the equivalent of our whole notes. His love is like the sea in its capacity to devour but not, unfortunately, in its ability to keep or preserve; since it is not salt but "fresh," it rapidly brings to a "low" and debased state everything it swallows, whatever its original "pitch." Not only music but flowers and the women who resemble them are subject to this disturbing decay, as soon becomes clear in Orsino's advice to the disguised Viola, whose hidden name declares her at once woman, flower, and musical instrument. The focus of Orsino's anxiety is again the inability to "hold" and the inevitable "fall": "Then let thy love be

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[18]For a similar mingling of music, flowers, air, and odor see Morley, *Introduction,* p. 139. On "bank" as a platform or stage for performers, see *OED,* sb.[2] 1. The pun on violet/viol is apt; the term "violetta" was sometimes used in this period to refer to the viol and particularly the treble viol (the "violetta piccola"). Although the violin also existed at this time, it did not replace the viol in popularity in England until later in the century. The use of the term "viola" for the instrument playing the "middle" (alto or tenor) part was common in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the modern viola, a member of the violin family, did not acquire its name until later. See *New Grove,* s.v. violetta (XXVI, 701), viol (663-75), violin (706-09), and viola (687-98).

younger than thyself, / Or thy affection cannot hold the bent; / For women are as roses, whose fair flow'r / Being once display'd, doth fall that very hour" (2.4.36-39).[19]

The parallel portrait of Olivia suggests a complementary case of musical malaise. If Olivia is the logical candidate for the soprano part, she is a soprano with a perverse interest not in quick steps or notes—Bardi's semiminims—but in slow pacing and intervals measured in years. She intends to "keep" her brother's love "fresh / And lasting" by pickling it in the brine of her tears, like a housewife salting away provisions for the future. The contrast offered by the spectacle of Orsino unable to hold for more than a minute and Olivia determined to hold for seven years, each in defiance of their natural roles, both musical and human, is a wonderfully comic one. In this musical mismatch, it is not surprising that it is Olivia's very ability to hold that so attracts Orsino. If she can do this for a mere brother, what might she not do for her "one self king" (1.1.38)?

The idea that all is not well musically is confirmed by the discovery that we are stranded on the shores of "Illyria" (1.2.2), a name that might have suggested to contemporary ears not only a distempered lyre (Ill-lyria) but perhaps also a sly reference to the lyra viol, a small bass viol that became popular at the turn of the century, or even to the new fashion around 1600 for the viol played "lyra way," like a lute.[20] With

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[19]Cf. the similar anxiety of Sonnet 15, where "everything that grows / Holds in perfection but a little moment" (1-2). The word "hold" reverberates throughout *Twelfth Night*, often in the form of a sly imperative. In addition to its strong musical sense, it may have sacramental overtones, in the double echo of the marriage ceremony: "let him . . . for euer holde hys peace" and "to haue and to holde" (*Book of Common Prayer*, 1552); the latter phrase is also a common legal formula. Like other Janus-faced motifs in the play, "hold" may have a bawdy side, as in the ejaculatory implications of Orsino's inability to hold for more that a minute. Cf. also the use of a carnal sense of "hold" in Sonnet 136: "For nothing hold me, so it please thee hold / That nothing me" (11-12); on the sonnet's elaborate sexual and numerical wordplay see Booth, ed., *Sonnets*, pp. 469-73. On the musical symbol for "hold" and the practice of holding in viol music to heighten resonance see *New Grove*, s.v. viol (XXVI, 672, 665).

[20]Geoffrey Hartman suggests a different pun: "ill liar/lyre" ("Shakespeare's Poetical Character in *Twelfth Night*," in *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, ed. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman [New York and London: Methuen,

remarkable dramatic compression, Shakespeare goes on to offer a distant glimpse of the Arion-like Sebastian, who will ultimately fill Orsino's role with Olivia so satisfactorily. Here there may also be a visual nudge: in some Renaissance emblems Arion holds a viol rather than the traditional lyre, an anachronism mirroring the fondness of the period for viol music.[21] The scene is rounded off by the picture of Viola poised between the alternatives of Orsino and Olivia, and by her final choice to serve Orsino in the guise of Cesario—a figure who will come more and more to resemble Messer Alto or Tenor roaming through the intervening floors of Bardi's musical palace, mediating between Bass and Soprano.

But something even more curious is going on. Shakespeare appears to be assembling, with his usual mixture of extreme subtlety and open punning, all the makings of a viol consort. The changeable Orsino (Or-C-no), whom Feste would have "put to sea" or C (2.4.76); sea-surviving Sebastian (C-bass-tian); and Viola and Olivia (the latter an anagram of Violia) now stand ready to play their parts, shortly to be joined by Malvolio (Mal-violo), a "distemper'd" (1.5.91) or out of tune instrument whose discords are essential to the plot.[22] Cesario (C's-ario) seems to

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1985], p. 46). On the lyra viol and the viol played lyra way (from tablature), see *New Grove,* s.v. lyra viol (XV, 418-21). Gerald Hayes gives a date of 1600 for the start of the lyra viol repertory ("Instruments and Instrumental Notation," *The Age of Humanism*, ed. Abraham, p. 714).

[21]An image of Arion with a viol from George Wither's *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne* (1635) is reproduced facing p. 243 in *Untuning of the Sky.* Hollander notes that "the anachronistic use of the contemporary viol for Arion follows several Renaissance depictions."

[22]"Or-si-no" may also suggest "Or-yes-no," underlining the Count's changeable disposition. The names of the play have been variously glossed. Barbara Everett points to the "internal harmonies" without further comment ("Or What You Will," p. 298). Hartman notes a frolic with vowels in both names and play ("Everything goes o-a in this play"), associating Malvolio with "malevolent" ("Poetical Character," pp. 46, 49). See further Winfried Schleiner, "Orsino and Viola: Are the Names of Serious Characters in *Twelfth Night* Meaningful?," *ShSt* 16 (1983): 135-41 (Orsino alludes to "little bear," Viola to a medicine for melancholy); Cynthia Lewis, "'A Fustian Riddle'?: Anagrammatic Names in *Twelfth Night,*" *ELN* 22.4 (June 1985): 32-37 (the names, like the riddle, are simply "empty ruses"); Vincent F. Petronella, "Anamorphic Naming in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night,*" *Names* 35.3-4 (1987): 139-46 (the names Malvolio, Olivia, and Viola are onomastically related); Norman Nathan,

share with Maria (M-aria) an allusion to the aria-like speeches to come, as well as to the role of Arion (Ario-n) as one completely at ease in the sea (or C). Even Fa-bian and An-tone-io extend the covert musical scheme. *Twelfth Night*, then, appears to be written in the key of C. At the very least, C provides a key to much in the play that seems puzzling. The insistence on the letters C, U, and T, for example, should be glossed not simply through bawdy anatomical implications but in the light of the music lesson offered by Hortensio in *The Taming of the Shrew*, where "*C fa ut*" (or middle C) occupies the middle of the gamut or scale as the note that "loves with all affection" (3.1.76).[23]

The enigmatic subtitle of *Twelfth Night, "or What You Will,"* further suggests that Will Shakespeare is deliberately offering his audience a verbal version of the "quodlibet," or "what you please," a popular musical form of the period.[24] In the quodlibet a number of incongruous melodies or voices—often a patchwork of musical or verbal quotations from earlier works, as in Toby's burps of song tags—are juxtaposed to comic effect,

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"Cesario, Sebastian, Olivia, Viola, and Illyria in *Twelfth Night*," *Names* 37.3 (1989): 281-84 (the names allude to Caesar Augustus); and Robert F. Fleissner, "Malvolio's Manipulated Names," *Names* 39.2 (1991): 95-102 (finding the origin of Malvolio's name in Montaigne).

[23]In playing with letters, *Twelfth Night* is allied with a whole genre of Renaissance music that toys with alphabetical elements. C fa ut is associated with Venus in Robert de Handlo's "Gam" of 1326, reproduced in Morley's *Introduction* (p. 109). "Fa" in the middle of "C ut" may itself have a bawdy meaning. On the coarser implications of Andrew's "cut a caper," Toby's "cut the mutton" and "call me cut," and even "galliard" and "backtrick" (1.3.120-23, 2.3.187) see Peter J. Smith, "M.O.A.I. 'What should that alphabetical position portend?' An Answer to the Metamorphic Malvolio," *RenQ* 51.4 (Winter 1998): 1199-224. Leah Scragg suggests an allusion to "cut-P—" or cutpurses in the audience ("'Her C's, Her U's, and Her T's: Why That?': A New Reply for Sir Andrew Aguecheek," *RES* 42 [1991]: 1-16).

[24]A possible allusion to the quodlibet is suggested in passing by Hartman, "Poetical Character," p. 47. On the quodlibet see *New Grove* (XX, 687-89), calling the form "the ultimate in contrapuntal mastery" (p. 688); see also ensalada (VIII, 255-56), noting that "the texts always contain a reference to Christmas" (p. 255). On the Spanish ensalada as helping "materially to create a Christmas atmosphere and to entertain the Court at Christmas and New Years," see further Higini Anglès, "The Catalan School," in *The Age of Humanism*, ed. Abrams, pp. 407-08.

either simultaneously (that is, polyphonically) or sequentially. Shakespeare's literary appropriation of this musical form chimes perfectly with the festive occasion of the play's title. Twelfth Night, also known as the Feast of Epiphany (6 January), celebrates the visit of the gift-bearing Magi to the newly born Christ child. The choice of the quodlibet may gesture toward the Spanish court, where this particular musical form, called the "ensalada" ("salad"), was the favorite vehicle for Christmas and New Year's entertainments celebrating the birth of the holy baby.

The nature of the shadowy ensemble being gathered to play Shakespeare's humorous holiday composition would presumably be much more obvious to an Elizabethan audience than to a modern one. In the early 1600s, as Meyer points out, the "chest of viols" was enjoying a new vogue in England as the most popular, and most written for, instrumental grouping ("Concerted Instrumental Music," pp. 583-84). Such an ensemble typically consisted either of three instruments—a treble, a tenor, and a bass viol—or of six, with each part doubled. Thus we have Viola/Olivia (treble), Cesario/Feste (alto/tenor), and Orsino/Sebastian (bass), with Malvolio and Andrew as the odd men respectively out of tune and out of time. In a "broken consort," wind instruments were added to the strings. Here the role is filled by Sir Toby Belch, who attributes his eponymous burps to fish pickled for keeping—"a plague o' these pickle-herring!" (1.5.120-21)—even while it is clear that this Dionysian wind instrument manages to "keep time" principally by pickling himself in alcohol.

The musical situation is further leavened by the presence of Sir Andrew Aguecheek, praised by Sir Toby as a gentlemanly player of "th' viol-de-gamboys" (1.3.25-26) or "leg-viol" (more formally the viola da gamba), who literally serves as the butt of all the bawdy Elizabethan humor surrounding the topic of viol playing. Taking Sir Andrew's talent as the only allusion to viols in the play, Gustav Ungerer has noted that such humor would have been especially welcome to the audience of the Middle Temple, where *Twelfth Night* had its first documented performance. By 1597/8, he points out, the "viol conceit with its inherent bawdy" had become a stock joke of the law students, who founded the "Order of the Quiver"—an allusion to the involuntary shaking that

results from bad bowing as well as to sexual shudders—at the Christmas revels in that year.[25]

But "Aguecheek," with his bawdy quivering buttocks and leaping thighs, is part of a much broader musical pattern than Ungerer has recognized: in fact, the whole configuration of *Twelfth Night* and its subliminal viol consort appears to be designed to tickle the Middle Temple revelers. As a "natural" (1.3.29; 2.3.83) or foolish musician (notes are classified as sharp, flat, or natural), Sir Andrew is like Malvolio a foil to his musical betters, a lagging "too" to their one (2.3.33, 82, 163, 181; 2.5.183). His constant echoing of Sir Toby and others is a clumsy attempt to "make one too" (2.5.207) in which he is perpetually one beat behind. His dubious mastery of his instrument is summed up in Sir Toby's reversal of the virile image of the viol player clasping his instrument between his legs. We see instead a passive Sir Andrew being spun like a distaff held between the legs of a housewife, his limp hair serving as her flax (1.3.102-04).

Not only the three-part configuration and stock humor of the viol consort but its specialized repertory may enter into the design. Orsino's opening allusion to a musically fragrant "bank of violets"—a company of "little viols" giving off sweet airs—suggests that the music he hears is in fact the music of a viol consort. "So full of shapes is fancy / That it alone is high fantastical," Orsino concludes (1.1.14-15). His praise of a shape-shifting fancy hints that we are indeed listening to a "fancy" or "fantasia," a form of "free music" that together with dance music made up the bulk of the traditional repertory of the viol consort.[26] Then in its full

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[25]"The Viol da Gamba as a Sexual Metaphor in Elizabethan Music and Literature," *Ren&R* 8 (1984): 79-90. Aguecheek's quivers may also be related to the use of the quaver (8th note), semiquaver (16th note), and "a Shake or Tremble with the Bow" (perhaps tremulo) in viol playing; see *New Grove*, s.v. viol (XXVI, 664, 674). In this extended anatomical joke, there may also be a glance at the suggestive term for quarter note, the crotchet.

[26]On the place of the fancy in the viol repertory see Meyer, "Concerted Instrumental Music," pp. 561-63; and *New Grove*, s.v. viol (XXVI, 672-74), fantasia (VIII, 545-46, 551-54). The published repertory includes three forms: the fancy, the "In Nomine" (a second kind of "free music" not important here), and dance music. Overlooking insinuations about viols, Long speculates that *Twelfth Night* begins to the sound of a consort "composed largely of recorders,

flowering, the fancy was characterized by great mobility, few rules, and a quodlibet-like emphasis on the musician's "pleasure." In the pleasure-driven fancy, Morley says,

> . . . a musician taketh a point [musical phrase to be imitated] at his pleasure and wresteth and turneth it as he list. . . . In this may more art be shown than in any other music because the composer is tied to nothing, but that he may add, diminish, and alter at his pleasure. And this kind will bear any allowances whatsoever tolerable in other music except changing the air and leaving the key. . . . Other things you may use at your pleasure, as bindings with discords, quick motions, slow motions, Proportions, and what you list.
>
> (*Introduction,* p. 296)

When we next see the vertiginous Orsino he seems to be suffering from an overdose of fashionable viol fancies, abruptly rejecting the "light airs and recollected terms / Of these most brisk and giddy-paced times" in favor of a more steadying "old and antique song" (2.4.5-6, 3).[27] In justifying his new choice he displays yet again the comical inversion that leads him to associate mobility, normally the province of the treble, with masculinity, and to attribute to women a bass-like ability to hold: "Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm, / More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn, / Than women's are" (33-35). (Characteristically, he promptly

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since this family of instruments was noted for its sweet and slightly mournful tones" (*Shakespeare's Use of Music,* I, 166).

[27]Orsino alludes here not only to the new ayre (as the First Folio spelling suggests) but specifically to the fancy, a form in which "points" or musical phrases are imitated or "recollected" in new "terms." Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra,* where Lepidus implores the conspirators to "compose well": "Touch you the sourest points with sweetest terms" (2.2.15, 23). See also the wordplay of Feste ("I am resolv'd on two points") and Maria ("That if one break, the other will hold; or if both break, your gaskins fall" [1.5.22-25]), which depends on "points" that "hold" up breeches or hose. On "point" as musical note or lace for clothing see *OED,* sb.[1]I.4a, III.9b, II.5; on "resolve" as bring from discord to harmony, see v. 5a, b. The fact that there are not only points but counts and a countess in the play (Count Orsino, the would-be Count Malvolio, the Countess Olivia) as well as a great deal of counting may indicate a continuing pun on the idea of counterpoint.

reverses himself some fifty lines later, sliding the emphasis from how long to how much: "no woman's heart / So big, to hold so much; they lack retention" [95-96]).

In this confusion of sexual and musical roles, the song the bachelor Orsino now admires is one sung by "spinsters" and "free maids" (44, 45), in which the choice "part" is death—perhaps the only way Orsino can conceive of holding for a long time. Like Olivia with her codicil of bodily parts to be hoarded until after death, Orsino is concerned with saving all the wrong things, among them thousands of sighs:

> My part of death, no one so true
> Did share it.
> . . . . . .
> A thousand thousand sighs to save,
> Lay me, O, where
> Sad true lover never find my grave,
> To weep there. (57-58, 63-66)

Beginning with the grim summons "Come . . . death" and proceeding through a "no one" and four "nots" to a "never" (57, 59, 61, 65), the song suggests the extent to which Orsino, despite his apparent erratic mobility, is out of step with the exuberant polyphonic life going on all around him. Like the young man in the sonnet, he "confounds / In singleness the parts that [he should] bear," refusing to share his "part of death" even to the extent of hiding his solitary grave from a mourning lover.

If Orsino is out of step, who is in step? The pervasive musical rhythm of *Twelfth Night* is found not in the inventive irregularities of the fancy but in another part of the viol repertory, which consists of dance music. Feste, the play's master of good timing, puts it most wittily in his attempt to persuade Orsino to triple-tip: "*Primo, secundo, tertio,* is a good play, and the old saying is, the third pays for all. The triplex, sir, is a good tripping measure, or the bells of Saint Bennet, sir, may put you in mind—one, two, three" (5.1.36-40). "Triplex"—triple time in music—is a good measure to "trip" or dance by. Thighs and legs are made not only to hold viols (and by implication lovers) but to leap in dance (as well as in sexual excitement). "Ha, higher! Ha ha, excellent," Toby urges, cheering on Aguecheek's quivering members (1.3.141). Like Sir Andrew's leg, this

play celebrating the trip of a trio of wise men appears to be "form'd under the star of a galliard" (133), a popular courtly dance in triple time.[28]

Twelfth Night is full of allusions to dance and dance steps: not only the triple-time galliard or cinquepace and its maneuvers the leap, caper, and "backtrick" (123) but the coranto, the jig, and the passing measure pavan.[29] The French term cinquepace, based on the dance's configuration of five steps and a leap in six beats, gives Sir Toby one of his most agile puns and not coincidentally links the quick step of triple-time dance with man's limited ability to hold his peace. Had he Sir Andrew's ability to caper, Toby claims, "My very walk should be a jig. I would not so much as make water but in a sink-a-pace" (129-31). In tribute to the Epiphany with its triple-trip under a star to view the sacred triad of the Holy Family, the whole play is in effect a dance of threes: there are three-man catches powerful enough to draw three souls out of a weaver, three "degree[s]" of drink (1.5.135), allusions to the picture "we three" and the catch "Three merry men" (2.3.17, 76-77), and most important, the

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[28]The occasion of the Epiphany, traditionally a night for giving gifts in imitation of the three wise men, is more deeply woven into the play than has been noticed. In addition to Toby's song fragment ("O' the twelf day of December" [2.3.84]), there are plentiful allusions to wise men (and even a "wise woman" and a "wise man's son" [3.4.102, 2.3.44]) and their opposites, fools, as well as a witty connection with both dance time (in the idea of a triple trip) and "present" time. The gifts of the Magi are subtly refracted both in the idea that "Present mirth hath present laughter" and in hints about the value of giving away or presenting oneself, like Olivia raising her veil for Cesario: "such a one I was this present" (2.3.48, 1.5.234). Cf. Sonnet 16, where giving is closely related to keeping: "To give away yourself keeps yourself still" (13). See also the "gifts" which Andrew keeps under wraps (like Olivia's they have a "curtain" before them [1.3.28, 31, 126]), and Cesario's exemplary offer to "make division of [her] present" with Antonio (3.4.346). In the constant reiteration of "peace" it is tempting to find an allusion to the seasonal proclamation "and on earth, peace, good will to men" (Luke 2:14, King James version). Like "hold," "peace" may embrace not only the sacred but (in its punning relation to "piece" and "pees") the profane. See *OED*, piece, sb. 3d: "she is a tall peece of flesh" (1593); and cod-piece (also codpiss), *Obs.* 1.

[29]On the allusions to dance in *Twelfth Night* see Alan Brissenden, *Shakespeare and the Dance* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1981), pp. 56-61.

irrepressible counterpoint of the three parts—high, low, and middle—that go to make up polyphonic texture.[30]

Viola's early speech casting her lot with Orsino—"for I can sing / And speak to him in many sorts of music"—prepares the way for this three-part counterpoint, in which her own future will depend on a sure-footed sense of "time" (1.2.57-58, 60). More subtly, her words prepare for the interpenetration of speech and music to come. There will be "many sorts of music," including consorts (a word with sexual as well as musical connotations [*OED*, sb.[1] 3; v. 2, 5c, 7]), and speech itself, with its echoing patterns of vowels, consonants, words, homophones, and signature phrases, will be made to sing. In deciding to play the part of Cesario, however, Viola has chosen an almost impossible musical assignment. Moving between two courts, she must mediate between mistaken ideas of time in both. True, in a mere "three days" (1.4.3) she both steadies the giddy duke and unsettles the too-constant lady. But her new part has simultaneously created a whole new set of "nots" ("I am not that I play" [1.5.184]) that can only be resolved by time: "O time, thou must untangle this, not I, / It is too hard a knot for me t' untie" (2.2.40-41).

Viola's position as the instrument in the middle is doubled by that of Feste, a figure ideally situated to play Messer Tenor to her own Alto, whose "shrill and sound" voice is understandably "semblative a woman's part" (1.4.33-34). Like Viola, Feste moves freely between the two courts, gently mocking the time-wasting excesses of both with a sure sense of timing and degree that Viola openly admires: "He must observe their mood on whom he jests, / The quality of persons, and the time" (3.1.62-

[30]For further musical implications of three see Booth's suggestion that Sonnet 8's "sire, and child, and happy mother" simultaneously evoke both the Holy Family and the Trinity, with the Trinity also recalled by the phrase "being many, seeming one" (11, 13; ed., *Sonnets*, pp. 146-47). On other Renaissance interpretations of the three notes of the triad as a mystical revelation see Finney, *Musical Backgrounds*, pp. 34-36. The rhythm of three drenches the play, extending from large motifs such as three alphabetical letters (C, U, T) and three epistolary letters to small details—Malvolio's imagined "three months" married to Olivia, "all three" scraps of eloquence stored up by Andrew, and the insult of thou-ing an enemy "thrice," to name but a few (2.5.44; 3.1.91, 2.45)—to yet smaller ones: "tray-trip" (a dice game using threes), "cockatrices," and things done in a "trice," or instant of time (2.5.190, 3.4.196, 4.2.123).

63). Feste's first song, "O mistress mine," delicately restates the play's subliminal concern with keeping time. The first stanza is in effect a musical command to hold: stop "roaming," "stay and hear," "Trip no further" (2.3.39-42). Only by holding (and hearing) can there be a musical "meeting"; the approaching lover will be another resourceful figure in the middle, able to "sing both high and low" (43, 41). The enigmatic poise of the song, mediating as it does between two extremes, is further established in the second stanza: hold but don't foolishly try to keep. Youth is a perishable commodity, a "stuff will not endure" (52). Out of the proverb "In decay there lies no plenty," a rebuke to misers, Feste fashions his own warning for those inclined to hoard time, ignoring its "present" (48): "In delay there lies no plenty" (50).[31]

Feste's pride in his grasp of human rhythms accounts not only for his hostility to Malvolio, who ill-advisedly criticizes his timing ("Unless you laugh . . . he is gagg'd"; 1.5.86-88, reprised at 5.1.375-76), but for his prickliness toward "Cesario," whom he sees as a rival go-between much too attractive to Olivia. Hence his elaborate word-duel about keeping and being kept, playing off Viola's innocent question, "Art not thou the Lady Olivia's fool?" (3.1.31). Feste huffily replies that Olivia will "keep no fool, sir, till she be married, and fools are as like husbands as pilchers are to herrings, the husband's the bigger" (33-35). Feste is not Olivia's kept pilcher (a word that suggests both a pickled sardine and a thief),[32] but a "corrupter," like "Lord Pandarus" bringing Cressida to Troilus: "Would not a pair of these have bred, sir?" he asks, eyeing Viola's single-coin tip (36, 51-52, 49). "Yes, being kept together, and put to use," she replies, completing the variations on a theme (50).

Viola's quick acknowledgment that one and one make three marks her as Feste's best pupil. Feste's perennial concern with making two three (contrasting with Andrew's doomed determination to "make one too") is mirrored in his insistence that "Journeys" end in "lovers meeting" with an outcome known to "Every wise man's son" (2.3.43, 44). The trip of the wise lover, like the trip of the wise men, ends in the joyous occasion of a

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[31]Feste's turn on the proverb is noted in some detail by Seng, *Vocal Songs*, p. 95.

[32]This complicated passage of wit may be inspired by the fact that "pickle-herring" was a Continental term for clown (*OED*, sb. 2, though the entry traces the usage back only to 1620).

child—the "son" that every "wise man" has, imitating God himself. Like the early sonnets, Feste hints that the only safe defense against time is a child. Thus his signature phrase, "that's all one," recalls the "all in one" note of Sonnet 8, where the third voice is the "child" (11) of the first two.[33] His own skill at playing the part in the middle, doubling Viola's adaptability, is the musical glue that holds the play together. The suppressed term here is "mean," a word denoting both the middle part in polyphony and (as in Chaucer's *Troilus*) a procurer (*OED*, sb.[2] I.2a, II.9a).

Although the musical ensemble would theoretically be complete without the "distemper'd" Malvolio, the play would not be half so entertaining. It is Malvolio's talent for social sour notes—his wounding of Sir Toby and Feste squarely in their musicianship, their pride in their ability to keep time with others—that sets in motion the famous subplot. Maria's description of Malvolio as "a kind of puritan" (2.3.140) glances at the fact that Puritans were the sworn enemies of polyphony. Thomas Becon's *Authorized Reliques of Rome* (1553) provides an early sample of Puritan invective against counterpoint, one which gives a comical new dimension to Malvolio's contemptuous claim that the catch-singers "gabble" and "squeak," to say nothing of Andrew's boast that he is "dog at a catch" and Maria's description of their singing as "caterwauling"(87, 89, 60-61, 72):

> . . . the choristers neigh a descant as it were a sort of colts; others bellow a tenour as it were a company of oxen; others bark a counterpoint as it were a kennel of dogs; others roar out

[33]Used by Feste at 5.1.373 and in the penultimate line of the play. Toby's casual use of the expression at 1.5.129 and 5.1.196 may hint that he is among the saved (certainly he is the first to marry). Cf. Sonnet 135, with its plea for the "rain" of sexual favors: "Think all but one" (9, 14), and (even more to the musical point) Bardi's insistence that "good part-singing is simply joining one's voice with . . . others and forming one body" (*Discorso*, ed. Strunk, p. 108). Other characters have trouble counting to two, much less achieving an all-in-one three; cf. Orsino's preoccupation with "nought" and "no one" (1.1.11, 2.4.57), Olivia's association with the word "none" (note 40), the cipher Malvolio with his conviction that he is the "one" (3.4.23), and Andrew with his lagging aspiration to "make one too" (2.5.207).

> a treble like a sort of bulls; others grunt out base as it were a number of hogs.[34]

But Malvolio is something even worse musically than a Puritan, according to Maria. As a "time-pleaser" (148) he has no objection to low songs if they suit his purposes, and thus weaves three coarse allusions to common ballads into his outrageous courtship of Olivia.[35] The refrain of one of these ballads neatly encapsulates his philosophy, deliberately inverting both Feste's "that's all one" and the sonnet family's ability to sing "all in one, one pleasing note." "Please one, and please all" (3.4.23) is not only comically inappropriate, hinting bawdily as it does that all women want the same thing. Its reversal of the order of "all" and "one" reminds us of Malvolio's chief article of faith: he is convinced (Maria says) that "all that look on him love him" (2.3.152). Put another way, for Malvolio "one" is "all." So "sick of self-love" is he, as Olivia astutely observes (1.5.90), that he imagines that when one Malvolio is pleased, Olivia—and all—are pleased.

If ever anyone confounded his parts in singleness it is Malvolio, who (the bawdy suggestion runs) prefers to play with himself. Surely this is the true wit of his daydreaming inclination to "play with my—," as he clutches at a dangling object hastily transformed from his steward's badge into "some rich jewel" (2.5.60). "Let me enjoy my private," he later exhorts the company (3.4.89-90), deaf to comic overtones. His pompous polysyllables and solipsistic speech rhythms (he also prefers to talk with himself) contrast sharply with the tripping counterpoint of wordplay favored by the rest:

> "I may command where I adore." Why, she may command me: I serve her, she is my lady. Why, this is evident to any formal capacity, there is no obstruction in this. And the end—

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[34]Quoted in William Chappell, *The Ballad Literature and Popular Music of the Olden Time*, 2 vols. (London: Chappell, 1855-59; rprt. New York: Dover, 1965), II, 402; see also pp. 403-06. Cf. Bardi's criticism of loud polyphonic singers who drown out other parts like "little snarling dogs . . . imagining that they are making no end of noise" (*Discorso*, ed. Strunk, p. 109). On the Puritan view of polyphony see also Hollander, *Untuning of the Sky*, pp. 247-57.

[35]The three ballads—"Please one, please all," "Black and yellow," and "Ay, sweetheart"—are identified in the Arden edition, pp. 93-94nn.

> what should that alphabetical position portend? If I could make that resemble something in me! Softly! "M.O.A.I." (2.5.115-20)

It is a nice touch that one of Malvolio's favorite words is "obstruction," something Feste delights in twitting him about in the darkness of his prison: "complainest thou of obstruction?" (4.2.38-39). Not coincidentally, the passage above also pokes fun at Malvolio's meager ability to hold; his "formal capacity" puts a self-serving logic above true content, producing a hilariously false conclusion.

The plot to "tickl[e]" Malvolio (2.5.22), a word used of stringed instruments as well as of trout (*OED*, v. 6a), is essentially a plan to amplify his solitary out-of-tuneness. Crouched behind the boxwood, the conspirators discover just how untuned Malvolio really is. "Take but degree away, untune that string, / And hark what discord follows," Ulysses observes in *Troilus and Cressida* (1.3.109-10). Here there is no need to take degree away; the steward's pre-letter daydreams—Olivia in his bed, Toby at his feet, himself in state—shout that Malvolio has already obliterated it. The virtue of the letter is that it allows all of Illyria to hark what discord follows. By confirming his illusions, the letter encourages Malvolio to act out the ensuing social and musical chaos, with the satisfying result that he is hauled off as a madman. Not, however, before he has been induced to display himself as a walking social discord—smiling, yellow-stockinged, and cross-gartered—who proudly exhibits his "obstruct[ed]" leg (3.4.21) for all to see.

The response of the eavesdroppers combines indignation over such blatant discord with delight at the prospect of its public airing. It is characteristic of the play's texture that the three listeners turn the interlude itself into an extended polyphonic exchange, almost madrigal-like in the way different voices harmoniously toss and tease a single word or sound.[36] If we listen carefully to this composition, in which Malvolio is a fourth voice and an unwitting participant, this is what we first hear: "O, peace," "Peace, I say!," "Peace, peace!," "O, peace," "O, peace, peace!,"

[36]For an analysis of the "contrapuntal orchestration" of this scene stressing the "clash of idioms" and the frustration of the eavesdroppers see Jean Howard, *Shakespeare's Art,* pp. 59-62. Although she rightly rejects the idea that musical counterpoint has no parallel in literature (p. 52), her emphasis on the discordant elements in such exchanges is at odds with Renaissance ideas of counterpoint.

"O, peace, peace, peace!," "yet peace," "O, peace" (2.5.30, 34, 38, 42, 51, 57, 64, 84). As earlier, here is a group having a great deal of trouble holding their peace, again with bawdy implications—a theme confirmed by Malvolio's climactic contribution: "thus makes she her great Ps" (87-88).

But the composition is even more complex. "These be her very c's, her u's, and her t's," says Malvolio, deciphering the hand of the letter, and Andrew takes it up: "Her c's, her u's, and her t's," adding (as the last to get any joke) "why that?" (86-87, 89). One answer to this deliberately teasing question may lie in the patterns described earlier, which seem to point toward an elaborate frolic with C fa ut as the tonic note of the play. In this light, Malvolio's musings—"let me see, let me see, let me see" (111)—become the comical plea of someone who is not only blind but desperately out of key: "let me C, let me C, let me C." Malvolio's c's and u's are further echoed in the composition below by Fabian: "you . . . you, you . . . see . . . you" (136-38). The most elaborate treatment, however, is reserved for the "fustian riddle" (108) which conceals the name of the supposed beloved. "M.O.A.I.," "M.O.A.I.," "M.O.A.I.," "M . . . M," "M . . . A . . . O," "I," intones Malvolio (107, 110, 120, 125, 129-31, 135), while the trio simultaneously works its contrapuntal variations: "say I," "O ay," "I say," "O . . . I," "Ay . . . I'll . . . O," "Ay . . . eye" (109, 121, 127, 132, 133-34, 136).[37] "M.O.A.I.," concludes Malvolio (139), providing the alphabetical medley with a cadence.

The letters "M.O.A.I.," ponderously pronounced by Malvolio again and again, simply represent, I would suggest, his inadvertent admission that "I AM O"—I am nought, or not, a musical and social cipher.[38] Far

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[37]The conspirators begin warming up even earlier. Their insistent chorus of O's (30, 42, 46, 51, 57, 84) anticipates the answer of the riddle; see esp. Toby's loaded "O . . . bow . . . eye" (46). Of this complicated pattern only Toby's echo of Malvolio in line 121 has thus far been noted (see the Riverside and Arden editions). The remarkable deployment here and elsewhere of homophones and rhyming sound-alikes—C/see/sea, U/you, Ps/[pees]/peace, I/ay/eye/why/fie, O/so/no, A/say/nay/play, not/knot/nought/note, no/know/nose, one/none—goes beyond punning to become an elaborate experiment in using letters and words like notes in a musical composition.

[38]For a detailed summary of the various readings see Smith, "M.O.A.I.," pp. 1204-24, who himself finds in the letters an attempt to make Malvolio repeatedly evoke Harington's scandalous *Metamorphosis of A IAX*. In addition to

from being "some sir of note" (3.4.73), as he imagines, his "alphabetical position" is as precarious as his musicianship; he is one letter short, in effect a "sir of not." Far from being "Count Malvolio" (2.5.35), much less a counterpointer, the suggestion is that he doesn't count, can't count, and is certainly no count, or of no account. A number of other details point to this solution, beginning with Maria's threat to "gull [Malvolio] into an ayword" (2.3.134-35)—that is, trick the naysaying steward into saying the hated yes, which he will be unable to withhold in the face of Olivia's supposed proposal. The fact that Maria's project finds "*not*able cause" to work on in his self-love furthers the theme (153).[39]

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earlier suggestions that the letters allude to "My Own Adored Idol"; John Marston's abbreviated signature; Montaigne; Gabriel Harvey; or the four elements (Mare, Orbis, Aer, and Ignis), more recent comment offers "I am O[livia]"; letters drawn from Malvolio's name; *moi* ("I myself"); "I am Alpha and Omega"; a progress to sexual satisfaction; or simply (like the anagrammatic names) an empty ruse meant to trap the audience as well as Malvolio. By contrast, my proposed solution arises from familiar Elizabethan proverbs (e.g., "One and none is all one," "One is as good as none," "One is none") evoked by Shakespeare himself in Sonnet 8 and even more clearly stated in Sonnet 136: "Among a number one is reckoned none" (8). On the use of these proverbs (Tilley O52, O54) see Booth, ed., *Sonnets*, pp. 147, 469-73. Cf. also Orlando's suggestion that when the misanthrophic Jacques looks in the mirror of the brook he will find "a fool or a cipher" (*As You Like It*, 3.2.290). The solution "I am nought," moreover, is not imposed from without but grows directly out of the language of the play. Cf. the repeated changes rung throughout on the phrases I am/I am not, with many teasing variants: what I am/I am not what I am/am not I/am I not/am I. See, e.g., Malvolio's inadvertent confession in prison: "I am," "I am," "Believe me, I am not, I tell thee true" (4.2.106, 109, 115).

[39]"Ayword" also of course suggests "byword." The Arden emendation of the Folio's "ayword" (a unique use in Shakespeare) to "nayword" changes the joke somewhat. The association of "not" words (italicized here for emphasis) with the naysaying and musically lacking Malvolio, perpetually one letter short of becoming a "sir of note," is insistent. Cf. Toby's delight at the prospect of Malvolio's "*not*able shame" and Maria's prediction that the steward will be brought into "*not*able contempt" (2.5.5-6, 203-04) as well as Malvolio's own comically obtuse descriptions of himself as "*not*oriously abus'd," victim of a "*Not*orious wrong," and (climactically) "the most *not*orious geek and gull / That e'er invention play'd on" (4.2.87-88, 5.1.328, 343-44). ("Invention" itself is a musical term; see *New Grove*, s.v. invention [XII, 511-12].) Olivia's final

In her inspired anagram Maria produces a three-step puzzle, of which Malvolio can solve only the first step: all the letters are in his name. Thus $M^1A^3LVOLI^4O^2$, read symmetrically from both ends in the order indicated (first and last letters followed by second and second from last letters), gives the infamous $M^3O^4A^2I^1$, which in turn, read symmetrically inward from both ends in the order indicated (last and second from last letters followed by first and second letters), yields I AM O. Perhaps not surprisingly, the three-stepping onlookers seem to grasp the solution immediately. As Malvolio struggles, unable to make the necessary dance-like leap from one end of his name to another ("M—why, that begins my name. . . . A should follow, but O does"), Fabian gives the audience a broad hint: "And O shall end, I hope"—suggesting not only (to Malvolio) "O ends your name," but "the end or solution is O, or nought" and even "I hope you'll end up nought" (2.5.125-26, 130-31, 132). Toby's threat to cudgel Malvolio to "make him cry O" (133-34) is thus simply a proposal to beat the right answer out of the unfortunate steward.

In suggesting that "No man must know" who the beloved is (2.5.99), the letter prepares the way for the joke. A social nobody, Malvolio is also in effect Olivia's "no man," habitually sent by her to say no, and given his ambition and conceit he "must know" who he is. Then too, "no man" naturally "must know," or constantly say no. Malvolio's tendency always to say nay, or neigh, is one of the factors that inspire the plotters to "make him an ass," accounting also for Feste's delight in out-noing him earlier, breaking the meter of the line with a verbal melisma: "O, no, no, no, no, you dare not" (2.3.168-69, 112). In the same vein, the twice-quoted urging of the letter, "put thyself into the trick of singularity" (2.5.151-52; 3.4.70-71), hardly necessary in Malvolio's case, deliberately reminds us of the threatened fate of the young man of Sonnet 8: "Thou single wilt prove none."[40]

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declaration that Malvolio has indeed been "most *not*oriously abus'd" completes the sequence (5.1.379).

[40]The verbal and thematic preoccupations of play and sonnet are remarkably close. Cf. Booth's comment on the juxtaposition in Sonnet 8 of the implied "knot" of marriage with "not," "note," and "none," with overtones of "nun." Though Booth does not make any connection with the language of *Twelfth Night*, his explication of the line "Thou single wilt prove none," citing "the ancient mathematical principle that 'one is no number,' which . . . became

If Malvolio is indeed "most *not*oriously abus'd," as Olivia concludes (5.1.379), it is because he, like the rhythmically challenged Sir Andrew, is musically and socially irredeemable. The pupil in Morley's *Introduction*, chastened by public ridicule, is anxious to reform: "I am so far changed as of a Stoic I would willingly make a Pythagorean. . . . I pray you begin even now" (p. 10). Malvolio in his dungeon is a much less promising convert, completely failing Sir Topas's comically apt test of sanity, which requires the benighted steward to accept one of the more outrageous tenets of the father of pitch and harmony:[41] "Remain thou still in darkness. Thou shalt hold th' opinion of Pythagoras ere I will allow of thy wits, and fear to kill a woodcock lest thou dispossess the soul of thy grandam" (4.2.57-60). To Olivia the clown reports only that Malvolio "holds Belzebub at the stave's end as well as a man in his case may do" (5.1.284-85)—a lively image of Malvolio still "hold[ing]" off rather than holding with, carefully keeping the length of a musical stave or staff between himself and the devil of polyphonic music.

The humor of the simultaneous quodlibet is based on a polyphony of incongruous voices. The comedy of *Twelfth Night* arises from just such "barful strife" (1.4.41), in which all the main characters are busy saying no to each other: there is Orsino's no to Olivia's no, Olivia's determination to have none, Cesario's no to Olivia, and Malvolio's no to everyone and everything, which inspires both Toby's and Feste's mockery ("Oh no no no no") and Maria's plan to turn the nay-prone steward into an "ayword." But in conclusions as in kisses, Feste slyly reminds us, "your

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proverbial," further supports my gloss of M.O.A.I. as "I am nought" (ed., *Sonnets*, pp. 146-47; see also pp. 469-73). In *Twelfth Night* Shakespeare extends the dance of knot/not/note/none/nun, adding repeated no's, knows, nays (neighs), noughts both open (1.1.11) and hidden (the repeated O's, the solution "I am nought"), and even noses (a motif related to the synaesthesia of music; see, e.g., 2.3.56). As a self-proclaimed "cloistress," Olivia is often associated with the word "none" (which both links "no" and "one" and evokes "nun"); see, e.g., 1.4.107, 109; 1.5.302; 2.2.8, 12, 24.

[41]Beyond Pythagorus's theory of the transmigration of souls, he was most famed for his belief that music, the natural world, and the universe itself were all ordered by numbers, and by his discovery of the basis of musical consonances and tuning. Thus Malvolio, as a musical and social nought with no sense of degree, makes a particularly unlikely Pythagorean acolyte. On Pythagorus's ideas see Finney, *Musical Backgrounds*, pp. 32-40.

four negatives make your two affirmatives" (5.1.21-22). In the process of getting to yes—to social and musical union—Malvolio's ecstatic conversion, with its eightfold "I will" (2.5.161-79) serves as a comic prelude, foreshadowing both Olivia's mistaken yes to Cesario and Sebastian's serendipitous "I will" to Olivia (4.1.65). In a play that toys so openly with nots, noughts, and knots as well as with the letters C, U, and T, it is perhaps not surprising that we finally arrive at the moment when the "nots" are cut—or even, as notes, brought to C ut or "middle" C, the note that "loves with all affection" (*TS* 3.1.76). The time has come at last to "bring the device to the bar," as Toby had earlier predicted, enigmatically adding, "But see, but see" (3.4.140, 141; cf. 1.3.70). The assembled barristers no doubt returned a favorable verdict on both the insistent legal-musical puns and the viol humor.

As the members of the company assume their true parts, a cascade of musical terms is released. After an alarming moment in which Orsino, now come to "partly know the instrument / That screws me from my true place," threatens to sacrifice Cesario (5.1.122-23), all is resolved. The company becomes aware that Viola and Sebastian have somehow miraculously "made division" of themselves, like violists dividing ground notes, appearing as like as two halves of a "cleft" apple (223-24).[42] The phrase "golden time convents" (382) is especially resonant, drawing as it does both on the language of Sonnet 3, where the parent's "golden time" is reiterated in radiant children (12), and on the musical notion that the consort is now ready to "vent" sweet airs or even heirs together, having avoided the barrenness of another kind of "convent." The one sour note, predictably enough, is struck by Malvolio, who sees in the finished ensemble not a group ready to make beautiful music together but simply, in the spirit of Puritan invective, a "pack" (378).

Over this final convention presides the meeting-minded Feste. His closing song, with its insouciant juggling of three kinds of time—days, lifetimes, and eternity—is more closely related to the play's preoccupations than has been noticed. To hoard life, the play has already

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[42]The full extent of the play's musical vocabulary, much of it both precise and up to date, has only been sketched here and above. Here, for example, see *New Grove*, s.v. division (VII, 400-02): "During the first half of the 17th century in England divisions were played on the consort bass and especially the lyra viol" (p. 401).

suggested, is to hold or keep in the wrong way, in effect coming, like the tricked Malvolio, to a "false conclusion"—a thing we should hate, Toby says, like an "unfill'd can" (2.3.6-7). As the rain relentlessly rains down on humanity every day (especially, the joke may go, in rain-sodden England), so we daily water the earth with tears and other waters, both waste and seminal. We are the leaky vessels through which life pours, all too briefly (if we can hold properly) filled full in one way or another—except for poor Malvolio, whose "water" is putatively sent to the "wise woman" for analysis (3.4.102), perhaps an allusion to a false pregnancy.[43]

A "tine" is a vessel for brewing (*OED*, sb.[3], obs.). Thus the much rained-on rogue of Feste's song, progressing from a "little tine boy" whose "thing" is merely a squirting "toy" to the company of old "toss-pots," is somewhat redeemed by his rakish capacity for life (5.1.389, 391, 403). But "capacity" is nothing, as Orsino nervously acknowledges at the start of the play (1.1.10), without the ability to hold for more than a minute. It is the patient and loyal Viola, with her openness to experience and to love, who stands finally as the play's model of "good capacity and breeding" (3.4.186). In the final lines, Feste ends the performance on a faint but recognizable echo of the sonnet's praise of the string family's ability to sing "all in one, one pleasing note": "That's all one, our play is done, / And we'll strive to please you every day."

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To move from the dense polyphony of *Twelfth Night* to *The Tempest*, some ten years later, is to step into a very different musical world.[44]

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[43]See, e.g., Maria's talk of "midwife," Olivia's concern lest Malvolio "miscarry," and later wishes that Malvolio finally be "deliver'd" (2.5.196, 3.4.63, 4.2.68, 5.1.315).

[44]On the music of *The Tempest* generally see John H. Long, *Shakespeare's Use of Music: The Final Comedies*, vol. 2 of 3 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1961), pp. 93-129, and Seng, *Vocal Music*, pp. 248-72. Articles analyzing the music in the context of *musica speculativa* include John Cutts, "Music and the Supernatural in *The Tempest*: A Study in Interpretation," *Music and Letters* 39 (1958): 347-58; Theresa Coletti, "Music and *The Tempest*," in *Shakespeare's Late Plays: Essays in Honor of Charles Crow*, ed. Richard C. Tobias and Paul G. Zolbrod (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1974), pp. 185-99; David Lindley, "Music, Masque, and Meaning in *The Tempest*," in *The Court Masque*, ed. David

Prospero's island is "strange," as we shall see, in several senses, and not least in the odd quality of its air. The shipwrecked party is dispersed in three wandering groups, each of which perceives in its own way a bewitching ambient synaesthesia. Comforting the group huddled around the grieving Alonso, Adrian observes that the island "must needs be of subtle, tender, and delicate temperance" because "the air breathes upon us here most sweetly" (2.1.42-43, 47)—a metaphorical train of thought suggesting that the island is a well-tuned instrument which gives off a sweet air, not unlike Orsino's musically fragrant "bank of violets" or little viols. Elsewhere, Ferdinand also marvels at a "sweet air" of puzzling origins: "Where should this music be? I' th' air, or th' earth? / . . . . / This music crept by me upon the waters, / Allaying both their fury and my passion / With its sweet air" (1.2.388, 392-94). Elsewhere still, Caliban assures Stephano and Trinculo that the island's "sweet airs" are not only harmless but delightful: "Be not afeard, the isle is full of noises, / Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not" (3.2.135-36).

The doubleness of this language, in which the airs the inhabitants hear become almost indistinguishable from the air they breathe, is compounded by the presence of an "ayrie" spirit called Ariel, who sings songs that an Elizabethan audience would have recognized as belonging to the fashionable new genre of the ayre.[45] As the name Viola hinted at

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Lindley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 47-59; and Peggy Muñoz Simonds, "'Sweet Power of Music': The Political Magic of 'the Miraculous Harp' in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*," *Comparative Drama* 29.1 (Spring 1995): 61-90. Two recent papers focus on Ariel's songs: Howell Chickering explores the theatrical experience of the combined music and text, providing a valuable look at the musical interaction of treble and bass ("Hearing Ariel's Songs," *JMRS* 24 [1994]: 131-53); Jacquelyn Fox-Good emphasizes the paradoxical materiality of the music and its bond with woman and the body ("Other Voices: The Sweet, Dangerous Air[s] of Shakespeare's *Tempest*," *ShSt* 24 [1996]: 241-74).

[45]Ariel is specifically described as "an ayrie spirit" in the First Folio's list of actors, in which (along with the play's unusual stage directions) some have seen the hand of Ralph Crane, a legal scrivener who prepared the manuscript for the Folio. On Crane's role see the Arden edition of *The Tempest*, ed. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan (London: Nelson, 1999), Introduction, pp. 126-30; see also T.H. Howard-Hill, "Shakespeare's Earliest Editor, Ralph Crane," *ShSu* 44 (1992): 113-29, and Jeanne Addison Roberts, "Ralph Crane

the social nature of the music of *Twelfth Night*, so here the name Ariel punningly suggests the kind of music that will dominate *The Tempest*: monodic rather than polyphonic, aloofly leading rather than joining with, irresistibly drawing all after it. The preoccupation of *The Tempest* with the theme of freedom, often interpreted in political and particularly colonial terms, is equally a musical matter.[46] Here a contemporary musical innovation is pressed into service as a powerful metaphor for the unsettling yet often liberating effects of leaving behind older configurations at once more stable and more confining. In contrast to the polyphonic music of *Twelfth Night*, this new music is centrifugal rather than centripetal, governed by an impulse toward individual freedom rather than by a need to make music with others. If *Twelfth Night* is concerned with how well you can hold and hold with, *The Tempest* is about how well you can let go or release. By the end Prospero has magnificently given up revenge, his magic, Ariel, his daughter, and even in a sense his kingdom, which will pass with his death to Naples. The play as a whole works toward an apocalyptic moment when "time [will]

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and the Text of *The Tempest*," *ShSt* 13 (1980): 213-33. Despite the uncertainty of Crane's contribution and the vagaries of Elizabethan spelling, it seems likely that the modern editorial emendation of "ayrie" to "airy" in the list of actors obscures a deliberate connection of Ariel with the musical "ayre," whether by Crane (who is known to be a perceptive reader) or Shakespeare himself. Perhaps significantly, the only other use of "ayrie" in the play appears in Prospero's "Ayrie-charm" (5.1.54). Although the Folio does not consistently use "ayre" for music, the spelling ayre/ayres/ayrie (11 uses) is far more frequent than aire/aires (4).

[46]For colonialist readings see, e.g., Paul Brown, "'This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine': *The Tempest* and the Discourse of Colonialism," in *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 48-71; and Francis Barker and Peter Hulme, "'Nymphs and reapers heavily vanish': The Discursive Con-texts of *The Tempest*," in *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. John Drakakis (London: Methuen, 1985), pp. 191-205. By contrast, two recent articles suggest a covert republican subtext: Annabel Patterson, "'Thought is free': *The Tempest*," in *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), pp. 154-62; and David Norbrook, "'What cares these roarers for the name of King?': Language and Utopia in *The Tempest*," in *The Politics of Tragicomedy: Shakespeare and After*, ed. Gordon McMullan and Jonathan Hope (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 21-54.

be out" (1.2.246)—a phrase that implies not discord, as it well might in other musical circumstances, but an untethering of music from its social context, the freeing of Ariel and the return of ayre to air.

The airy nature of the ayre was primarily the result, as the musically literate among Shakespeare's audience would have known, of the new independence of the agile treble part, which now moves freely above a supporting bass accompaniment with no intertwining middle voice to consider. Although all ayres share what Elise Jorgens has called a "treble-dominated style," there was also, as she points out, a broad stylistic range within the genre, from the light polyphony of Dowland to the more plainly homophonic style of Campion[47]—and, it might be added, the light confections of the accomplished lutenist and composer Robert Johnson, whose two ayres "Full fadom five" and "Where the bee sucks" are the only original music of *The Tempest* to survive. In locating these two songs stylistically, Ian Spink has described them as "after the tuneful manner of Campion or Jones," a connection useful in reconstructing the specific musical vein in which Johnson was working.[48] Thomas Campion—a composer and poet whose own masque shared the program with *The Tempest* in 1613—was an enthusiastic advocate of the new form: "why not new Ayres, as well as new fascions?" he asks, defending the new freedom of the "naked" (i.e., monodic) ayre against those who "will admit no Musicke but that which is long, intricate, bated with fuge, chaind with sincopation."[49]

This new melody is not only unchained, it is so "light" as to almost defy gravity. Although the term "light ayres" was in common use (even by Orsino; First Folio, *TN* 2.4.5), Campion puts it best, comparing his works to the feather-weight leaves of gold sold by apothecaries: "so light,

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[47]Elise Bickford Jorgens, *The Well-Tun'd Word: Musical Interpretations of English Poetry 1597-1651* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), pp. 81, 77-83. Jorgens further associates the ayre with "the humanistic appeal of personal statement" (p. 78). On the form and history of the ayre, see above, note 5.

[48]Spink, *English Song, Dowland to Purcell* (London: Batsford, 1974), p. 54. On Johnson and his works see also Ian Spink, ed., *Robert Johnson: Ayres, Songs, and Dialogues*, The English Lute-Songs, 2nd series, vol. 17 (London: Stainer and Bell, 1961); and *New Grove*, s.v. Robert Johnson (ii), XIII, 165-67.

[49]Quoted from *The Works of Thomas Campion*, ed. Walter R. Davis (New York: Norton, 1970), p. 15.

as that they are subject to be shaken with the least breath, yet, rightly handled, they serve both for ornament and use; such are light *Ayres*." The language here is not so far in tone from Prospero's affectionate references to Ariel, a spirit preeminently "Delicate," "fine," and "dainty" who performs his tasks before Prospero can "breathe twice" (1.2.442, 494; 5.1.94; 4.1.45). For Campion, ayres are not only by definition airy; he seems almost to suggest that they are made of the local air, an emanation of place not unlike the "sweet airs" of Prospero's island: "But some there are who admit onely *French* or *Italian* Ayres, as if every Country had not his proper Ayre, which the people thereof naturally usurpe in their Musicke."[50]

This novel ayre-ness, in all its aspects, was a conceit made to order for the Elizabethan mind, and one that would have subtly influenced the contemporary reception of Ariel and his songs. It is very like Shakespeare to marry such a topical allusion to a deeper tradition, and his dealings with Ariel and the ayre are no exception. Here he draws on the large Renaissance repertory of ideas about the relationship between music and air, which ranged from the simple notion put forward in Davies's *Orchestra* (1596)—"For what are *Breath, Speech, Ecchos, Musick, Winds*, / But Dauncings of the ayre, in sundry kinds?"—to more recondite theories that held, for example, that the images of sounds continued to hang in the air indefinitely, like so many aural ghosts.[51]

Such a context, in turn, opens a new aerial perspective on the play. It has not been sufficiently appreciated, I would suggest, that *The Tempest* is in fact all about air and the remarkable constructions we make in and of it, from the play's title and first event—for what is a tempest but agitated air?—to the "auspicious gales" and "Gentle breath" of clapping hands and acclaiming voices at the end (5.1.315; epil. 11). Shakespeare

[50]For another allusion to "light Ayres" see the preface to Morley, *First Booke* (1600), A2. Campion's opinions appear in prefaces to his *Third and Fourth Booke of Ayres* (1617) and his *Two Bookes of Ayres* (1612-13?). The last two texts (the first from the preface of the fourth book) are quoted from *Works*, ed. Davis, pp. 168, 55. In the latter quote "ayre" could of course also mean habitual attitude or bearing.

[51]*The Poems of Sir John Davies*, ed. Robert Krueger (Oxford: Clarenden, 1975), st. 43.6-7, p. 101. On Renaissance ideas about the relation of air and music see Finney, *Musical Backgrounds*, chs. 5 and 7; for aural ghosts, pp. 140-41.

gives us not only an intriguing exploration of the upper registers of both music and lofty thought, hermetic and political, but a remarkably successful experiment in keeping an audience up in the air, as recent critics who have commented on the play's powers of "suspension" have inadvertently confirmed.[52] The play itself slowly rises like a soufflé, subtly pumped full of echoing allusions to Ariel (which we hear as "aerial" or "airy-el," some 17 times), air and airs (14), tempests and storms, winds and gales, and finally breath, the lungs that make it, and the ears that perceive its airy creations, from roars and bow wows to delicately nuanced music.

Perhaps most interesting among the Renaissance theories about air and music then circulating, given Ariel's mysterious mode of being, is Ficino's intriguing personalizing of the world spirit, which he saw as the breath of a musically proportioned universe. "Undoubtedly the world lives and breathes," he writes in his *De triplici vita*, and its breath is music. Ficino carries this idea yet further: because our music imitates cosmic music, it too is spirit, which he describes in startlingly physical terms. Thus the material of song is "warm air, even breathing, and in a measure living, made up of articulated limbs, like an animal, not only bearing movement and emotion, but even signification, like a mind, so that it can be said to be, as it were, a kind of aerial and rational animal." Ariel is not so odd a creature, seen in such a context, nor are Prospero's powers so inexplicable. The "Orphic Songs" described in the *De vita* were composed specifically for the purpose of influencing human behavior, and required special attention to the daily positions and aspects of the stars:

> Consider which star chiefly rules which place and man. Then observe what modes . . . and songs these regions and persons

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[52]A. D. Nuttall has praised the play for its "peculiar atmosphere of ontological suspension," finding in it a "recurrent sense of ambiguity and suspension" (*Two Concepts of Allegory: A Study of Shakespeare's "The Tempest" and the Logic of Allegorical Expression* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1967), p. 158; the point is expanded by Russ McDonald, who notes that "the poetry seduces the audience into a state of stylistic suspension, an intuitive zone between sleep and wake. . . . It is a marginal condition between expectation and understanding, affirmation and skepticism, comedy and tragedy" ("Reading *The Tempest*," *ShSu* 41 [1991]:15-28; see esp. pp. 23, 27).

> generally use, so that you may apply similar ones. . . . The daily positions and aspects of the stars are to be noticed; then investigate to what speech, songs, movements, dances, moral behaviour and actions, most men are usually incited under these aspects, so that you may make every effort to imitate these in your songs.[53]

Ficino's particular configuration of these themes helps to identify the nature of Prospero's "Ayrie-charme" (as the First Folio spells it [5.1.54]) as specifically musical and to connect his pervasive use of music as a moving force with his determination to seize the moment offered by a star. "'Tis time," he tells Miranda; "The hour's now come, / The very minute bids thee ope thine ear":

> By accident most strange, bountiful Fortune
> (Now my dear lady) hath mine enemies
> Brought to this shore; and by my prescience
> I find my zenith doth depend upon
> A most auspicious star, whose influence
> If I court not, but omit, my fortunes
> Will ever after droop. (1.2.24, 37-38, 178-84)

The kind of time found in Prospero's kingdom is strikingly different from that in *Twelfth Night*—that circular, knot-untying, revenge-bringing-in time that lends itself to three-part song and triple-time dance. Prospero's Fortune is a lady intimately related to Time and Occasion, both sometimes shown with a luxuriant forelock that must be seized at once or not at all (*OED*, forelock, sb.[2] 2). Time in *The Tempest*

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[53]On Ficino's musical theories see D. P. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella* (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), pp. 3-72; and Finney, *Musical Backgrounds*, pp. 102-12. The translations quoted here are Walker's (pp. 13, 10, 17); the Latin text provided in his footnotes is taken from Ficino, *Opera Omnia* (Basel, 1576): *De triplici vita* III.iii (p. 534) and III.xxi (pp. 562-63). As far as I can determine, Ficino's "aerial and rational animal" has not earlier been associated with Ariel. For other views of Ariel, see W. Stacy Johnson, "The Genesis of Ariel," *ShQ* 2 (1951): 205-10; Frank Kermode, ed., *The Tempest* (London: Methuen, 1972), pp. 142-45; Orgel, ed., *Tempest*, pp. 6, 26-27, 77-78; and Chickering, "Hearing Ariel's Songs," pp. 149ff.

is linear and fleeting, moving always rapidly forward in one direction, offering opportunity but once. The play's conspirators realize this as fully as does Prospero. "Th' occasion speaks thee," Antonio tells Sebastian, urging him to seize power by killing his sleeping brother; here alert conspiracy "His time doth take," as Ariel warns Gonzalo (2.1.207, 302). Even Caliban realizes that in stealing finery his allies are seizing trash rather than their one chance to kill Prospero: "We shall lose our time, / And all be turn'd to barnacles, or to apes" (4.1.247-48).

Time in *The Tempest* plunges forward not only through the steady rhythm of sand dropping in the hourglass (three glasses, or hours, as we are carefully reminded) but in idiosyncratic leaps and bounds, through spellbinding foreshortenings and expansions rather like those permitted to the solo voice. "When singing alone," Bardi notes in his *Discorso*, ". . . the singer may contract or expand the time at will, seeing that it is his privilege to regulate the time as he sees fit" (conversely, when singing with others it is unforgivable to "disregard the time . . . breaking and stretching it" [ed. Strunk, p. 109]). Like a skilled soloist, Ariel contracts time or expands it, characteristically operating between beats—"ere your pulse twice beat"—and in the instant between breaths and words: "Before you can . . . / . . . breathe twice and cry 'so, so'" (5.1.103; 4.1.44-45). His modus operendi is part of a wider scheme in the play whereby the participants are carefully assigned specific musical rhythms and affinities.

The success of Ariel's most compelling song, "Full fadom five," rests upon just this kind of temporal sleight of hand. In a few brief lines the sprite convinces Ferdinand that his father, supposedly drowned but minutes before, has already been transformed into a remote and precious artifact of coral and pearl: "Nothing of him that doth fade, / But doth suffer a sea-change / Into something rich and strange" (1.2.400-02). As Howell Chickering has recently pointed out, in Johnson's ayre a literal shift to the key of C on the words "sea-change" (a "C-change," as it were) is followed by intriguing modulations designed to emphasize the richness and strangeness of "something rich and strange" ("Hearing Ariel's Songs," p. 159). Ariel's haunting song, as we shall see, not only celebrates the new richness of strangeness but marks the beginning of a subtle rehabilitation of the lower regions of both sound and earth that prepares for a circling back to polyphony.

Prospero's long opening recital of how he arrived on the island—itself presented as a kind of solo, in which we are repeatedly admonished to

attend to a single voice—reveals that his original fault is a familiar one: musical singleness or strangeness, a refusal to play his part. "The government I cast upon my brother, / And to my state grew stranger, being transported / And rapt in secret studies," he confesses (1.2.75-77). Taking advantage of Prospero's neglect (and showing a wily understanding of political polyphony), his brother Antonio retuned the instrument of state to his own advantage: "having both the key / Of officer and office, [he] set all hearts i' th' state / To what tune pleas'd his ear" (83-85). Impatient with playing his part behind a screen, like a musician entertaining at a play or in the hall of a noble household, Antonio soon became ambitious to confront his audience directly: "To have no screen between this part he play'd / And him he play'd it for, he needs will be / Absolute Milan" (107-09).

There is a certain musical justice in Prospero's fate. He who turned a deaf ear to the "concord of [his] state," as Shakespeare describes such neglect in *Richard II* (5.5.47), is put to sea with his infant daughter to make polyphonic music with water and air: "To cry to th' sea, that roar'd to us; to sigh / To th' winds, whose pity, sighing back again, / Did us but loving wrong" (1.2.149-51). The intransitive verb "to strange" once meant "to banish" as well as to distance oneself (*OED*, v. obs. 1, 5). Earlier "transported" from his "state" by his studies (76), Prospero is now literally transported from Milan to an island notable for its strangeness—that is, for its remoteness and its singularity, qualities that translate in human terms into aloofness and unsociability (*OED*, a. 6, 8, 11). It is no coincidence that the word "strange" and its variants (stranger, strangely, strangeness) occur some 27 times in *The Tempest*, repeatedly sounding in different contexts and even permeating the stage directions.[54]

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[54]In a comic vein, cf. the unsociable Malvolio's determination to set himself apart by being "strange" (*TN* 2.5.170). Critics have noted that the stage directions of *The Tempest* are unusual; even more unusual is the way in which the "strange" language of the play spills over into them. Cf. the "*strange music*" and "*strange* Shapes" that herald the banquet of 3.3 and the "*strange . . . noise*" of the disappearing masque in 4.1 as well as the twice-repeated instruction "*Burthen, dispersedly*" (1.2) and the directions that the masquers "*heavily*" vanish (4.1). Again, Crane's role is unclear; see Roberts, "Ralph Crane," pp. 214-18, and John Jowett, "New Created Creatures: Ralph Crane and the Stage Directions in *The Tempest*," *ShSu* 36 (1983): 107-20.

Critics have puzzled over the harmony or disharmony of Prospero's island, and over whether the music heard is divine music.[55] But it seems clear that Shakespeare is making a deliberate foray into the world of musical and political possibilities that lay beyond *musica speculativa*, with its divine harmony created by many parts. The new realm in which we find ourselves is alternately intoxicating and alarming. By its very remoteness and the sparseness of its population, Prospero's island must have "strange"—solitary or singular—music, and an Elizabethan audience would have been forewarned of the presence of new music by the pointed allusions to contemporary reports of new lands and exotic new forms of life. The very first song of the play, an ayre whose original music is unknown (although perhaps also by Johnson), suggests the insidious power that the solo voice will have in this brave new musical world:

> Come unto these yellow sands,
> And then take hands:
> Curtsied when you have, and kiss'd,
> The wild waves whist:
> Foot it featly here and there,
> And, sweet sprites, [the burthen bear]. (1.2.375-80)

The dominance of the solo voice is lightly suggested by the fact that it has musical underlings to do the heavy work—"sweet sprites" that both

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[55]Critical comment on the question of harmony is various. Cutts posits a Circean music that nonetheless leads to a "harmony in which all discord, strife, disunion and evil intentions have been dissolved" ("Music and the Supernatural," p. 58); despite an opening disclaimer, Coletti ultimately finds a harmony laboriously attained, precarious, and incomplete ("Music and *The Tempest*"); stressing musical coercion and manipulation, Lindley explores musical betrayals as evidence of the untuning of the sky ("Music, Masque, and Meaning"). More recently Simonds has called for a focus on "harmonist elements" rather than "political discords," finally suggesting that the two somehow work together polyphonically ("'Sweet Power,'" p. 63). Chickering claims that although Shakespeare "wanted Prospero's magic to be closely allied with the music of the spheres," the music we hear is also connected with Prospero's emotions ("Hearing Ariel's Songs," pp. 145-46); Fox-Good rejects the equation of music with harmony as "simplistic," stressing "materiality" and "expressive capacities" ("Other Voices," pp. 244, 246).

bear the "burthen," the undersong or bass part that supplies the underpinning for the more mobile treble part, and provide the "foot," another term for the bass part, as they punningly "Foot it featly."[56] More dramatic evidence of the power of Ariel's voice is presented in its riveting effect on Ferdinand: "thence I have follow'd it / Or it hath drawn me rather" (1.2.394-95). In the below-stairs version of this scene, Caliban and his companions react similarly ("Let's follow it. . . . we'll follow. . . . I'll follow") in a comical interlude reported by Ariel to Prospero: "calf-like they my lowing follow'd through / Tooth'd briers, sharp furzes, pricking goss, and thorns. . . . / . . . At last I left them / I' th' filthy-mantled pool beyond your cell" (3.2.148, 150, 152; 4.1.179-82).

The use to which Ariel puts his song is revealing. Peter Seng has suggested one way in which *The Tempest* is musically unique: "few of Shakespeare's plays . . . require so much music . . . and none of them puts so much emphasis on 'dispersed' music, performed as if it came from all over the stage" (*Vocal Songs*, p. 252). The music is unusual not only in being dispersed, it should be pointed out, but in its active role in dispersing. It is active not simply in scattering the characters in strategic groups (Ariel himself reports that he has "dispers'd" both the shipwrecked on land and the fleet at sea [1.2.220, 233]) but in everywhere delicately undercutting the social nature of music and multi-part repartee as we saw it in *Twelfth Night*. The abject failure of the only attempt at a three-man catch, described above, offers the spectacle of Stephano and Trinculo listening open-mouthed with Caliban as their botched polyphony is replaced by the right tune played by a single unseen agent on pipe and tabor. As their music is dissolved, so they too are dispersed, led by Ariel's music into the ignominy of the horsepond.

Other signs of the erosion of the social nature of music are more subtle. Although the scene in which Gonzalo tries to comfort Alonso is in a sense, as Jean Howard suggests, an example of Shakespeare's skilled use of "contrapuntal effects" (*Shakespeare's Art*, pp. 55-57), there is an

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[56]Chappell observes: "The burden of the song, in the old acceptation of the word was the base, foot, or under-song. It was sung throughout, and not merely at the end of the verse" (*Popular Music*, I, 222; see also I, 34n.). *OED*, burden, sb. IV, comments on the confusion with the word "bourdon": "Apparently the notion was that the bass or undersong was 'heavier' than the air." Shakespeare dallies with this notion in *TGV* 1.2.80-82.

important twist. For a contemporary audience, what happens among Gonzalo, Antonio, and Sebastian would have been perceived not as counterpoint—a cooperative effort among parts that creates repeated moments of harmony—but the very reverse: the deliberate undoing of polyphony. In this composition only one voice strives good-humoredly to play its part, while the other two delight in striking sour notes and in subverting any chance of harmony:

> *Gon.* Here is everything advantageous to life.
> *Ant.* True, save means to live.
> *Seb.* Of that there's none, or little.
> *Gon.* How lush and lusty the grass looks! How green!
> *Ant.* The ground is indeed tawny.
> *Seb.* With an eye of green in't.
> *Ant.* He misses not much.
> *Seb.* No; he doth but mistake the truth totally. (2.1.50-58)

Significantly, Antonio and Sebastian take special pleasure in disparaging the sweet air, a tactic that places them squarely in the ranks of Shakespearean music-haters "fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils" (*MV* 5.1.85) even while simultaneously allowing a clever double sally about the bad breath of the audience and the bad air in the new Virginian colony:

> *Adr.* The air breathes upon us here most sweetly.
> *Seb.* As if it had lungs, and rotten ones.
> *Ant.* Or, as 'twere perfumed by a fen. (47-49)

John Gillies has noted both the double joke and Caliban's inspired affinity for fens and unwholesome winds in his curses, but in a musical context the joke goes further yet, playing on the idea of low "ground" in its meaning of bass accompaniment.[57] The lowest members of the

[57]John Gillies, "Shakespeare's Virginian Masque," *ELH* 53 (1986): 673-707; see esp. pp. 679-83, 684. On the Renaissance use of "ground" as a term for musical base, see *OED*, ground, sb. II.6c; see also ground, sb. III.8c (as place of burial) and 8e (as pit of theater), and groundling, sb. 3 (denizen of the theatrical pit) and 4 (one of "base" breeding). How such humor was received at court performances is not clear.

audience, not only socially but physically, were the "groundlings," literally located in the sunken area surrounding the stage and no doubt providing a low running commentary. They also, of course, obligingly smelled, making the analogy with low ground or fragrant fen complete.

Similarly, those who inhabit the social and musical low ground in the play smell bad, thereby embodying the very opposite of sweet airs. Caliban, we are told, smells like rotten fish—"a kind of, not-of-the-newest poor-John," as Stephano delicately puts it (2.2.26-27). Such low physical and musical humor also subtly informs the horsepond scene. The immersed conspirators, musically associated with the ground or foot, by implication have smelly feet made even more odoriferous by the foul lake which "O'erstunk their feet"—that is, not simply covered their feet but out-smelled them or made them smell even worse (4.1.184). Following Ariel's "lowing," the three reach a new low when they emerge from their dip smelling of "horse-piss" (179, 199).

Of all the visitors, it is Gonzalo who is most in tune with the airy nature of the island, as Shakespeare suggests in various ways. Hidden among Antonio and Sebastian's gibes is an inadvertent compliment to Gonzalo and a bow to the patron musician of the play—a twin to the key image of Viola's brother as the musician Arion charming his way to shore in *Twelfth Night.* In confusing Tunis with Carthage, they imply, Gonzalo is a kind of Amphion, creating a city out of thin air:[58]

> *Ant.* His word is more than the miraculous harp.
> *Seb.* He hath rais'd the wall, and houses too. (2.1.87-88)

In the scene Gonzalo goes on to build not just a city but a whole republic in the sky, a cloud-kingdom in which nature pours forth abundance, society is unfettered by letters or law, and harmony prevails. He speaks,

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[58]For a suggestion that Amphion's building is accomplished by an Ariel-like "sweet . . . *Syren* of the ayre" begotten by his "charming Lire" see Davies, "Orchestra," *Poems*, ed. Krueger, st. 21.1-2, p. 95. Cf. Simonds's view that Orpheus is the presiding musician of the play ("'Sweet Power,'" pp. 62ff.); Orpheus is also the candidate of Robin Hadlam Wells, who finds an intent to honor King James ("An Orpheus for a Hercules: Virtue Redefined in *The Tempest*," in *Neo-Historicicism: Studies in Renaissance Literature, History, and Politics*, ed. Robin Headlam Wells et al. [Cambridge: Brewer, 2000]: pp. 240-62).

as he admits, "nothing" (175)—mere air—but it is an air that, like Amphion's music, raises a vision of social coherence out of dispersal and ruin.

Gonzalo's airy commonwealth, which has a king but "no sovereignty" and less labor (157), mirrors the uneasy political arrangements of the island, where the desire to be free and the desire to rule often appear in odd conjunction. The sheer airiness of the island and its music seems to create a state of reverse gravity where everything wants to go up—to become ever airier and higher in the political and musical hierarchy. Gonzalo's daydream itself represents a kind of gentle usurpation in which he anoints himself the perfect ruler of a kingdom where everyone and everything is free. Even Ariel, the lightest of spirits, paradoxically yearns to be free, and the idea of this final release is woven insistently through Prospero's speeches like a refrain: "Thou shalt be as free / As mountain winds"; "thou / Shalt have the air at freedom"; "Thou shalt ere long be free."[59]

Against Gonzalo's and Ariel's purer aspirations is placed Antonio's seductive offer to Sebastian of a higher part through the murder of Alonso, his king and older brother: "heed me; which to do, / Trebles thee o'er." Sebastian reciprocates by offering to "free" Antonio from tribute in exchange for the murder of the high-minded Gonzalo: "One stroke / Shall free thee" (2.1.220-21, 292-93). A similar upstart impulse informs both Caliban's rebellious chant of "Freedom, high-day!" and the defiant catch that celebrates the trio's resolve to murder Prospero: "scout 'em and flout 'em! / Thought is free" (2.2.186; 3.2.122-23). These parallel plans for usurpation, like Prospero's original exile, represent "high wrongs" (5.1.24)—unsettling attempts to rise politically and musically.

All this is part of a covertly musical tug of war over who will bear the burden, serve as the foot, provide the ground, play the base part—all Elizabethan synonyms, as noted above, for the musical underpinnings of the ayre and other musical forms. Although some have briefly glanced at the musical significance of Caliban's "burden," the opposition of Caliban

[59]1.2.499-500; 4.1.264-65; 5.1.87. The refrain is pervasive; see also 1.2.421-22, 442-43; 5.1.96; and the final release at 5.1.319 ("Be free").

and Ariel has only begun to be explored in musical terms.[60] Musically Caliban must do the heavy lifting while Ariel does the light work, and their rebellion at the opposite ends of the musical spectrum is not so much tragic, in this context, as comic. In the modern pursuit of colonial wrongs, much of the playful musical humor apparent to Elizabethans, who were comfortable with the hierarchical nature of both music and society, has been overlooked. (The First Folio, after all, placed *The Tempest* first among the comedies.) Caliban, for better or for worse, is presented as a born bearer of burdens whose very attempt at a solo—an act of musical as well as social defiance—is comically earthbound. The foot by nature plays a supporting role; with its unmelodic "burden" it is rarely allowed or encouraged to sing alone.

Thus Caliban's base song is the very reverse of Ariel's light ayres and between-the-beats insinuations, an emphatically square-on-the-beat foot-stomper with a small hop in the middle ("'Ban, 'Ban, Ca-Caliban") that attempts to defy gravity (2.2.184). Caliban's repeated refusals to serve ("No . . . Nor . . . Nor . . . nor") betoken a kind of Malvolian refusal to play his true part (180-83). His solo ends in a desperate attempt to get "high" with the new-found aid of drink: "Freedom, high-day! high-day, freedom! freedom, high-day, freedom!" (186-87). The only freedom Caliban can imagine, it is already clear, is a "new master" (185) and not coincidentally, a different burden to bear and a new foot to kiss. His refusal to bear Prospero's logs ("I'll bear him no more sticks") is soon followed by Stephano's casual command "Here! bear my bottle," and in the clothesline scene both Stephano and Trinculo methodically join in loading Caliban up: "Help to bear this. . . . Go to, carry this. . . . And this. . . . Aye, and this" (163, 175-76; 4.1.250-54). It is moreover a running joke, as it were, that Caliban has something of a foot fetish,

[60]Joan Hartwig suggests a connection between Caliban's "burden" and parodic, antimasquelike elements in the play ("Cloten, Autolycus, and Caliban: Bearers of Parodic Burdens," in *Shakespeare's Romances Reconsidered*, ed. Carol McGinnis Kay and Henry E. Jacobs [Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978], pp. 91-103). Simonds briefly notes that "while the king plays the melody or air on the harp, Caliban . . . must be persuaded . . . to bear the burden—or the bass musical accompaniment—of the daily workings of human society" ("'Sweet Power,'" p. 68). Stressing that the two are fellow servants, Chickering points out that Ariel's song "bears an obvious resemblance to Caliban's song of freedom" ("Hearing Ariel's Songs," pp. 154, 164).

repeatedly offering to kiss feet or lick shoes and generally spending a great deal of time on his knees.[61]

Caliban's love of the ground explains his unexpected eloquence about the land, long a subject of critical comment. He is happiest—and most generous—digging in the ground on all fours with dirt under his nails: "I with my long nails will dig thee pignuts" (2.2.168). The fact that he delights not only in the island's ground but in its sweet airs (he is no music-hater) may finally be redemptive. (He not only assays a solo, he even wants to sing a polyphonic catch with his new friends.) For all his faults, Caliban, like his bumbling companions, clearly has sensitive feet. Thus his horror of Prospero's hedgehogs, sent to "Lie tumbling in my barefoot way and mount / Their pricks at my footfall" (11-12), and thus too the comic point of Ariel's strategy of leading the tender-footed trio through briars and thorns (4.1.180). By contrast, the irredeemable villain Antonio—whose garments, he brags, sit "Much feater" on him after his crime—boasts that his heelish bosom is too tough to be inconvenienced by the "kibe" (normally a chilblain on the heel) of conscience (2.1.273, 276).

In a final touch of musical wit, all three of the below-stairs conspirators are comically interested in beating, as befits their musically base lot. From the pounding beat of their songs—"No more dams I'll make for fish" and "Flout 'em and [scout] 'em, / And scout 'em and flout 'em!" (2.2.180; 3.2.121-22)—to their litany of threats to beat each other, they are creatures of percussion. Their base proclivities finally lead to actual blows: "I'll . . . make a stock-fish of thee," Stephano tells Trinculo, administering a pounding (3.2.70-71, 76).[62] Small wonder that the trio

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[61]For Caliban's enthusiasm for kissing and licking feet or shoes see 2.2.149, 152; 3.2.23; 4.1.219. (Appropriately, in creeping up on Prospero he worries that his "foot-fall" will betray him [4.1.195].) Caliban kneels to Stephano at 2.2.118 and is made to kneel by Stephano (who clearly likes the idea) at 2.2.153 and 3.2.40. Trinculo and Stephano, too, show their affinity for the ground, one by crawling under the recumbent Caliban's cloak, the other by refusing to "give ground" at the sight thus created (2.2.61-62).

[62]"Stock-fish," or dried cod, was softened by beating. For the trio's repeated thoughts of beating each other see further 2.2.156; 3.2.64, 85, 86, 111. Cf. their instinctive response to Ariel's musical bait ("I beat my tabor, / At which . . . they pricked their ears, / Advanc'd their eyelids, lifted up their noses" [4.1.175-76]) and Stephano's admiration for Ariel's percussive technique ("I would I could see

becomes the cause of a "beating mind" in Prospero (4.1.163). Caliban's first choices for killing Prospero—knocking a nail into his head, braining him, or battering his skull with a log (3.2.61, 88-90)—all involve beating. Musically and politically, such acts are in fact all versions of the foot rising up against the head, a metaphor used elsewhere by Prospero in an odd rebuke to Miranda: "What, I say, / My foot my tutor?" (1.2.469-70). In an inspired combination of the musical motifs of beating, air, ground, and foot, to say nothing of foot-kissing, the three conspirators are climactically reported by Ariel to be so hot with drink that they "smote the air / For breathing in their faces; beat the ground / For kissing of their feet" (4.1.172-74).

Caliban's dogged devotion to the ground and foot contrasts strikingly with Ariel's exuberant embrace of the air in his own final song, an ayre about being suspended high in the air. In "Where the bee sucks" Ariel imagines a future in which he will no longer be forced to touch ground for further orders. The slender thread that binds treble and bass is severed, and melody floats freely. In Ariel's joyous ayre he cavorts in the air forever, eating, foraging, and sleeping there like the bee, owl, and bat. Chickering notes the subtle way in which Johnson's setting works together with the text of the song to "give the effect of flitting about freely but always coming to rest" aloft, finally providing a musical structure that supports Ariel's levitation on a bat's back ("Hearing Ariel's Songs," pp. 168-69). The last lines are in fact the very epitome of delightfully precarious adverbial suspension, in which Ariel is entirely at ease somehow hanging "under" a hanging blossom: "Merrily, merrily shall I live now, / Under the blossom that hangs on the bough" (5.1.93-94).

There is no doubt, in this musical opposition, that Ariel has the better part. In the ayre the treble is not only higher and freer, doing as it likes with its time: by its very nature it commands the ear and lords it over the

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this taborer; he lays it on" [150-51]). "Beating" is also used (as in Prospero's case) of anxious, repetitively troubling thoughts; cf. Miranda's "beating" mind about the tempest (1.2.176) and Prospero's admonition to Alonso: "Do not infest your mind with beating on / The strangeness of this business" (5.1.246-47). Most subtly, it appears in the beating pulse that supports all life and breath (our common ground, as it were)—a motif stressed at the sociable end of the play (5.1.103, 113-14). On Renaissance ideas about the relationship of the pulse and music see Finney, *Musical Backgrounds*, pp. 38-39.

sometimes restive, not to say resentful and ambitious, ground or base. The temptation to switch parts is strong. In luring the "bottom run[ning]" Sebastian to treble himself, Antonio imagines the dozing Gonzalo as already dead or "earth'd," like the sleeping king: "Here lies your brother, / No better than the earth he lies upon, / If he were that which now he's like—that's dead" (2.1.227, 234, 280-82). The scene itself is part of a growing exploration of the lower depths of earth, consciousness, and sound. The descent into the "heavy" state of sleep is presented as restorative if potentially dangerous, uncomfortably close to the "dying fall" so feared by Orsino (189, 194, 197). "They fell together all . . .; / They dropp'd, as by a thunder-stroke," Antonio observes of the sleepers (203-04). His choice of words is revealing. Unlike the low conspirators with their buffoonish interest in beating, the aristocratic villains are preoccupied with the more elegantly percussive "stroke"—whether of chiming clocks, lethal lightning, or fatal dagger (13, 204, 288, 292).

In *The Tempest* some are clearly born base—not only Caliban and his low companions but the morally base Antonio and Sebastian—while others have baseness thrust upon them. Thus Ferdinand, who thinks himself in all probability already a king, is forced to bear the burden on Prospero's island, a musical test Prospero himself had recognized when he vowed to "bear up" under the "burthen" of his exile (1.2.157, 156). It is significant that Ferdinand makes the best of his base new part: "some kinds of baseness / Are nobly undergone; and most poor matters / Point to rich ends" (3.1.2-4). Set against the picture of Caliban grumbling under his "*burthen of wood*" (2.2, stage dir.) is the luminous double portrait of the "patient log-man" Ferdinand and the generous Miranda: "I'll bear your logs," she offers eagerly (3.1.67, 24). That the two are so willing to bear the burden together bodes well not only for their future but for the eventual transformation of the burden from single and onerous to social and joyous.

Equally impressive in learning to abase himself is Ferdinand's father, the usurping Alonso. Hearing the thunder musically "base [his] trespass," he vows to join his son at the bottom of the sea: "Therefore my son i' th' ooze is bedded; and / I'll seek him deeper than e'er plummet sounded, / And with him there lie mudded" (3.3.99, 100-02). The language of this vow, like Alonso's later wish that "Myself were mudded in that oozy bed / Where my son lies" (5.1.151-52), quietly intertwines the vocabulary of

sleep, music, and death ("bedded," "sounded," "mudded"), hinting at a kind of moral and musical repose or even reward to be found in accepting the lower regions. This willing plummet to the depths of repentance both fulfills Ariel's proleptic song about Alonso's "rich" transformation five fathoms under the sea and reinforces Ferdinand's new association of "baseness" with "rich ends."

Like Viola, who resourcefully disguises herself as the middle voice between high and low, Ferdinand succeeds because he is willing to play a new part, fulfilling his "base" duties gracefully. As Viola is rewarded with Orsino's love, so Ferdinand receives Miranda from Prospero: "thou / Hast strangely stood the test. Here, afore heaven, / I ratify this my rich gift" (4.1.6-8). Prospero's words bring together the persistent themes of strangeness and richness, first linked in Ariel's haunting song describing a "sea-change" into something "rich and strange" (1.2.401, 402). The suggestion that strangeness can be a source of richness was perhaps not a startling one in the golden age of exploration. In *The Tempest*, however, Shakespeare extends this insight into the realm of music, so that musical aloneness no longer carries the stigma attached to it in Sonnet 8 or even in *Twelfth Night*. The play is remarkable, in fact, for its recognition of the mystery, power, and attractiveness of a music that holds itself aloof from fellowship, and in its exploitation of a new texture of single voices and dispersed sounds.

Part of the fascination of musical strangeness lies in the aura of danger and excitement that surrounds the contagious new freedom of the solo voice. The villains and drunken rabble of the play interpret freedom as licence, an opportunity to unburden and treble themselves by violent means that points in the direction of musical and social anarchy. The wiser characters, by contrast, find in freedom an inexhaustible source of richness in the other sense of "free": noble, generous, liberal, lavish, open (*OED*, a. I.4a, III.21a, 22c, 23). To be "free" is in fact something of a Shakespearean ideal; Olivia scolds Malvolio for lacking this quality and praises Orsino for possessing it (*TN* 1.5.92, 260). Ben Jonson memorably describes Shakespeare's own nature as "open, and free"—a quality he associates with the too-flowing facility of Shakespeare's pen.[63] *The Tempest* is suffused with a sense of the sheer copiousness available to

[63] *Ben Jonson*, ed. C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1925-52), VIII, 584.

those who, like the musician Amphion or the denizens of the Globe, successfully build in air—whether through music, words, or high thoughts.

Gonzalo's commonwealth, "all foison, all abundance" (a condition from which Antonio and Sebastian extrapolate only idle licentiousness) anticipates Prospero's masque, which keeps license at bay with a vision of "foison plenty," offering a three-part configuration of "Honor, riches, marriage-blessing" that hints at an older kind of harmony (2.1.164; 4.1.110, 106). In the masque the opposition of Caliban and Ariel is recast into a generous-spirited collaboration of earth and air in which "rich Ceres" (75) joins with Juno, queen of the sky, and air-borne Iris. In the song that follows, earth with her "Rich scarf" of rainbow colors magnificently bears the "burthen," now transformed into an emblem of exuberant fruitfulness: "Vines with clust'ring bunches growing, / Plants with goodly burthen bowing" (82, 112-13).

At the approach of Caliban and his company the masque breaks off abruptly and the spirits "*heavily vanish,*" perhaps literally sinking through a grave-like trapdoor to the "*strange . . . noise*" of stage machinery (4.1, stage dir.). Throughout the play base elements—not only the oafish Caliban and his confederates, who are literally linked to the heavy elements of earth and water, but the morally base Antonio and Sebastian—have threatened Prospero's "Ayrie" charm (First Folio, 5.1.54). If the destruction of Prospero's "baseless fabric" by the intrusion of rebellious base elements leaves him momentarily "distemper'd" (4.1.145) or out of tune, it also evokes a moving statement about the hazards of building in air:

> Our revels now are ended. These our actors
> (As I foretold you) were all spirits, and
> Are melted into air, into thin air,
> And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
> The cloud-capp'd tow'rs, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And like this insubstantial pageant faded
> Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep. (148-58)

The masque and these "cloud-capp'd tow'rs" are of a piece with the bubble of Gonzalo's commonwealth burst by the base Antonio and Sebastian (who would also, if they could, bring down the moon [2.1.183]), the banquet that disappears as the foul usurpers reach out to touch it, and the clouds that open to reveal "riches / Ready to drop" on the dreaming Caliban only to vanish as he regains his earthy consciousness (3.2.141-42). There will always be base sorts, some musically and humanly irredeemable, capable of destroying beauty and harmony at a touch. When Iago sets his sights on the "free and open nature" of Othello (1.3.399), there is little doubt of the outcome. But the message of *The Tempest* seems to go beyond this discouraging fact. The airy creation is magnificent, the moment of dissolution sad but inevitable. Life is rounded with a sleep, and to sleep, as we have seen, is someday to be "earthed"—to surrender oneself to the ground. If the music of men's lives is the melody—the ayre or air that we freely carry as we transform breath into ephemeral words and music above the steady beat of the pulse that supports our life—when it ends we become the ground, bearing the burden for further melodies that now go on above us. Some such subtext, both musical and human, may account for Prospero's distress at being brought down to earth so unceremoniously by Caliban and the "beating" thoughts he arouses (4.1.163).[64]

In the final scene, Prospero is again serenely in control and "Time / Goes upright with his carriage," as though his burden is no longer heavy (5.1.2-3). The masque has prepared us for the fact that what goes up must come down. In a series of rhythmic "release[s]" (5.1.30)—of Alonso's group, Caliban's gang, the sailors, and finally Ariel himself—Prospero (or Shakespeare) lets the ayre out of the play, achieving a perfect three-point polyphonic landing so gentle that few are aware that we, along with Prospero, are being grounded. Prospero has loved his books and airy spells—and his Ariel—too well, perpetuating the flaw that led to his exile. (Conversely, his aversion for Caliban recalls another

[64]On the airy heights and final descents of music as emblematic of life and the inevitable "fall" of death see, e.g., Samuel Rowley, *When You See Me, You Know Me* (1605): "and when [man] hath attain'd, / His high and loftie pitch, breathed his sharpest and most / Shrillest ayre, yet at length tis gone, / And fals downe flat to his couclusion" (sigs. H-H2, quoted by Finney, *Musical Backgrounds*, p. 41).

aspect of his former Achilles heel.) Like Alonso, Prospero performs a plummeting penance, breaking his "Ayrie" charm by burying the instruments of his art deep within the base elements of earth and water: "I'll break my staff, / Bury it certain fadoms in the earth, / And deeper than did ever plummet sound / I'll drown my book" (5.1.54-57).

As the conjunction of "bury," "sound," and "drown" suggests, Prospero still associates the lower regions of both earth and music with death. His rehabilitation, like Alonso's and even Orsino's, is covertly presented in musical terms, and is suggested when he suddenly begins to talk, like Feste, in threes, willingly giving away "a third of [his] life" in presenting Miranda to Ferdinand (4.1.3). The difficult acknowledgment of Caliban, "this thing of darkness" (5.1.275)—the very antithesis of airy lightness—is part of his new acceptance of the lower regions of human nature, thought, and sound, showing his determination to achieve a more statesmanlike musical poise in which every part, including the base, is polyphonically balanced, and thus "Every third thought shall be my grave" (312).

If Prospero appears to give up music along with Ariel, it should be pointed out that he gives up only a certain kind of music—"strange," monodic, dispersed and dispersing. Heavenly music is by definition polyphonic, composed of many parts, and Prospero's summoning of its healing force—"when I have requir'd / Some heavenly music (which even now I do)"—signals the necessary movement back toward a more social kind of music, like the "sociable" tears he now sheds with Gonzalo (5.1.51-52, 63). The union of Ferdinand and Miranda is part of the return to both the polyphony of marriage, with its putative "burden" of fruitfulness, and the polyphony of state, as is Prospero's final appeal to the groundlings for forgiveness and release. The poignancy of the moment in which he reluctantly frees Ariel is testimony to the new power of musical aloneness. But it is the many-stringed lute or viol that is the established emblem of the concord of state,[65] and it is to polyphony that Prospero must return.

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[65]On musical images of the concord of state see Hollander, *Untuning of the Sky*, pp. 47-50; Andrea Alciati's emblem of the stringed instrument as political concord (*Emblemata*, first published 1531) is reproduced as the fourth figure following p. 242.

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The ambivalence we feel when Prospero circles back to polyphony suggests that the music of men's lives has changed forever in some essential way, and that Shakespeare has recorded this change in a particularly faithful and ingenious way. It seems clear that the evolution of Elizabethan music and the shifting fortunes of musical genres inform the plays in quite unexpected ways, and that a closer understanding of musical kinds provides a new and relatively unexplored perspective on Shakespeare's skill. Not a small part of this skill was an ability to speak about "many sorts of music" in a language whose idiom is no longer obvious to the modern reader. The expression "to play a part" is no longer instantly recognizable as a musical as well as a dramatic metaphor, nor does "sorts" put us in mind of "consorts." Nor does the word "air" immediately suggest sweet music, much less music of a historically specific kind. "Ground" and "foot," moreover, seem merely pedestrian terms. Yet the evidence suggests that the lost resonances of these words have a great deal to contribute, and that without their guidance we can have only the most general impression of why it is that the music of *The Tempest,* for example, does indeed "Take the ear strangely" (5.1.313).

The implications of these findings for dramatic genre and the movement from comedy to romance are intriguing. It is perhaps not surprising to discover that Shakespeare composed scenes or even entire plays at least partly by ear, weaving the voices together not only thematically but as pure sound. But it is striking to find that he applied musical insights about texture so fully, reserving his most complete exploration of polyphonic sounds and themes not only for a comedy—an eminently social form that traditionally ends in the polyphony of marriage—but for what well may be his final comedy. Similarly, it is perhaps significant that he saved his fullest exploration of dispersed sound and "strange" or singular music not only for a romance—an open-ended, questing form in which reunions and unions are more precariously won—but for what was perhaps his final romance and even his last play.

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