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# Serious Play: Sir John Harington's Material-Textual Errancy in Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse (1591)

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Article abstract

Sir John Harington's *Orlando Furioso* in English Heroical Verse (1591) is a significant example of material-textual Englishing: under the direction of Harington, his book's emblematic title page, copperplate engravings, typography, mise-en-page, and commentary apparatus are all transmutations of the preeminent Italian editions of the sixteenth century, most notably Francesco de Franceschi's lavish 1584 edition. This article traces how Harington cannily deploys his bibliographic code in metatextual and metavisual ways to call attention to how the material-textual manipulates the reader's experience. In what could be called an act of early postmodern deconstruction, Harington playfully dismantles the edifying structures of pragmatic humanism in the same way that romance dissolves epic.

# Serious Play: Sir John Harington's Material-Textual Errancy in *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse* (1591)<sup>1</sup>

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*Sir John Harington's Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse (1591) is a significant example of material-textual Englishing: under the direction of Harington, his book's emblematic title page, copperplate engravings, typography, mise-en-page, and commentary apparatus are all transmutations of the preeminent Italian editions of the sixteenth century, most notably Francesco de Franceschi's lavish 1584 edition. This article traces how Harington cannily deploys his bibliographic code in metatextual and metavisual ways to call attention to how the material-textual manipulates the reader's experience. In what could be called an act of early postmodern deconstruction, Harington playfully dismantles the edifying structures of pragmatic humanism in the same way that romance dissolves epic.*

*La célèbre traduction de Sir John Harington, Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse (1591), offre un exemple remarquable d'“anglicisation” de l'Arioste, sur le plan textuel autant que matériel. Avec sa page de titre emblématique, ses gravures, ses procédés de typographie et de mise en page, et même ses commentaires, le volume composé sous la direction étroite de Harington opère une véritable transmutation du modèle proposé par les grandes éditions italiennes du seizième siècle, en particulier celle de Francesco de Franceschi publiée en 1584. On montre ici comment Harington déploie une adresse étonnante dans la manipulation des codes bibliographiques de l'époque, jouant sur le métatextuel et le métavisuel pour mettre en scène les pièges que le livre imprimé, dans ses dimensions matérielles autant que textuelles, lui permet de tendre à son lecteur. En un jeu sur les signifiants digne de la déconstruction post-moderne, Harington désarticule les structures édifiantes de l'humanisme pragmatique, comme pour rappeler la dissolution des codes épiques par ceux de la romance.*

In his *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse* (1591),<sup>2</sup> Harington exhibits an unusual interest in the interplay of what Anne Coldiron calls

1. I am grateful for Marie-Alice Belle's, Brenda Hosington's, and Anne Coldiron's comments on this article and for the feedback from the participants (particularly Randall McLeod) of the 2017 conference “Early Modern ‘Transmissions’: Linguistic, Material, and Cultural Translation in England and France (c. 1470–1660),” organized by Marie-Alice Belle and Brenda Hosington. This work was funded in part by a grant from the East Tennessee State University Research Development Committee Small Grants Program for research at the Folger Shakespeare Library.

2. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by Iohn Haringto[n] (London: Richard Field, 1591). All citations are from this edition.

the co-processes of translation and printing, the linguistic and the material-textual.<sup>3</sup> He knew that he was generating a book object as much as he was a translation. As bibliographers and Harington scholars such as Gerard Kilroy, Jason Scott-Warren, Simon Cauchi, and Randall McLeod have carefully noted, Harington was deeply involved in the materiality of the text through all phases of production, including giving design direction for the copperplate engravings, providing explicit guidance to his printer Richard Field on typefaces, ornamentation, and layout, making stop-press corrections during printing, and providing post-printing adjustments by hand, such as specialized gift bindings and inscriptions.<sup>4</sup> Harington understood and sought to control the shaping of meaning via translation's material incarnation. This article traces how Harington cannily deploys his bibliographic and paratextual codes in metatextual and metavisual ways to call attention to how the material-textual manipulates the reader's experience. In what could be called an act of early post-modern deconstruction, Harington playfully dismantles the edifying structures of pragmatic humanism in the same way that romance corrodes epic.

3. For an exploration of the material-textual, see Anne Coldiron, *Printers without Borders: Translation and Textuality in the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1–19, dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139681056.

4. For the standard bibliographical studies on the printing process behind Harington's *Orlando Furioso*, see Simon Cauchi, "The 'Setting Forth' of Harington's Ariosto," *Studies in Bibliography* 36 (1983): 137–68; Simon Cauchi, "Harington's *Orlando Furioso*: A 'Spare Leafe' and a Stop-Press Correction," *Studies in Bibliography* 45 (1992): 68–70; W. W. Greg, "An Elizabethan Printer and His Copy," *The Library* 4.2 (1923): 102–18, dx.doi.org/10.1093/library/s4-IV.2.102; Philip Gaskell, *From Writer to Reader: Studies in Editorial Method* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 11–28; Randall McLeod, "From Tranceformations in the Text of *Orlando Furioso*," *Library Chronicle of the University of Texas* 20.1–2 (1990): 60–85; Randall McLeod, "IMAGIC: A Long Discourse," *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 32.1 (1999): 190–215; Randall McLeod, "Information on Information," *Text* 5 (1991): 241–81; Gerard Kilroy, "Advertising the Reader: Sir John Harington's 'Directions in the Margent,'" *English Literary Renaissance* 41.1 (2011): 64–110, dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6757.2010.01080.x; Robert McNulty, ed. *Ludovico Ariosto's "Orlando Furioso," Translated into English Heroical Verse by Sir John Harington (1591)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), xli–li; Jason Scott-Warren, *Sir John Harington and the Book as Gift* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).



Figure 1. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by *John Haringto[n]* (London: Richard Field, 1591), title page. Rare Books 62722, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.



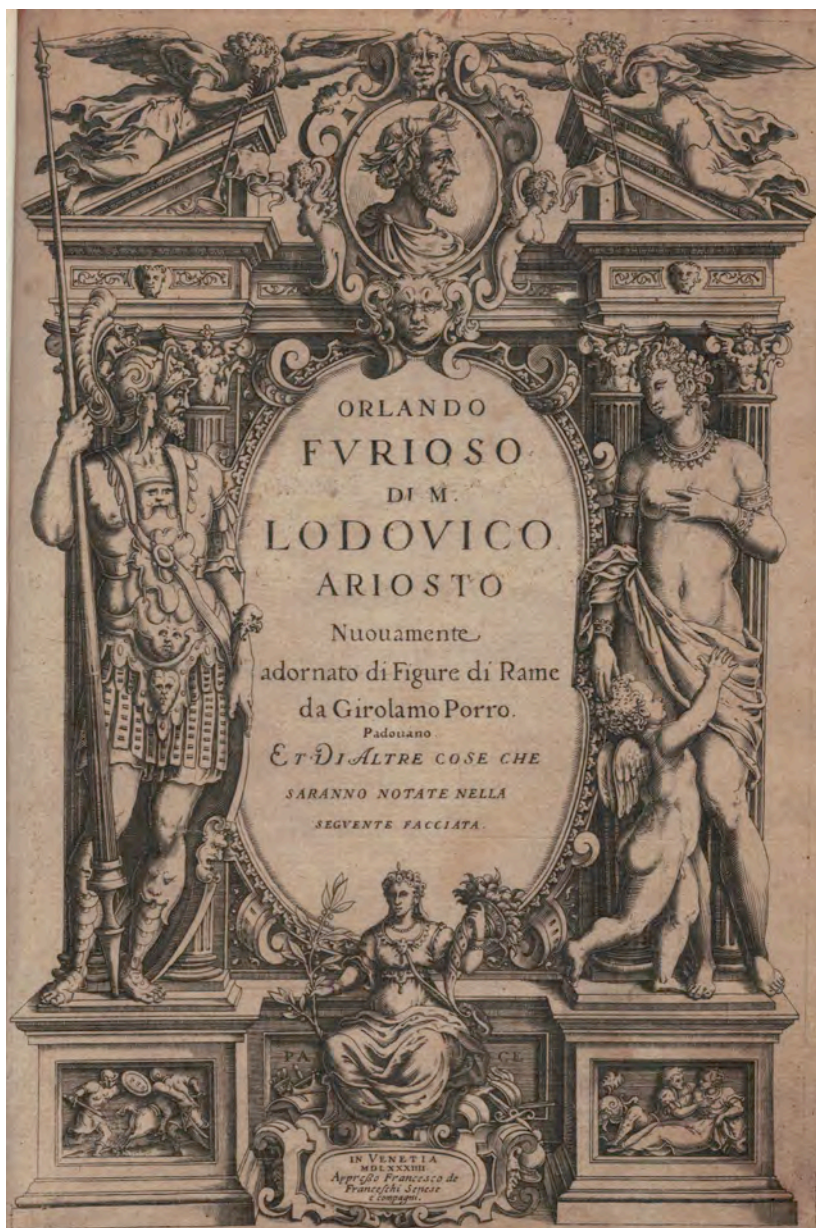


Figure 2. Lodovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso Di M. Lodovico Ariosto* (Venice: Francesco di Franceschi, 1584), title page. Private copy.

An apt place to start is where Harington's book begins, with the title page (fig. 1), which is in many ways a pictorial translation of the title page of Francesco Franceschi's 1584 edition (fig. 2), Harington's primary model for much of his engravings and commentary.<sup>5</sup> Both are emblematic title pages, which carried sophisticated symbolic freight for audiences.<sup>6</sup> The fusion of classical architectural details in emblematic title pages—such as plinths, columns, and broken pediments—elevates the author through its association with triumphal entries, while the allegorical tableau serves as a representation of the text's totalizing theme, an elaborate *pictura* façade that explicates the text before the reader enters the cathedral of words.<sup>7</sup> In Franceschi's title page, engraved by Girolamo Porro, we can see this dual purpose of pre-interpreting the text and lauding its author. In the romance epic, the principal themes of Love and War are often represented by Venus and Mars, and the poets in the tradition had to find ways to "balance them and link them together."<sup>8</sup> On the title page, Venus and Mars, Love and War, and in many ways, Romance and Epic, are balanced on either side. The reliefs on the wings of the plinth show scenes of war and love that mirror the gods above as well as illustrate the dual subjects of Ariosto's romance epic as stated in the opening line of his work: "Le Donne, i Cavalier, l'Arme, gli Amori."<sup>9</sup> As Women and Knights, Arms and Love,

5. Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso* Di M. Lodovico Ariosto (Venice: Francesco di Franceschi, 1584). For Harington's use of the Italian editions, including Franceschi and Vincenzo Valgrisi (1556), see Daniel Javitch, *Proclaiming a Classic: The Canonization of Orlando Furioso* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 135–57; Townsend Rich, *Harington & Ariosto: A Study in Elizabethan Verse Translation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), 51–69; and McNulty, xliii–xlvi.

6. For the classic work on the emblematic title page in England, see Margery Corbett and Ronald Lightbown, *The Comely Frontispiece: The Emblematic Title-Page in England, 1550–1660* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979). See also Karl Josef Höltgen, "Emblematic Title-Pages and Brasses," in *Aspects of the Emblem: Studies in the English Emblem Tradition and the European Context* (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1986), 91–140; Alastair Fowler, *The Mind of the Book: Pictorial Title-Pages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); and Karl Josef Höltgen, "Early Modern English Emblematic Title-Pages and Their Cultural Context," in *Entree aus Schrift und Bild: Titelblatt und Frontispiz im England der Neuzeit*, ed. Werner Busch, Hubertus Fischer, and Joachim Möller (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2008), 40–79.

7. Corbett and Lightbown, 7–9.

8. Jane E. Everson, *The Italian Romance Epic in the Age of Humanism: The Matter of Italy and the World of Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 166, dx.doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198160151.001.0001.

9. Ariosto, "Women, Knights, Arms, Love," *Orlando Furioso*, 1.1.1. All quotations from Ariosto's original are taken from Franceschi's edition (1584). See note 5.

receive balanced treatment in Ariosto's line, they are also balanced visually in the composition of the title page, equal in stature. A personification of Peace, Franceschi's printer's device, mediates between them, implying that the poem unites its twin impulses towards Mars and Venus, and by implication, romance and epic. Porro reinforces the visual consonance by having the two male figures on the left and centre-top—Mars and Ariosto—face to the right, and the two female figures on the right and centre-bottom—Venus and Peace—face to the left. Peace's olive branch in her right hand and cornucopia on the left, both at diagonals, echo the lines of Mars's shield and Cupid's body. All the elements in the title page are decorously balanced, bringing about visually what Franceschi's annotations and prefatory materials do for Ariosto's text—the rapprochement of romance and epic via a Neo-Aristotelian classicizing.<sup>10</sup> The aspects of Ariosto that were so troubling for critics, such as his episodic variety, are presented to the reader as a totalizing visual unity.

On most title pages, the visual energies are drawn to the centre, where the title cartouche or authorial portrait may be found. The horizontal and vertical balances in Franceschi's title page help draw the eye to the centre, but there are also visual cues moving the eyes upward: the columns themselves, the olive branches and cornucopia in Peace's arms, and, most conspicuously, the spear of Mars, which breaks the architectural plane like an arrow, drawing the eye on an upward diagonal from plinth to angel's wing. The eye moves along the spear to the angels who are trumpeting Ariosto's eternal fame while almost joining hands and wings to form a seraphic canopy over his laurelled head. The title page's visual rhetoric reinforces the literary beatification of Ariosto, which is the purpose of the edition, to "canonize" the author.<sup>11</sup>

Harington's transmutation of the title page, as carried out by the engraver Thomas Coxon, destabilizes Porro's carefully wrought visual and thematic

10. For the "debate" over Ariosto and epic theory, see Bernard Weinberg, "The Quarrel of Ariosto and Tasso," in *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 2:954–1073; Daniel Javitch, "Italian Epic Theory," in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, ed. Glyn P. Norton, 9 vols., *The Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 3:205–15, [dx.doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521300087.022](https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521300087.022); and Daniel Javitch, "The Emergence of Poetic Genre Theory in the Sixteenth Century," *Modern Language Quarterly* 59.2 (June 1998): 139–69, [dx.doi.org/10.1215/00267929-59-2-139](https://doi.org/10.1215/00267929-59-2-139). For the Italian editions' role in classicizing Ariosto, see Javitch, *Proclaiming a Classic*.

11. For canonizing Ariosto via editions, see Javitch, *Proclaiming a Classic*.

harmonies.<sup>12</sup> The horizontal visual balance between Mars and Venus is now a competing vertical visual imbalance between author and translator, whose dignified portrait has replaced Franceschi's printer's mark. At first glance, the title page may seem to emphasize a typical vertical translation relationship with bottom-translator's subservience to top-author, but Harington's *bas-de-page* portrait instead shifts the compositional heft to him and away from Ariosto, where the dissimilar sizes of the portraits create immediate hierarchical scaling in Harington's favour.<sup>13</sup> While the visual energies of Franceschi's title page move toward the centre and up to Ariosto, Harington's has a visual gravity that draws the eye downward to himself and his beloved English Spaniel Bungey, who wrenches the compositional balance toward the Venus plinth, where he is anchored. This visual figuring of the translator is significant. While not the first English title page portrait of any author or translator, as has been claimed,<sup>14</sup> it is definitely the most brazenly self-aggrandizing presentation of a Renaissance English translator on the title page—a translator claiming equality with, if

12. For other readings of Harington's famous title page, see Randall McLeod, "The Fog of arT," in *Exercices furieux. A partir de l'édition de 'l'Orlando furioso' De Franceschi* (Venise, 1584), ed. Ilaria Andreoli (Bern: Peter Lang, 2013), 162–247, 199–203; Fowler, 95–103; Evelyn B. Tribble, *Margins and Marginality: The Printed Page in Early Modern England* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1993), 89; D. H. Craig, *Sir John Harington* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1985), 44; Gerard Kilroy, ed., *The Epigrams of Sir John Harington* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 15–16, [dx.doi.org/10.4324/9781315239965](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315239965); McNulty, xlv–xlv; Scott Warren, *Sir John Harington and the Book as Gift*, 52–55. For the standard art historical descriptions of Harington's title page, see Sidney Colvin, *Early Engraving and Engravers in England: A Critical and Historical Essay* (London: British Museum, 1905), 58–59; and Arthur M. Hind, *Engraving in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: A Descriptive Catalogue with Introductions. Part I: The Tudor Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), 240 and 251.

13. Anne Coldiron, "The Translator's Visibility in Early Printed Portrait-Images and the Ambiguous Example of Margaret More Roper," in *Thresholds of Translation: Paratexts, Print, and Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Britain (1473–1660)*, ed. Marie-Alice Belle and Brenda Hosington (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 51–74, 60, [dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-72772-1\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-72772-1_3).

14. See Corbett and Lightbown, 43. For a more accurate history of authorial portraits on title pages, see Sarah Howe, "The Authority of Presence: The Development of the English Author Portrait, 1500–1640," *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 102.4 (December 2008): 465–99, [dx.doi.org/10.1086/pbsa.102.4.24293689](https://doi.org/10.1086/pbsa.102.4.24293689), where she mentions that Harington's was the first portrait to appear in an engraving, rather than in a woodcut. For the most comprehensive survey of translator portraits, see Coldiron, "The Translator's Visibility," 51–74.



not superiority to, his source text.<sup>15</sup> While the emblematic title page is usually intended to glorify work and author, it has now been co-opted to glorify its translator and editor. Rather than status anxiety, we have status audacity.<sup>16</sup>



Figure 3. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by John Haringto[n] (London: Richard Field, 1591), title page detail. Rare Books 62722, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Looked at closely, Harington's portrait insertion is also a text to be read: it is an *impresa* portrait (fig. 3). *Impresa* portraits were developments in English miniature portraiture from the 1580s onward; they were "exercises in Renaissance self-fashioning" that fused esoteric symbolic imagery with the sitter's likeness.<sup>17</sup> Similar to the medal, the *impresa* portrait became an "expression of the ideals

15. For the larger implications of Harington's visibility for translator-authorship, see Coldiron, "The Translator's Visibility," 69.

16. For status anxiety among English translators, see Neil Rhodes, "Status Anxiety and English Renaissance Translation," in *Renaissance Paratexts*, ed. Helen Smith and Louise Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 107–20, dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511842429.007.

17. Michael Bath, *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture* (New York: Longman Group, 1994), 10. See also Roy Strong, "The Portrait as *Impresa*," in *The English Miniature*, ed. John Murdoch, Jim Murrell, Patrick J. Noon, and Roy Strong (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 68–73.

and aspirations of the sitter.”<sup>18</sup> This significant instance of an individualized message (the *impresa*) perched on the framework of a more public and moral emblematic edifice demonstrates Harington’s conflation of self-presentation and publication.<sup>19</sup> He is the only title page figure looking directly at the reader. The lower rim of the roundel contains the motto “il tempo passa” (time passes), while a watch with Harington’s family crest lies open before him. This *impresa* portrait expresses Harington’s aspirations as a courtier, with Harington’s expectant pose and the watch signalling that time is passing, complete with the conspicuous turning key. The upper rim of the roundel bearing the date 1591 indicates that Harington was thirty at the time of publication, the same age as Ariosto when he set forth on his courtly career and the composition of his great romance epic, as Harington mentions in his “Life of Ariosto.”<sup>20</sup> As Scott-Warren argues, the “Life of Ariosto” is rhetorically structured to mirror Harington’s own life—as Ariosto was, so Harington will be (hopefully).<sup>21</sup> The two roundels on the title page cement that connection, as the inscriptions both have crosses on them, which preface references to time: timelessness for Ariosto, who has become one for the ages, stuck in numismatic profile,<sup>22</sup> and time passing for Harington, who is stuck in the moment in three-quarter profile, turning to the reader. While Ariosto has become *il divino*, Harington waits anxiously for his turn to become so too. Once a contemporary poet, Ariosto has been sublimated into a classic, and Harington’s edition is an attempt to do the same for his career.

But then what are we to make of Bungey, this furry intrusion challenging the decorum of the emblematic title page? Dogs have had a history of accompanying translators in images, and they have been seen as representations of fidelity to the source text, particularly when leashed as Bungey is here.<sup>23</sup> But this particular dog’s startling presence on the title page has made such an

18. Strong, “The Portrait as Impresa,” 68.

19. See Scott-Warren’s reading of this portrait in *Sir John Harington and the Book as Gift*, 53–55.

20. Harington, 417.

21. Jason Scott-Warren, “Sir John Harington’s ‘Life of Ariosto’ and the Textual Economy of the Elizabethan Court,” *Reformation* 3.1 (1998): 259–301, dx.doi.org/10.1179/ref\_1998\_3\_1\_010.

22. See Coldiron, “Translator’s Visibility,” 60.

23. For images of dogs (and monkeys) associated with translation, see Andrea Rizzi, “Monkey Business: *Imitatio* and Translators’ Visibility in Renaissance Europe,” in *Trust and Proof: Translators in Renaissance Print Culture*, ed. Andrea Rizzi (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018), 33–61, dx.doi.org/10.1163/9789004323889\_004.

impression that it has been mentioned in other texts, such as Sir John Davies's *Epigrammes*, where the poet speaks about "Lepidus and his printed dogge."<sup>24</sup> Harington constructs his dog's reputation intratextually, as he includes in his notes for canto 41 an interpretation of the knight Olivero's device, which is as follows:

[...] whose devise is the spaniell, or lyam hound couching with the word, *fin che vegna*, doth with great modestie shew thereby, that as the Spaniell or hound that is at commaundement, waiteth, till the fowle, or deare be stricken, and then boldly leapeth into the water, or draweth after it by land: so he being yet a young man, waited for an occasion to shew his value, which being come, he would no longer couch, but shew the same.

In this kind we have had many in our time, as the happie 17. day of November can witnesse, that have excelled for excellencie of devise, of which if I should speake at large, it would aske a volume by it selfe. My selfe, have chosen this of *Olivero* for mine owne, partly liking the modestie thereof, partly (for I am not ashamed to confesse it) because I fancie the Spaniell so much, whose picture is in the devise.<sup>25</sup>

Later, in the canto 43 commentary, Bungey reappears by name:

Marrie for the shagheard dogge, that could daunce to please Ladies so well, and had such pretie qualities, I dare undertake my servant Bungy (whose picture you may see in the first page of the book, and is knowne to the best Ladies of England).<sup>26</sup>

These notes, which are intended to explicate the moral, history, allegory, and allusions to be derived from Ariosto's text, instead help valorize Harington's favourite dog, tying Bungey to the text as it ties him to the base of the Venus pillar. Harington fuses the fictional world of his text with his own autobiography, converting Bungey into an *impresa* borrowed from Ariosto's Olivero, a device

24. Davies's quote and a discussion of Bungey's fame occur in Gilroy, ed., *Epigrams*, 76.

25. Harington, 349.

26. Harington, 373.

that Harington relates to the tournament *imprese* during Elizabeth's Accession Day events. These Accession Day tournaments were significant socio-political events, where the queen and her knight-courtiers enacted an elaborate chivalric spectacle.<sup>27</sup> Elizabeth depended on the rhetoric of chivalric romance as the "shaping fantasy" for expressions of power and loyalty.<sup>28</sup> One of the most significant moments of the tournaments was the presentation of personalized shield *imprese*.<sup>29</sup> Each knight would devise (or pay someone else to devise; even Shakespeare was enlisted to create shield *imprese*) a picture and corresponding motto, usually from another language, that would represent a "conceit of their owne." These shield *imprese* would be presented to the queen on a special platform, as the knight's page would explicate the meaning of the device. These *imprese* allowed the knight-courtiers to fashion themselves through image and text, and they were "anxious to use the *impresa* as a means of enhancing their own relationship with the monarch."<sup>30</sup>

When Harington describes how he has "chosen this [*impresa*] of *Olivero* for mine owne,"<sup>31</sup> enlisting Bungey and the motto *fin che vegna* (until he comes) for an *impresa* on his title page, it shows how he is again using his text as a means for self-presentation. The textual economy is now likened to a tiltyard, where Harington has presented himself as a courtier-translator-knight who has "waited for an occasion to shew his value,"<sup>32</sup> and that occasion, it seems, is now, with this text. Ariosto's poem once again is put into the service of the translator. But there is also another, more potentially corrosive, implication here. Harington deliberately links the fictional shield *impresa* with the Accession Day tournaments, which brings England into the fictional world of Ariosto's poem, demonstrating the consonance between the two worlds. It also, by association,

27. For studies of the Accession Day Tilts, see Alan Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments* (Dobbs Ferry, NY: Sheridan House, 1987); Frances A. Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975; London: ARK, 1985); Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977 / London: Pimlico, 1999). Citations from Yates and Strong refer to the later editions.

28. Louis Adrian Montrose, "'Shaping Fantasies': Figurations of Gender and Power in Elizabethan Culture," *Representations* 2 (Spring 1983): 61–94, doi:10.2307/2928384.

29. See Young, 123–41; Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth*, 137–63; Bath, 20–24.

30. Young, 143.

31. Harington, 349.

32. Harington, 349.

exposes the inherent fiction of the tournaments and their associated pageantry. As Bath describes it, “the tiltyard was so entirely a world of make-believe, in which the participants dressed up in elaborate costumes and invented fictitious identities for themselves.”<sup>33</sup> Harington sees this ritual performance as “in this kind” with Ariosto’s romance epic, where chivalry is a metaphorical conceptual system that structures court performance and promotion.<sup>34</sup>

Harington’s simultaneous attempt to promote himself through his own Ariostian *impresa*, while also exposing the fiction undergirding it all, is one of many unstable postures present in the title page. Bungey’s scroll-motto unfurls from his mouth like a speech band and intrudes into the space of Harington’s portrait *impresa*, linking the two meanings—the urgency of time passing, signified by Harington’s timepiece, and the patience “until he/it/patronage commeth” connected to the dog waiting with folded paws—so that Harington can present both personas to the reader, the impatiently patient courtier practising *festina lente*. Bungey faithfully serves both as an *impresa* symbol and as a physical dog. Yet there is a subversive edge to Harington’s insertion of his dog into the title page, a friction between the symbolic work Bungey must do as an *impresa* and the reality of the dog itself. Notice how the checkered floor gives not only a surface for Bungey to sit on, but also a recess of space that was missing in the original Italian edition. Only the *impresa* portrait and the dog cast a shadow. The floor and shadow create a clear separation between the emblematic architectural edifice and *impresa* portrait leaning up against it (but not attached) and Bungey, who is leashed to it. The edifice is constructed, artificial, monolithic; the dog is real. The edifice is Italian; the dog is an English Spaniel. The edifice petrifies Ariosto in numismatic profile in eternity as *il divino*; the dog and miniature, in three-quarter view turning toward the reader, represent individuals who are still alive.<sup>35</sup> The emblematic title page has always included the “interplay of symbol and reality,” the fictional and the real,<sup>36</sup> but those elements were usually brought into consonance and a totalizing theme; here, they seem to be juxtaposed for cognitive dissonance—to expose the fissure

33. Bath, 21.

34. For the ways that metaphors structure conceptual systems, see George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

35. For the contrasting portrait styles of source author and translator, see Coldiron, “Translator’s Visibility,” 60.

36. Corbett and Lightbown, 42.



between two worlds. Or, to adapt T. S. Eliot, between the idea and the reality, between the dog and the classicizing emblematic title page, falls the shadow.

And yet, this dichotomy of fictional edifice versus real dog begins to make the speech band that unfurls from the dog's mouth look incongruous: as if it would bark an unfurled scroll, "until he commeth." Fiction and reality collide within the dog representation as well. It is almost a Magrittean treachery of images (fig. 4), a deconstruction of visual and verbal representations: *Ceci n'est pas un chien*. Finally, the presence of Bungey creates a conflicting sense of scale, where a miniature portrait looms larger than a dog. This instability of perspective emphasizes this movement between large and small, symbol and reality, gravitas and play. According to Alastair Fowler, Bungey was named after Friar Bungay, a reputed fifteenth-century conjurer who appears in Robert Greene's *Frier Bacon and Frier Bongay* (1594).<sup>37</sup> Bungey is up to his old conjuring tricks on the title page, signalling the playful dissolution of its marmoreal semiotic program.



Figure 4. René Magritte, *The Treachery of Images* (1929). Oil on Canvas, 64.45 x 93.98 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art. © 2019 C. Herscovici / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo: © 2019 Museum Associates / LACMA. Licensed by Art Resource, NY.

37. Fowler, 100.

So much of this instability centres on the title page's signalling of its own perspectival and visual tricks: Bungey is on a leash, and yet it is not clear whether he is tied to the pilaster or whether the leash is simply resting on it; Harington's right eye stares at us while his left eye peers off-centre; the cross-hatching of the floor does not match on either side of the resting portrait; the recessed space in the *impresa* portrait, created by the table, generates a space-within-a-space regression; and the plinths have now been torqued ever so slightly off-centre by the addition of the hatched floor, with the right plinth receding ever so slightly.<sup>38</sup> It is as if the title page is deliberately going errant from the teleological line of perspective, the "symbolic form" of Renaissance humanism.<sup>39</sup> The title page, when read this way, can be seen as one of the more significant examples of the "self-aware image" in the Renaissance,<sup>40</sup> or of what W. J. T. Mitchell has usefully called the "metapicture,"<sup>41</sup> a picture that theorizes its own meaning-making process. Harington's title page is a self-conscious representation of the visual rhetoric of the emblematic frontispiece tradition: how authors are constructed and canonized and how these frontispieces attempt to pre-interpret their texts for readers. Emblematic title pages picture a theory of reading, and the humanistic editions of Ariosto, like Francesco Franceschi, attempted to tame Ariosto's unruly energies via the harmonizing structures of contemporary epic theory. Harington's meta-title-page, however, is a representation of representation,<sup>42</sup> and it playfully dissolves the signifying project of the title page. As a metapictorial emblematic title page, it prepares the reader for the real "content" of the work, which includes the systematic deconstructing of pragmatic humanism via his interplay of commentary and translation.

38. I am grateful to Randall McLeod for pointing out a couple of these visual discrepancies, which he said were "calling attention to cheap perspective tricks" (during a conversation with McLeod on 6 July 2017).

39. For perspective's "symbolic form," see Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996).

40. Victor I. Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting* (New York: Brepols, 2015).

41. W. J. T. Mitchell, "Metapictures," in *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 35–82.

42. "Representation as it were of Classical representation" is what Michel Foucault famously called Velázquez's *Las Meninas* in *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1994), 16.

This visual deconstruction of emblematic title page rhetoric mirrors Harington's practice throughout his *Orlando Furioso*, where he adopts the pose of an editor and a moralizer of Ariosto's verse.<sup>43</sup> Harington responds both to the Italian Neo-Aristotelian allegorizers of Ariosto and to the tradition of pragmatic humanism in his home system. Pragmatic humanism was a mid-to late-sixteenth-century Tudor development that focused on "presentist" application of ancient texts in the public sphere, rather than the more historicist philology attributed to traditional Petrarchan humanism.<sup>44</sup> Translations, accreted with commentary, mined classical texts for readers, and translators like Thomas Paynell began adapting these pragmatic humanist techniques to the transmuting of contemporary romance for edification. As Helen Moore writes about Paynell's *The Treasurie of Amadis of Fraunce* (1572), these humanist editions were an "important means by which the pleasures of romance may be refined into rhetorical and social profit."<sup>45</sup> On the surface, Harington seems to be upholding that tradition with his commentary and marginal glosses, which will harvest "profit" for the reader, a word he mentions eight times in his preface. Both his "Preface" and his postface, the "Brief and Summarie Allegory," establish his role as purifier of Ariosto's text, which had a reputation for salaciousness in England. Harington uses a metaphor of infection to describe the sensual invasion into Heroic poetry: "*Cupido* is crept even into the Heroicall Poems [...] sure it is this lasciviousnesse, yet this I will say, that of all kinde

43. This section builds on the following important studies on Harington's commentary and the construction of meaning, including Kilroy, "Advertising the Reader"; Tribble, 87–100; Tiffany Jo Werth, *The Fabulous Dark Cloister: Romance in England after the Reformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 103–14; Judith Lee, "The English Ariosto: The Elizabethan Poet and the Marvelous," *Studies in Philology* 80.3 (1983): 277–99; T. G. A. Nelson, "Sir John Harington and the Renaissance Debate over Allegory," *Studies in Philology* 82.3 (1985): 359–79; Bryan Brazeau, "London Calling: John Harington's Exegetical Domestication of Ariosto in Late Sixteenth-Century England," *History of European Ideas* 42.5 (2016): 640–50, [dx.doi.org/10.1080/01916599.2016.1152755](https://doi.org/10.1080/01916599.2016.1152755). My approach is more directed towards Harington's metacommentary and his intratextual dialectic between his commenting and translating.

44. For a definition and discussion of pragmatic humanism, see Jonathan Woolfson, "Introduction," in *Reassessing Tudor Humanism*, ed. Jonathan Woolfson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 1–21, 11–12, [dx.doi.org/10.1057/9780230506275](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230506275).

45. Moore, "Gathering Fruit: The 'Profitable' Translations of Thomas Paynell," in *Tudor Translation*, ed. Fred Schurink (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 39–57, 50, [dx.doi.org/10.1057/9780230361102\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230361102_3).

of Poesie, the Heroicall is least infected therewith.”<sup>46</sup> However, infection is still infection, and the allegory, as he shows in his “Brief and Summarie Allegory,” can help quarantine the excesses of love in heroicall verse, just as the humanistic commentators in the Ariosto editions did with romance. Even Ariosto’s most scandalous sections, Harington argues in “An Advertisement to the Reader,” are “neither vicious, nor profane, but apt to breede quite contrarie effects, if a great fault be not in the readers owne bad disposition.”<sup>47</sup> Harington’s preface sets up his humanistic program—to use his allegorical commentary to convert Ariosto’s seeming wantonness (and presumably the reader’s bad impulses) into these “contrarie effects.” He prophylactically conditions the reader to “take this caveat with you” while reading potentially dangerous passages, to understand them as “my author ment them, to breed detestation and not delectation: remember when you read of the old lecherous Frier, that an fornicator is one of the things that God hateth.”<sup>48</sup> With enough humanistic guidance, he continues, even a “lewd tale may bring some men profit.”<sup>49</sup> He uses his postface to “give you occasion to ruminate, as it were, & better to digest that, which before in reading, did perhaps swallow down whole without chewing.”<sup>50</sup> Allegory helps the reader’s consumption. Also, this moralizing, by implication, helps assist Ariosto’s assimilation into England’s *corpus* or body of cultural consumption, with the precedent of the humanistic pre-mastication of Ovid’s sensuality and the reformation of Continental romances.<sup>51</sup> This presentation of humanist profit extracted hygienically from romance pleasure is complemented by Harington’s book design, which exudes epic grandeur and learnedness: it is the first literary folio in England,<sup>52</sup> and Harington explicitly requested that Richard Field use the same *pica roman* typeface for his humanistic paratexts that George Puttenham

46. Harington, ¶5v.

47. Harington, Air.

48. Harington, ¶7r.

49. Harington, ¶7r.

50. Harington, 414.

51. See Ian Frederick Moulton, “Arms and the Women: The Ovidian Eroticism of Harington’s Ariosto,” in *Ovid and the Renaissance Body*, ed. Goran V. Stanivukovic (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2001), 111–26, 117–18, [dx.doi.org/10.3138/9781442678194-008](https://doi.org/10.3138/9781442678194-008); for post-Reformation humanist processing of romance, see Werth, 103–31 (chapter 3, “Glozing Phantasies”).

52. Francis X. Connor, *Literary Folios and Ideas of the Book in Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 31–36, [dx.doi.org/10.1057/9781137438362](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137438362).

used in *The Art of English Poesie* (1589).<sup>53</sup> The result is a text that mimes the bibliographic code of didactic allegory and sententiae familiar to early modern readers.<sup>54</sup>

However, just as he adopts the visual rhetoric of the emblematic title page only to destabilize its totalizing structure and expose its inherent artifice, Harington adopts the role of practical humanist only to deconstruct its edifying goals. To this end, he has cannily adapted Ariosto's use of personas in the *Orlando Furioso* and mapped it onto his editorial project. Ariosto often employs narrative proxies—such as the Innkeeper in canto 28 and the Mantuan Knight and Steersman in canto 43—to tell stories. They join the poet-narrator as one of many tale-tellers in this polyvocal poem: he does the *Orlando Furioso* in different voices. These narrator stand-ins allow for Ariosto to displace unsavory perspectives via narrative ventriloquism, where the teller is condemned while the scandalous tale is still allowed to be told. Harington has learned from Ariosto's own displacement devices: once he has established that the "lascivious" sections are Ariosto's—he mentions the word "lascivious" four times in his preface in relation to Ariosto, establishing it as a virtual epithet for the author—Harington can project all of the salacious content onto Ariosto, presenting both a distance from, and yet a rhetorical dependence on, a fictionalized other, the source text, essentially laying blame on Ariosto and exonerating himself.<sup>55</sup> Harington often refers to Ariosto as "mine author," which echoes his reference to the innkeeper as "Mine Host" in his translation of canto 28. The source author is one voice and Harington's commentary becomes, in effect, another voice in the translation, a persona of the pragmatic humanist correcting and interpreting the Englished source text. Unlike what happens in the Italian editions, where there is a clear separation between the roles of commentator and author, in the translation the glosses are composed by the translator himself, who is thus playing two roles in his own text, performing a "duet" of commentator and translator as D. H. Craig aptly calls it.<sup>56</sup> The effect is reminiscent of Ariosto's own poet-narrator prophylactically warning and apologizing to the reader before or after

53. Kilroy, "Advertising the Reader," 64.

54. For a summary of the reading contexts for Harington's *Orlando Furioso*, see Brazeau, 6–7.

55. Chaucer was also a model for narrative ventriloquism and serious play. Tellingly, when discussing Ariosto's lasciviousness in his preface, Harington brings in Chaucer as an English example, referencing "The Wife of Bath's Tale" and "The Miller's Tale." See Harington, ¶7r.

56. Craig, 51.



a potentially offensive tale. This dynamic allows Harington to exploit reader expectations about Ariosto and pursue his own libidinous interpolations in Ariosto's text. Townsend Rich notes that while 728 stanzas from the original were cut, "the only general statement one can make about Sir John's expansions and additions is that they usually occur in passages of wantonness."<sup>57</sup> Harington already hinted at the direction in which he would go in his title page, where all the male eye traffic zeroes from left to right to Venus, where the emblem of fidelity happens to be perched.<sup>58</sup> Following through on his title page's message, Harington exploits the way commentary and *mise-en-page* guide the reader so that he can stage a game of serious play between humanist moralizer and his own salacious translation.<sup>59</sup>

For an example in the text, take canto 15 (fig. 5), when Mercury chases a woman, "Till at the last by Nylus banks he caught her, / And there to daunce *la volta* he then taught her."<sup>60</sup> Ariosto's original ends with Mercury simply catching the woman, and with no mention of what happens next; Harington adds the final line of sexual innuendo, placing *la volta* in italics to imply its feigned origin in Ariosto's original Italian. As Guyda Armstrong has noted, italics were often used as typographical signifiers for a foreign text when used with "English" roman.<sup>61</sup> Harington emphasizes the otherness of the Italian

57. Rich, 130.

58. In the 1634 edition of *Orlando Furioso*, published after Harington's death in 1612, the more subtle sensual predispositions have been enhanced and made explicit. Even the angels' eyes bulge with scopophilia as they orient towards the Venus figure. While the 1634 engraver follows Coxon's precedent with the relief on the wings of the plinth on Mars's side, he has changed the Venus relief considerably. The woman is now naked, and the young knight has become much older. Most importantly, the knight groping and the woman being groped have become modified to look more like the Mars and Venus column figures. Mars has fully capitulated to Venus. While it is unknown whether the engraver was working from corrections left by Harington or whether he was foregrounding what was latent in the original, it is clear that the 1634 title page has abandoned any pretense of seriousness and has become all play.

59. For a classic study on how printed marginalia structure the reader's experience, see William W. E. Slights, *Managing Readers: Printed Marginalia in English Renaissance Books* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), [dx.doi.org/10.3998/mpub.17226](https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.17226).

60. 15.43.7–8 (Harington, 116).

61. Guyda Armstrong, "Coding Continental: Information Design in Sixteenth-Century English Vernacular Language Manuals and Translations," *Renaissance Studies* 29.1 (2015): 78–102, 88, [dx.doi.org/10.1111/rest.12115](https://doi.org/10.1111/rest.12115).

by italicizing it in the text as untranslated foreign residue (thereby Ariosto's), when in fact, in this case, it was his own invention. Through his artfully playful appropriation of Ariosto's narrative ventriloquism, Harington reveals that translation is really just linguistic ventriloquism—we think we are reading the source author, but it is actually the source author speaking with the projected words of the translator all along.

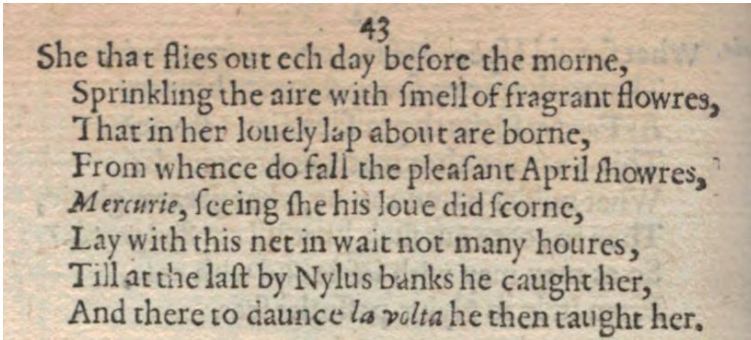


Figure 5. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by John Haringto[n] (London: Richard Field, 1591), 15.43, 116. Private copy.

Another example of sensual accentuation and typographical play occurs in canto 43, at the beginning of the Mantuan Knight's tale to Rinaldo describing the sage:

Learned, and wise, and old beyond all credit,  
 For ear he dyde, he on his backe did carrie,  
 Full sixscore yeares and eight at least, he sed it:  
 An hundred yeares he lived sollitarie,  
 But after that (you know what humor bred it)  
 He lov'd a dame, & with his wealth so wrought her  
 That at the last he gat of her a daughter;<sup>62</sup>

Whereas Ariosto has one reference to the man's age at death—"cento e ventotto"—Harington mentions he is "old beyond all credit" and then provides

62. 43.13.2–8 (Harington, 360).

two more references to the number of years—"Full sixscore yeares and eight [...] An hundred yeares"—which adds to the prurience of the old man marrying and begetting a daughter. The parenthetical aside, "you know what humor bred it," original to Harington, is a pun and a wink at the reader that foreshadows the literal breeding at the end of the stanza. Finally, in multiple copies of Harington's translation (fig. 6), the "h" of the "he" in the final line is inverted and downright, which creates a typographical pun, first noted by McLeod. Here the downright "he" stands out in the stanza and brings attention to the "gat." What was the ascender in the "h" now becomes a conspicuous phallic pointer to the "g" in gat, and the downward "he" presents the reader with a typographical pictogram of the act of "gating," or, as McLeod puts it, Harington's "invoking the downright heness of the male, by playing with his letters."<sup>63</sup>

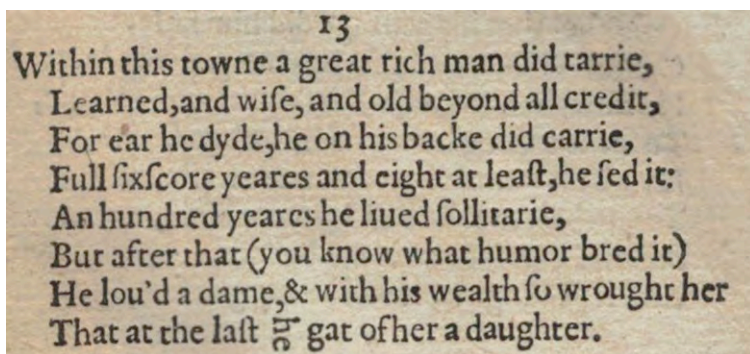


Figure 6. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by *Iohn Haringto[n]* (London: Richard Field, 1591), 43.13, 360. Private copy.

Punctuation, as well, can be used for manipulative effects, such as once again in book 43 (fig. 7), where Anselmo the avaricious judge gives in to the "Blackamore's" depraved desires and is sodomized in return for promised riches. The great Victorian translator of Ariosto, Sir William Stewart Rose (1831), thought the sodomy in Ariosto's original so scandalous that he changed the sex of Ariosto's Ethiopian to an "Aethiop Woman." Harington, however, not only keeps the sodomy but also abandons all of Ariosto's delicate phrasing at the

63. McLeod, "From Tranceformations in the Text," 64.

end of the stave—"Sempre offerendo il merito il palagio, / Che fe inchinarlo al suo voler malvagio" (Every time offering him the palace / Which made him bow to his depraved desire)—and plainly states, "So as it might be done, in hugger mugger, / The Judge agreed, the Negro him should ( )."<sup>64</sup> Here, Harington seems to be thoughtfully removing the offending word, one Ariosto never uses, from the translation so as not to offend English readers' eyes. And yet, by leaving the parentheses there at the end of the final stanza of the entire page, and by making the missing verb the final couplet word, Harington emphasizes the sex act in the reader's mind. Ariosto's emphasis, by contrast, is on *voler malvagio*, "depraved desire," not on Harington's blunt vulgar verb. In a delightfully crude play on the bibliographic code, Harington makes readers insert the phantom word themselves into a set of parentheses reminiscent of the buttocks and an anus, thus making reading itself an act of sodomy. By posing as a decorous bowdlerizer of Ariosto's lascivious verse, Harington sets a typographical trap for the reader's eyes to spring.

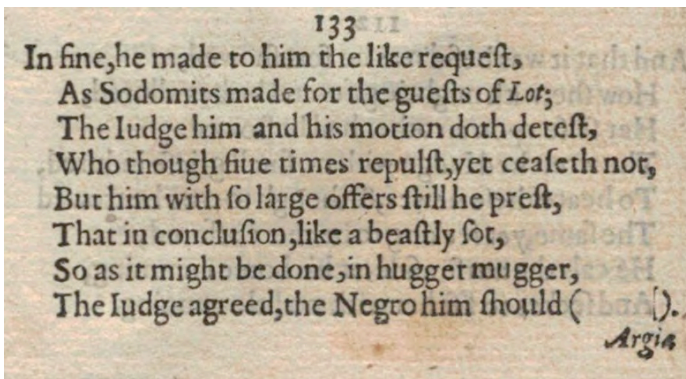


Figure 7. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by *Iohn Haringto[n]* (London: Richard Field, 1591), 43.133, 368. Private copy.

64. See, respectively, Ariosto, 43.139.7–8; and Harington, 43.133.7–8 (368).

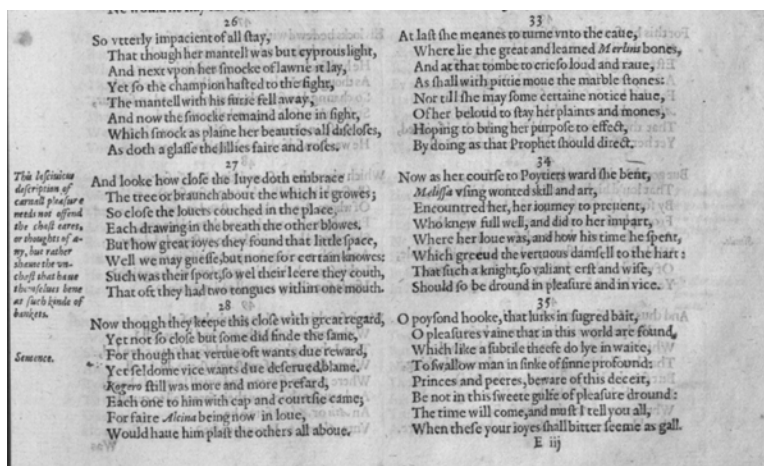


Figure 8. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by John Harington[n] (London: Richard Field, 1591), 51. Private copy.

When Harington is not trapping, he is pointing, as he does here in book 7, stanza 27, which is a translator-enhanced description of Ruggiero and Alcina's sensual embrace; the octave ends with "two tongues within one mouth," which he has bracketed on one side by one of the longest glosses in the entire translation (fig. 8): "This lascivious description of carnall pleasure needs not offend the chaste eares, or thoughts of any, but rather shame the unchast that have themselves bene at such kinde of bankets." And on the other side Harington has added an original diatribe to the reader on the wages of lust that begins in stanza 35, which sounds like a verse annotation in the voice of the moral commentator:

O poysond hooke, that lurks in sugred bait,  
 O pleasures vaine that in this world are found,  
 Which like a subtil theefe do lye in waite,  
 To swallow man in sinke of sinne profound.<sup>65</sup>

Surrounding the infected passage on all sides with his moralizing, Harington seems to have cleansed the possible "contrarie effects" of the passage through

65. 7.35.1–4 (Harington, 51).



an arsenal of containment, as promised in his preface. And yet, the moral packaging may have some contrary effects of its own. The homily continues on the next page:

Turne then your cloth of gold, to cloths of heares,  
Your feasts to fasts, to sorrowes turne your songs,  
Your wanton toyes and smilings into teares,  
To restitution turne your doing wrongs [...]

Then shall the vertuous man shine like the sunne,  
Then shall the vicious man repent his pleasure,  
Then one good deed of almes sincerely done,  
Shall be more worth then mines of Indian treasure  
Then sentence shalbe giv'n which none shal shun,  
Then God shal way and pay our deeds by measure  
Unfortunate and thrise accursed thay,  
Whom fond delights do make forget that day.

But to returne unto my tale againe [...]<sup>66</sup>

This homily—full of sanctimonious disapprobation and seeming to have the final say on Ruggiero and Alcina’s “riot” together—is completely undermined by the dull, repetitive plodding of the verse (accentuated by the anaphoric “then”), by the negative connotations of repentance via antithesis (feasts to fasts, songs to sorrows, smiling to tears), and by the glib line “But to returne unto my tale againe.” This finessed *voltafaccia* registers the entire didactic section as digressive content. Moreover, the note on the left margin, while ostensibly following the humanist program of converting wantonness to contrary effects, actually serves as a guidepost pointing to “this lascivious description of carnall pleasure.” The note’s incongruous size at the bottom left margin drags the reader’s eyes to the passage in question, fulfilling Harington’s promise in his “Advertisement to the Reader” to give “directions in the margent” with his gnomic pointers.

Harington does this marginal pointing again with another scandalous tale in book 25, stanzas 29 and 30, where he begins a catalogue of illicit love,

66. 7.36–7.38.1 (Harington, 52).

providing two almost identical notes that exhort the reader to look (fig. 9): “Looke in the Allusion of this booke [...] Looke in the historie of this booke.”<sup>67</sup> Just two pages later, he provides another note on Richardetto’s specious tale of his gender transformation, which he uses to get close to and seduce Fiordispina (fig. 10). The note reads: “This is a frivolus tale, devised by him to blear her eys, and therefore it is not requisite it should be probable, though Castelvetro, an Italian wryter, found fault with this, because he sayth, it should have had more probabilitie.”<sup>68</sup> The note as a whole is almost tautologically nonsensical and needless, practically a parody of learned commentary. It is there to bring attention to the passage, to “blear” the reader’s eyes, since it is so long and placed all by itself on the left margin. The “frivolus” tale pays off for the reader, as soon enough “Without a ladder I did scale the fort, / And stoutly plant my standard on the wall, / and under me I made my foe to fall. [...] Ivie embraceth not the piller more, / Then she did me.”<sup>69</sup> Helpfully, Harington includes a note at the end of this steamy passage, “The end of the tale of Fiordispina,” so that the two notes—“This is a frivolus tale” and “The end of the tale”—effectively bookmark the passage for the reader’s orientation. While the humanist practice of commentary typically emphasizes “the *act* of interpretation over a text’s *effects*,”<sup>70</sup> these examples seem to serve less for interpretation than for guidance, drawing the reader less from the text out to the margins than from the margins to the text’s explicitly salacious (and translator-enhanced) textual effects. These instances of Harington’s metatextual commentary call awareness to the way marginalia guide and capture the wandering eye, like a dog attached to a Venus pillar.<sup>71</sup>

67. Harington, 200.

68. Harington, 202.

69. 25.59.6–9, 25.60.5–6 (Harington, 202).

70. Stephen B. Dobranski, *Readers and Authorship in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 29.

71. For the centrifugal and centripetal effects of marginalia, see Slights, “A Theory of Margination,” in *Managing Readers*; for the “manipulation of the viewing eye” and the directing power of marginalia, see Slights, 75–76. Fascinating new research on medieval manuscript marginalia by J. Seth Lee and Candice Lanius with the eValuation and User Experience (VUE) Lab at the University of Alabama–Huntsville, titled “Learning How They Read: Qualitative Coding with Eye Tracking Methods,” found that readers’ eyes were drawn unbidden to marginalia on the left and right of the page. Even if they self-reported that they did not look at the marginalia, their eyes still drifted unconsciously to these textual buoys floating in the margin.

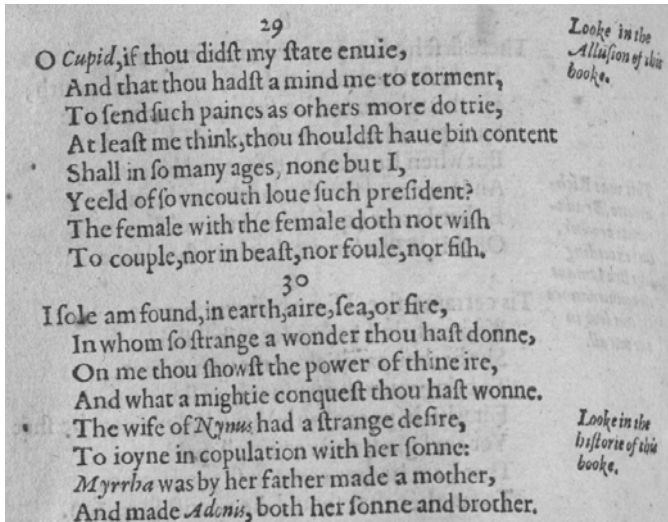


Figure 9. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by John Harington[n] (London: Richard Field, 1591), 25.29–30, 200. Private copy.

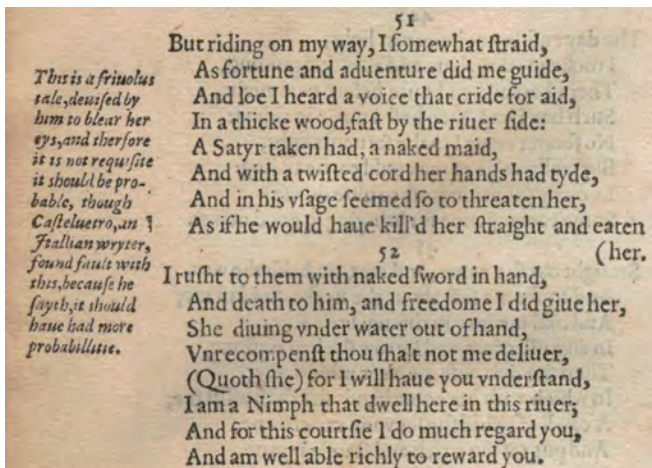


Figure 10. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by John Harington[n] (London: Richard Field, 1591), 25.51–52, 202. Private copy.

In book 37, Harington's capturing of the reader's eye becomes a metatextual allegory of reading (fig. 11). The first notes in the right column of page 307 are anchored to stanzas 18 and 19, which describe Rogero, Marfisa, and Bradamante discovering three women who have been stripped "up to their navells, to their foule disgrace." The first note, like the one from book 25, seems gratuitous, solely there for the pun on "kin": "He makes them [Marfisa and Bradamante] cosins though very farre of, which we count indeed the noblest kinred, though not the kindest." The textual hook for the note—"With him those dames, the noble cosins went"—is spurious, as Ariosto does not refer to Marfisa and Bradamante as "noble cosins" in the original Italian in this stanza. The "He makes them cosins" of the note, which seems to refer to Ariosto, playfully refers instead to the interpolation by the translator, who actually "makes them cosins": the addition, in turn, serves as a catalyst for the superfluous note ultimately leading the reader's eyes to another prurient passage. Unsurprisingly, this passage has also been augmented by Harington: Ariosto's four-line description of the women's *deshabillé* has been expanded to five. Moreover, while Ariosto's stanza ends with the women unwilling to rise to reveal themselves—"e non ardian levarsi" (and dare not rise)—Harington refocuses the end of the octave on the viewing of the women's "secret parts" by making an addition in the final line: "To hide their secret parts from straungers eyes."

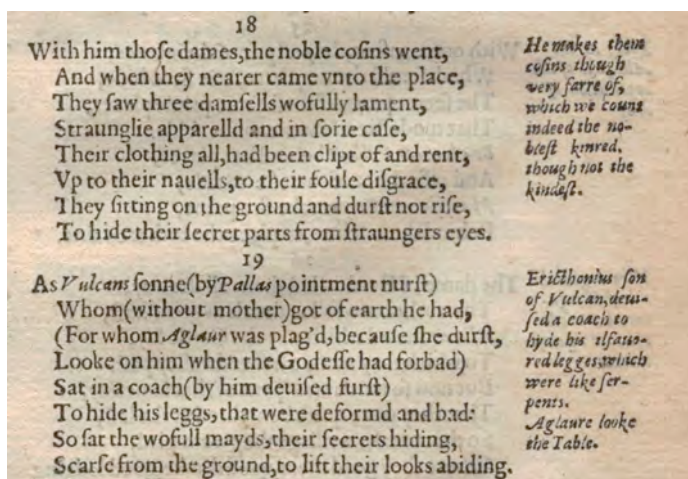


Figure 11. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by Iohn Haringto[n] (London: Richard Field, 1591), 37.18–19, 307. Private copy.

Ariosto clearly exploits the voyeuristic traits of the episode in his original, providing the allusion in the next stanza to Aglaurus looking at Erichthonius, an emblem of forbidden viewing. Harington duly glosses the allusion, providing an additional phallic reference to Erichthonius's "ilfavoured legges, which were like serpents." He ends the stanza with echoes of the preceding one: if stanza 18 ends with "secret parts from straungers eyes," stanza 19 closes with "wofull mayds, their secrets hiding, / Scarse from the ground, to lift their looks abiding" (fig. 11). The emphasis on prohibited vision, with the repetition of "secret" and "eyes [...] looks," along with the classical reference, serves as a kind of taunt to the reader-Aglaurus—just try to look away, "straunger." The final reference to the maidens in stanza 25 is to their magnanimous covering by Marfisa and Bradamante (fig. 12), and yet their covering prompts another salacious reference to "the secret parts, of those same privie places, / That modestie to show cannot abide." Harington expands a one-line reference in Ariosto, "Ch'á ricoprir le parti meno oneste"<sup>72</sup> (to cover the less honest parts), to two, where Ariosto's euphemism becomes, instead, an obsessive excursus (along with stanzas 29–30) on secrecy: "secret parts [...] privie places [...] to show cannot abide." As with book 25 and Richardetto, Harington the commentator tells the reader to "Looke."

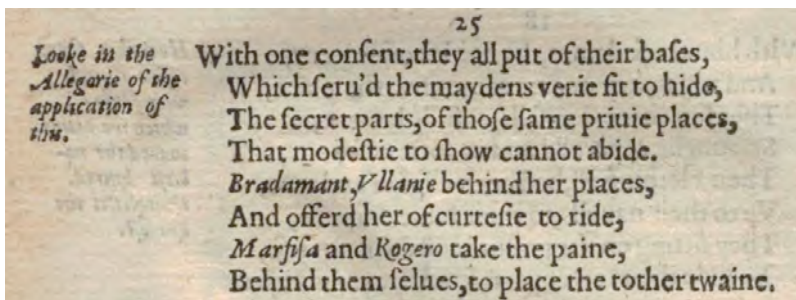


Figure 12. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by John Harington[n] (London: Richard Field, 1591), 37.25, 308. Private copy.

Once again, this episode is curated by marginal commentary, primed for selective reading. Moreover, if readers follow directions and go to the commentary at the end of the canto, the only allegorical comment for the entire canto pertains to this episode, where the clothing of the maidens by

72. Ariosto, 37.33.3.



Bradamante and Marfisa represents how the “vertues of some excellent women are so great [...] as to serve to hyde and cover the deformitie of others not so well appparelled with the garments of honour, and so (as it were with workes of supererogation) bewtifie those that had defectes of their owne.”<sup>73</sup> Interestingly, the alleged textual cue of the note, the women knights’ virtues, has been muted in Harington’s translation: Ariosto’s reference to their “gran bontà” (great goodness) is not even translated. The result is a sophisticated allegory of reading, extended from text to paratext. On the surface, the allegorical commentary, a “work of supererogation,” as Harington calls it in his preface,<sup>74</sup> converts potentially subversive delight to instruction via the decorous covering of allegory. But Harington exposes how allegory reveals the very “secret parts” it purports to hide, and all readers are hapless Aglauruses reaching delight through the supererogatory accessory of instruction: pragmatic humanism becomes prurient humanism.

Perhaps the most brazen example of Harington’s manipulation of his paratextual codes to entrap the reader is the illustration for book 28, the infamous tale of Giocondo. The engraver, on Harington’s direction, has removed the wall of the palatial home from the original Italian engraving in the 1584 Franceschi edition, which was his source image, and has included the tale-within-a-tale of the Innkeeper. Harington makes good on his promise in his “An Advertisement to the Reader” that in the engraving you can read the canto “(as it were againe) in the very picture.”<sup>75</sup> In the far background of Harington’s plate, the climax, as it were, of the pictorial narrative, the walls of the added homes have been removed so that we can watch two sets of naked figures in all their copulating glory, representing some of the most salacious scenes in the entire *Orlando Furioso* (fig. 13). Peeping Giocondo becomes a proxy—like Aglaurus—for the voyeuristic reader who can’t help but stare. It is much more explicit than anything in prior Italian Ariosto editions. Ironically, this is the very canto that Harington, in his preface and mimicking Ariosto’s own warnings to the female reader at the beginning of canto 28, warns the reader about: when they reach “mine hostes tale (if you will follow my counsell) turne over the leafe and let it alone.”<sup>76</sup> However, by the time they reach the opening of the tale the image trap

73. Harington, 314.

74. Harington, ¶8v.

75. Harington, ¶A1r.

76. Harington, ¶7r.

is already waiting there to draw the eye well before the leaf can be turned. Nor it seems have many readers followed Harington's counsel and left it alone: in most editions that I have consulted, this particular engraving has seen the most wear from reading traffic.



Figure 13. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by John Harington[n] (London: Richard Field, 1591), detail from canto 28 illustration, 224. Private copy.

Harington knows his readers well. Even in his preface, he points readers to the places that he has labelled as potentially harmful. He writes that in some places Ariosto is “too lascivious, as in that of the bawdy Frier, in *Alcina* and *Rogeros* copulation, in *Anselmus* his *Giptian*, in *Richardetto* his metamorphosis, in mine hosts tale of *Astolfo* & some few places beside.”<sup>77</sup> This is the same paragraph where Harington mentions that Ariosto contains “infinet places full of Christen exhortation, doctrine & example,” which he “could quote out of the booke save that I hasten to an end.”<sup>78</sup> Obviously, he is not hasty enough to leave out any mention of these specific places of lasciviousness, which end up being more than the specific passages of “Christen exhortation” he references. Harington adds after this greatest hit list of Ariosto’s bawdy tales: “I doubt too many of you (gentle readers) wil be to exorable in this point, yea me thinks I see some of you searching already for these places of the booke, and you are halfe offended that I have not made some directions that you might finde out and read them immediately.”<sup>79</sup> Yet Harington does offer direction, first by listing all the episodes and then by indicating where to find them at the end of the

77. Harington, ¶7r.

78. Harington, ¶7r.

79. Harington, ¶7r.

translation in the section “The Principal Tales in *Orlando Furioso* That May Be Read in Themselves.” There, “gentle readers” find them labelled by canto and stanza number (fig. 14).<sup>80</sup> These are the very episodes, as explored in this article, that receive such calculated material-textual curation. Harington’s elaborate apparatus, it seems, is less a containment and sanitizing device (as promised) than a perfunctory moral package that allows him to smuggle in his, and his reader’s, interest in Ariosto’s sensuality. Harington admits as much in his preface, where he characterizes his readers as chaste Lucretias who “will blush and be ashamed to read a lascivious book, but how? not except *Brutus* be by, that is, if any grave man should see her read it, but if *Brutus* turne his backe, she will to it awayne and read it all.”<sup>81</sup>

THE PRINCIPAL TALES IN ORLANDO FVRIOSO THAT MAY BE READ BY THEMSELVES.	
1	Tale of Genewra begins pag. 28. st.affe 42.
2	Tale of Astolfo turning to a tree. pag. 43. st.affe 26.
3	Tale of Ruggeros coming to Alcina. pag. 45. st.affe. 54.
4	Tale of Proteus and the Orke. pag. 60. st.affe 46.
5	Tale of Olimpia. pag. 66. st.affe 16.
6	Tale of Isabella. pag. 94. st.affe 67.
7	Tale of sending Discord and Syllence. pag. 107. st.affe 59.
8	Tale of Calligorant. pag. 115. st.affe 30.
9	Tale of Orillo. pag. 116. st.affe 49.
10	Tale of Origille. pag. 121. st.
11	Tale of Lucina and Norandino. pag. 129. st.affe 20.
12	Tale of the Amazons. pag. 153. st.affe. 5.
13	Tale of Gabrina. pag. 162. st.
14	Tale of Olandos madnes. pag. 183. st.affe. 78.
15	Tale of Fiordispina. pag. 199. st.
16	Tale of mine Host with Rodomonts inueltine against women. pag. 222. st.affe. 93.
17	Tale of Tristrains lodge. pag. 263. st.affe. 77.
18	Tale of Senapo. pag. 275. st.affe. 93.
19	Tale of Lidia. pag. 281. st.affe. 6.
20	Tale of Astolfo going to Paradiſe and finding Orlandos wit. pag. 284. st.affe 49.
21	Tale of Marganor. pag. 308. st.affe 26.
22	Tale of the Mantuan knight. pag. 356. st.affe 66.
23	Tale of Adonia called the Stears mans tale. p. 364. st. 66.
24	Tale of Leons courtesie to Rogero. pag. 385. st.affe. 11.

Figure 14. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by Iohn Haringto[n] (London: Richard Field, 1591), ¶Ooiiiv. Private copy.

80. Harington, ¶Ooiiiv.

81. Harington, ¶6r.

As mentioned earlier, by displacing the responsibility for the salacious content onto Ariosto, Harington can amplify with impunity the sensuality in his English translation, therefore becoming a seemingly severe moral commentator on his own erotic flourishes. The co-processes of translation and the material-textual, then, become a dialectic between the voices of the practical humanist and ventriloquized Englished translation, where one empowers the excesses of the other. Accordingly, as Harington goes beyond his author's lasciviousness in his translation, so he creates more notes for containing and, ironically, locating such prurient passages: approximately 1,200 total notes to Franceschi's two hundred.<sup>82</sup> The result plays the pleasure and profit principles against one another, a merry game of serious play between text and paratext, with the gentle reader as the ultimate subject.<sup>83</sup>

As Gerard Kilroy puts it, "the apparently marginal is at the center of Harington's writing."<sup>84</sup> Like an early modern Charles Kinbote, Harington revels in the dilatory excesses of commentary, its parasitic and rivalrous relationship with the text, its opportunities for illuminating the commentator's own life and obsessions. Harington, like Kinbote, knows that "for better or worse, it is the commentator who has the last word."<sup>85</sup> At times, Harington's end-of-canto commentary seems itself to be infected with a kind of subversive romance, mirroring Ariosto the narrator's preference for taxis over thesis. Harington reaches terminal allegorical exhaustion as early as canto 1 of a thirty-four-canto poem,<sup>86</sup> where he writes:

For the Allegorie, in this Canto I find not much to be said, except one should be so curious to search for an allegorie where none is intended by the Author him selfe: yet an allegorie may not unfitly be gathered, of the description of Bayardos following Angelica, which may thus be taken.<sup>87</sup>

82. Lee, 282.

83. For analogous paratextual play in Iberian romance translations, see Louise Wilson, "Playful Paratexts: The Front Matter of Anthony Munday's Iberian Romance Translations," in *Renaissance Paratexts*, ed. Helen Smith and Louise Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 121–32, dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511842429.008.

84. Kilroy, "Advertising the Reader," 67.

85. Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire* (New York: Vintage International, 1989), 29.

86. See Tribble, 99–100, and Nelson for Harington's attitudes towards allegorizing in general.

87. Harington, 7.

The commentary-story, in other words, must go on, and the dutiful commentator should weave a virtuoso exegesis just as the romance narrator summons a story. However, signalling to the reader that there is not much to be said here—yet continuing on regardless—does not lend much validity or necessity to the commentary itself. As Evelyn Tribble argues, Harington's allegorical commentaries are "external guarantors—accretions" meant to fill the page.<sup>88</sup> Accordingly, in canto 28, we see "Historie nor Allegorie, nor scant any thing that is good, can be picked out of this bad booke: [...] Only I will touch one or two (to fill up this page withall),"<sup>89</sup> and Harington does indeed almost fill up the page withal (fig. 15). In fact, it becomes clear that this commentator persona has been dutifully filling blank space withal this entire time, including a short note at the end of an already full canto 31 (fig. 16). It only provides a comment on the first stanza, but "The rest of the booke hath no new matter, but such as hath bin noted before: and therefore I will end this little space with this short note."<sup>90</sup> No new matter or not enough space for filling withal? It is a short note about how little space there is for noting: a note that explicates its own existence. How, then, are we to take this commentary seriously? It casts a shadow, like his *impresa* portrait and Bungey, on the entire practical humanistic enterprise of glossing, which looks more and more like a condition of explication-induced logorrhea.

Finally, and most significantly, we reach canto 35, a signature moment for all of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. In a most fantastical moment in a continually fantastical poem, Astolfo has travelled to the moon with the Evangelist St. John to recover Orlando's wits. From this lunar vantage point, St. John explains that all the familiar heroes of classical antiquity were not who they were made out to be: "Perhapps *Eneas* was not so devout / Nor *Hector*, nor *Achilles* were so brave, [...] *Augustus Cesar* was not such a saint, / as *Virgill* maketh him by his description."<sup>91</sup> History is written by the poet patronized by the winners, and if Troy had prevailed, proverbially chaste Penelope would be "but a queane."<sup>92</sup> Most shockingly, St. John implies that even his own Gospel might have been a work of what Scott-Warren calls "poetic spin-doctoring."<sup>93</sup>

88. Tribble, 99.

89. Harington, 232.

90. Harington, 256.

91. 35.24.1–2, 35.25.1–2 (Harington, 292).

92. 35.26.8 (Harington, 292).

93. Scott-Warren, *Sir John Harington and the Book as Gift*, 37.



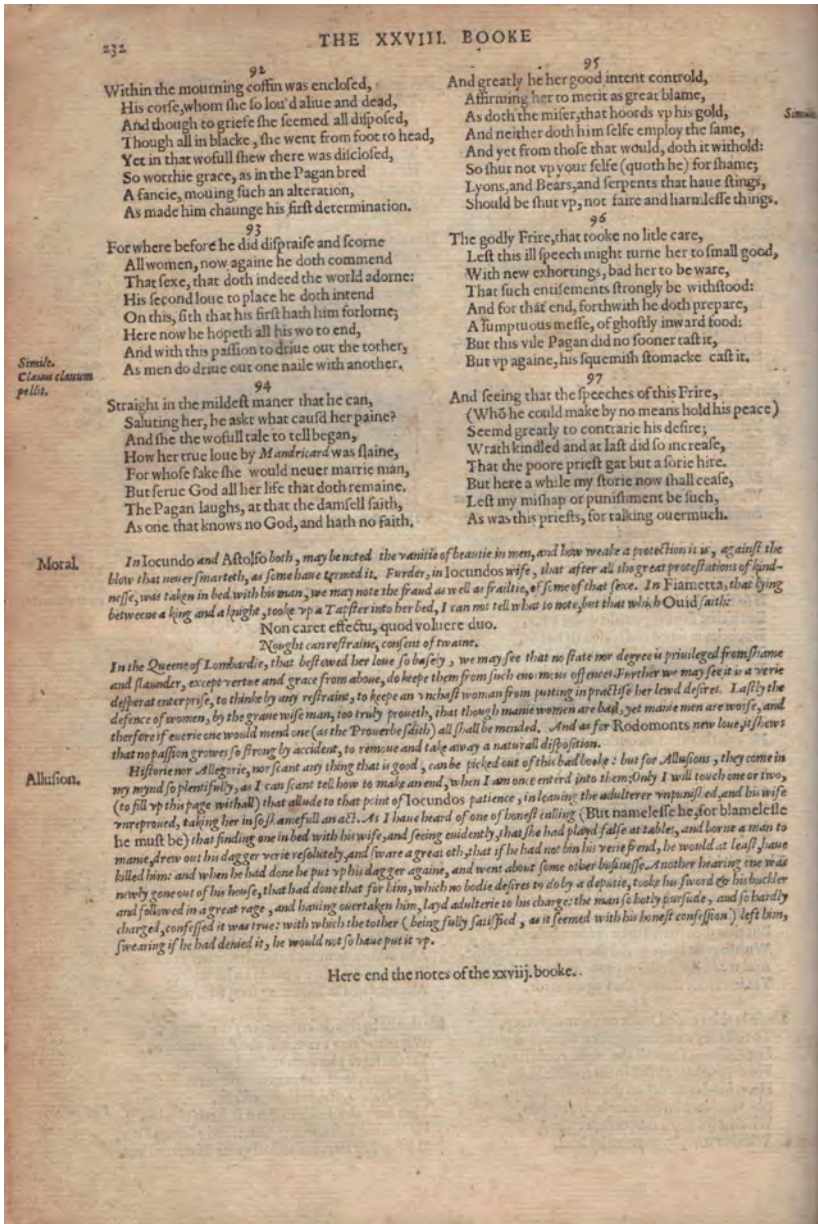


Figure 15. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by John Haringto[n] (London: Richard Field, 1591), 232. Private copy.





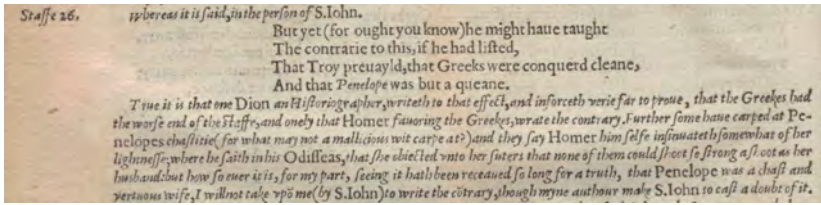


Figure 17. Sir John Harington, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, by John Haringto[n] (London: Richard Field, 1591), 296. Private copy.

To this episode, which opens up all of classical history—that endless mine for humanistic commentators—to the corrosive agents of fiction-making, Harington glosses a disavowal, of sorts (fig. 17). Significantly, Harington violates his own formatting of moral, history, allegory, and allusion by generating a special commentary category for “Staffe 26” to show the exigency for exegetical disarmament of the volatile stanza. After acknowledging how some have wondered at Penelope’s preternatural chastity before, “but, how so ever it is, for my part, seeing it hath been receaved so long for a truth, that Penelope was a chaste and vertuous wife, I will not take upon me (by S. John) to write the contrary, though myne authour make S. John to cast a doubt of it.”<sup>94</sup> He tries to displace responsibility once again onto “myne authour,” but like romance dissolving epic, the fiction has taken hold of the commentary, where Harington as commentator swears an oath to “S. John”—which S. John? Ariosto’s or the “real” one?<sup>95</sup> In the sentence they are the same, in the same roman typeface. Just as in the title page, the fictional and the real are blurred. The damage has been done. The possibility of an unchaste Penelope and impious Aeneas threatens to unravel the entire classical authority upon which practical humanism is based—if Penelope be not chaste, where shall the proverbial be found? The commentary, unmoored from its stable tradition in what “hath been receaved so long,” is free now for metatextual play and commentary on itself and its shaping tradition on morality, history, and allegory—revealing, how, in the end, humanistic commentary alludes to and perpetuates itself in a process of ever self-reinforcing appeals to authority. In conclusion (for I have filled up this article withal), these examples of Harington’s title page, typeface, bibliographic

94. Harington, 296.

95. Or even, as Marie-Alice Belle pointed out to me, could he be swearing by “S[ir]. John [Harington]”?

code, and paratext all point to an elaborate game of meaning-making through story, a story that is embedded in specific material conditions: the materials are the message. What Harington's game reveals for us in the end, what we are understanding more and more now, but what he knew all along, is that it matters how a text is incarnated: the word (by S. John) is its flesh.

But all at once it dawned on me that *this*  
 Was the real point, the contrapuntal theme;  
 Just this: not text but texture ...  
 –Nabokov, *Pale Fire*<sup>96</sup>

96. Nabokov, 62–63, lines 806–08.