

EARLY MODERN LITERARY STUDIES



The Evolution of the Patient Woman: Examining Patient Griselda as a Source for Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*

Grace McCarthy
Wilfrid Laurier University
mcca7330@mylaurier.ca

Since Stephen Greenblatt's reference to source study as 'the elephant's graveyard of literary history',¹ scholars have been reimagining their methodologies for constructing the networks in which texts are connected. Shakespeare source studies in particular have a contentious record, as Colin Burrow points out. Burrow's method for untangling 'sources' from what might today be considered outright plagiarism is to consider 'authorities'; Burrow uses the term in the older sense of the word: 'a book, passage, etc., accepted as a source of reliable information or evidence'.² Burrow's rationale for tracking authorities rather than sources is that 'It allows for continual leakage between different types of "authority". Narrative, verbal, conceptual, Latin, and vernacular authorities might interact with each other'.³ In essence, Burrow avoids trying to track linear sources or explicit literary echoes – for example, Enobarbus's barge speech is nearly a word-for-word versification of Plutarch.⁴ Janet Clare cautions, however, that a new historicist-based language with which to discuss source study 'disembedded the plays from the immediacy of their theatrical contexts'.⁵ Clare argues that there has been a communicative disconnect between theatre historians and scholars interested in literary echoes.⁶ My intention in this essay is to address one such communicative

¹ Quoted in Colin Burrow, 'Shakespeare's Authorities' in *Shakespeare and Authority: Citations, Conceptions and Constructions*, in ed. by Katie Halsey and Angus Vine. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018) pp. 31-54 (p. 33).

² Ibid. p. 35.

³ Ibid. p. 35.

⁴ For this example and others, see Janet Clare, *Shakespeare's Stage Traffic: Imitation, Borrowing, and Competition in Renaissance Theatre*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 9-10.

⁵ Ibid, p. 17

⁶ Ibid.

disconnect in early modern dramatic source studies, and to reshape the language around said disconnect by adopting Burrows' term, authorities, in my linguistic framework.

The critical discussions surrounding Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* nod to the echoes of the Patient Griselda story in the acknowledged source text: Robert Greene's *Pandosto, the Triumph of Time* (1588). However, while readers will see similarities between Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, Greene's *Pandosto*, and even Geoffrey Chaucer's 'The Clerk's Tale', I argue that Dekker, Chettle and Haughton's *The Pleasant Comodie of Patient Grissil* is the most immediate source⁷ and strongest authority for certain features of the Griselda story that appear in *The Winter's Tale*. The Stationer's Register shows *The Plaie of Patient Grissell* entered in March 26, 1599-1600, nearly a decade before *The Winter's Tale*.⁸ This collaboration between Thomas Dekker, Henry Chettle and William Haughton was performed in 1601, although it would not be printed until 1603, as *The Pleasant Comedy of Patient Grissil*. By drawing intertextual connections between parallel passages, similar characters, plot structures, and instances of the word 'patient' in the text of *The Winter's Tale*, I will demonstrate that Shakespeare's Griselda authorities come most immediately from Dekker's play, rather than from 'The Clerk's Tale' as Anna Baldwin argues,⁹ or Chaucer's influences on Greene's *Pandosto*, as argued by Thomas H. McNeal.¹⁰

Despite the similarities between Hermione and Griselda, few critics have attempted to connect any version of the Griselda story with *The Winter's Tale*. The handful who have did so by way of Chaucer's connection to Robert Greene's *Pandosto*, rather than any direct connection between Shakespeare and a version of the Griselda story. I will begin by examining the sources used by Shakespeare for *The Winter's Tale*, and argue that

⁷ By immediate source, I am referring the work that is acknowledged as the direct source of plot or character influences used in another work. Examples include Shakespeare's use of the anonymous *King Leir* (1590) as the literary basis for *King Lear* (1605), and the *Ur-Hamlet* (Thomas Kyd, 1589) as the literary basis for *Hamlet*, the anonymous *History of King John* for Shakespeare's *King John*, and so on; see *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 'Chronology and Sources' 2nd ed., ed. by G. Blakemore Evans, et al. (Boston: Houghton, 1997) pp. 889-923. Currently, the accepted primary source for *The Winter's Tale* is Robert Greene's 1588 *Pandosto, the Triumph of Time* (see 'Chronology and Sources' in Blakemore Evans, p. 87).

⁸ Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, William Haughton, *Patient Grissil: A Comedy*, (London: The Shakespeare Society, 1841), p. x. All quotations are taken from this edition and page numbers will be cited parenthetically.

⁹ Anna Baldwin, 'From "The Clerk's Tale" to *The Winter's Tale*', in *Chaucer Traditions: Studies in Honour of Derek Brewer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 199-212 (p. 200).

¹⁰ Thomas H. MacNeal, "'The Clerk's Tale' As A Possible Source For *Pandosto*", *PMLA* 47.2 (1932), 453-460 (p. 453).

while *Pandosto* is an important authority, and while features of early versions of the Griselda story are significant, Thomas Dekker's *The Pleasant Comedy of Patient Grissil* is Shakespeare's most immediate source.

While plenty of critics have written about *The Decameron* and *The Canterbury Tales*, little attention has been paid specifically to the Griselda stories in those frame narratives, and less critical attention has been paid to Elizabethan stage versions of the Griselda story. What little analysis has been done has largely been relegated to textual explications, contextualizing the expectations of an Elizabethan audience, and damning the story for modern readers. A typical critical assessment of the Griselda story is that of Harry Keyishian, who writes, 'The Griselda story is a piece of sentimentalism at best, and affront to human dignity with pathological implications at worst'.¹¹ However, the seven hundred and fifty years of literary history behind the Griselda story simply proves the inherent adaptability of the tale, as Greene's Griselda elements demonstrate.

The synopsis of *Pandosto* is nearly an exact match for the synopsis of *The Winter's Tale*; the main structural change between the texts being the family reunion at the end. Perdita and Leontes's reunion with Hermione more closely resembles the end of any given Griselda story than *Pandosto*, in which Pandosto commits suicide at the end. Anna Baldwin and Thomas H. McNeal both tie Chaucer's 'The Clerk's Tale' to *The Winter's Tale*, acknowledging Shakespeare's Chaucerian authorities. McNeal argues that Greene has 'taken the one set of characters offered in "The Clerk's Tale" and used them twice in his own story'.¹² McNeal argues that Shakespeare's Griselda influences come through Greene, but Baldwin argues that '[t]here is however one important aspect of *The Winter's Tale* which Shakespeare could not have found in any of the Grissel stories apart from Chaucer's [...] Chaucer's Griseldis however is both triumphant and suffering'.¹³ This characterization of Griselda is vague, and as we shall see, while Griselda is a complex character in general, Dekker's Grissil in particular is multi-layered. Shakespeare, however, had more sources than simply Greene and Chaucer.

While *Pandosto* is recognized as the main source for *The Winter's Tale*, *The Riverside Shakespeare* and E.A.J. Honigmann acknowledge Francis Sabie's 1555 texts, *The Fisherman's Tale* and *Flora's Fortune*, as authorities for particular details within *The Winter's Tale*. Honigmann draws parallels between Sabie and Shakespeare which

¹¹ Harry Keyishian, 'Griselda On The Elizabethan Stage: The Patient Grissil Of Chettle, Dekker, And Haughton', *SEL: Studies In English Literature, 1500-1900* 16.2 (1976), 253-261.

¹² MacNeal, 455.

¹³ Baldwin, 209.

include similarities in the titles of the works, the number of messengers sent to Apollo and the order of events from raising the question of consulting the oracle to abandoning the infant.¹⁴ Additionally, Honigmann lays out parallel passages between Shakespeare and Sabie which are absent in Greene.¹⁵ Each of these passages fails to have a corresponding passage in Greene, supporting Sabie as a source for *The Winter's Tale*.

Honigmann also draws from an 1884 anonymously published book, which suggests a parallel between Ceres and Proserpine and Hermione and Perdita.¹⁶ Connecting Perdita to Proserpine however, fails to stand up to scrutiny. The separation of mother and daughter in 'The Rape of Proserpine' and *The Winter's Tale* are significantly different. For Proserpine, the separation from Ceres becomes cyclical, and is due (in part) to a conscious act of Proserpine's.¹⁷ Additionally, Proserpine's initial abduction is an act of violence. Perdita, on the other hand, is willingly relinquished by Hermione to Paulina, in the hope that Leontes's heart would soften upon seeing his child.¹⁸ At the close of the play, once Perdita is reunited with Hermione, the reunion is permanent; Ceres and Proserpine reunite every spring and so represent Spring's cyclical nature, but Hermione and Perdita's reunion is less an allegory for seasonal change and renewal than it is a permanent reconnection. While Honigmann is correct that no reader will deny the connection between Perdita and spring (and therefore Proserpine), tying *The Winter's Tale* to specific tales in *Metamorphoses* quickly becomes problematic; particularly when comparing connections between 'Pygmalion' and Act V of *The Winter's Tale*.

When examining parallels between *The Winter's Tale* and 'Pygmalion', critics often cite the statue scene.¹⁹ This comparison, while visually powerful, is more complex than mere staging. Pygmalion's initial aim was to create the perfect woman, and he required divine intervention in order for his statue to come to life.²⁰ While both Hermione and Paulina argue at various points in *The Winter's Tale* that Hermione was an excellent wife and mother, the emphasis is on Hermione's constancy, loyalty and chastity, not her

¹⁴ E.A.J. Honigmann, 'Secondary Sources Of *The Winter's Tale*', *Philological Quarterly* 34 (1955) 27-38 (pp. 28-9).

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 30.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 33-4.

¹⁷ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. by A.D. Melville, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). p. 115.

¹⁸ William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale* in *The Riverside Shakespeare*. 2nd ed. Ed. by G. Blakemore Evans, et al. (Huffington: Boston, 1997), pp. 889-923 (2.1.27-39). Subsequent quotations are taken from this edition and will be cited parenthetically.

¹⁹ Virginia Lee Strain, 'The Winter's Tale and the Oracle of Law', *Project Muse* 78.3 (2011) 57-584. (p. 575).

²⁰ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, pp. 232-4.

physical perfection.²¹ Pygmalion's desire for his statue, aside from perfection, is also to create a new relationship. Paulina and Leontes, by resurrecting and accepting Hermione, are restoring shattered relationships: husband and wife, parents and child, as well as that of ruling family and kingdom. Noticeably lacking is the unequal relationship between experienced creator and innocent creation that resonates at the end of 'Pygmalion'. Leontes and Hermione, while not necessarily equal within their relationship, certainly do not embody the lopsided relationship of Pygmalion and his statue; if any relationship is unequal, it is Paulina and Leontes' relationship at the end of the play. Overall, while it is clear that Ovid was an influence for Shakespeare during the writing of *The Winter's Tale*, it is equally clear that *Metamorphoses* is a minor, rather than a major authority.

The two significant critical texts connecting *The Winter's Tale* to 'The Clerk's Tale' are Anna Baldwin's 1990 essay 'From "The Clerk's Tale" to *The Winter's Tale*', and Thomas H. McNeal's 1932 article "'The Clerk's Tale" as a Possible Source for *Pandosto*'. Both scholars argue for a Griselda authority within *The Winter's Tale*; however, both focus on a connection to Chaucer through Greene's *Pandosto*. Suggesting that Shakespeare's reworking of the Griselda story comes from Greene ultimately weakens the connection between 'The Clerk's Tale' and *The Winter's Tale*.

Baldwin's essay first traces the history of the Griselda story, and then examines whether or not Greene and Shakespeare were influenced by any version of the Griselda story.²² Her methodology is flawed primarily because she asserts that Boccaccio's Griselda story bears little resemblance to any other English Griselda story because it was not translated until 1620.²³ Petrarch's 1373 translation of Boccaccio's Griselda story from Italian to Latin, and Chaucer's subsequent English adaptation in 1372 gave the story widespread recognition. Additionally, John Phillips's morality play adaptation of the Griselda story, *The Comedy of Patient and Meek Grissill* was entered into the Stationer's register in 1565 and 1568;²⁴ the Griselda story at this time was sufficiently well known so as to be adapted not only across genre, but across medium. Crossing medium, however, is where there is a major communication breakdown between disciplines as defined by Clare. Chaucer, Boccaccio, and Greene all represent prose narratives, which fall into the purview of literary history, not theatre history. Dramatic writing occupies a unique liminal space in that play texts are sometimes considered literary texts, and other times performance blueprints. Burrow's term 'authorities'

²¹ See *The Winter's Tale*, 3.2.22-53.

²² Baldwin, 199.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Louis B. Wright, 'A Political Reflection in Phillip's *Patient Grissell*', *The Review of English Studies* 16.1 (1928), 424-8.

allows us to largely collapse the liminal space that dramatic works occupy, and discuss them alongside the strictly literary sources. Baldwin's parameters for defining her authorities reflects some of the limitations of older models of source study.

While Baldwin acknowledges that the parallels between Dekker's *Patient Grissil* and *The Winter's Tale* are striking,²⁵ she discards the textual and character similarities of the two works over a single difference: stoicism. Baldwin notes that the sixteenth-century Giseldas maintain a tradition of dry-eyed composure, and never express the betrayal Hermione does when she admits that Leontes's love for her is gone and she knows not why.²⁶ Baldwin's explanation for this departure from the sixteenth century tradition is to attribute the less complaisant Griselda to Chaucer, specifically citing:

Oh good god: howegentill and howekynde
Ye seemed by your speech and your visage
The day that marked was our maryage;...
Love is not olde as whan it is new.²⁷

In direct comparison to Hermione's final moment of loss in the courtroom:

The crown and comfort of my life, your favour,
I do give lost, for I do feel it gone,
But know not how it went. (3.2.94-6)

According to Baldwin, these passages represent Griselda figures, both of whom are 'triumphant and suffering'.²⁸ This characterization is problematic when these excerpts are taken with the rest of their respective speeches. Hermione had just been threatened with death by Leontes (3.2.82-90), and her response is, in essence, that she would prefer to die than to live (3.2.91-115). That is a clear white flag from Hermione; she is surrendering to the loss of her husband and her marriage despite having done nothing wrong and this causes Hermione much suffering. While Baldwin fails to specify what Hermione's triumph is, she does say that Hermione's greatest trial is 'the loss of this tyrant's love'.²⁹ Chaucer's Grisilde's suffering is clear; Baldwin characterizes Grisilde's

²⁵ Baldwin, 208.

²⁶ Ibid, 209.

²⁷ Geoffrey Chaucer, 'The Clerk's Tale', in *The Canterbury Tales: Fifteen Tales and The General Prologue A Norton Critical Edition*, ed. by VA Kolve and Glending Olsen, 2nd Ed. (New York: WW Norton, 2005). pp. 852-7.

²⁸ Baldwin, 209.

²⁹ Ibid.

suffering as ‘...faithfulness, this continuing love for a man she recognizes, by his cruelty and fickleness, to be unworthy of her love’.³⁰ What precisely these women share in triumph is not explained by Baldwin, but if triumph is the ability to be ‘aware of her own value’ and to put that value into words aimed at the man who has wronged her, then Hermione *has no triumph*. In *The Winter’s Tale*, the final declaration of Hermione’s value comes in her first speech in the courtroom scene, when she appeals to Leontes as a wife to her husband:

You, my lord, best know,
Who least will seem to do so, my past life
Hath been as continent, as chaste, as true,
As I am now unhappy; which is more
Than history can pattern, though devised
And play’d to take spectators. (3.2.32-7)

This speech functions as a code for the Griselda story, cuing audiences to see the parallels between the onstage action and the source material. Specifically, the reference to the events being ‘devised / And play’d to take spectators’ suggests that the antecedent authorities both within the narrative and in the wider critical discussions about sources are dramatic, not literary. After this speech, Hermione deals only with specific court charges, and then an enumeration of what she has lost before appealing to Apollo for judgment. Moments after judgment, Hermione dies. Grisilde may be sent away after her cutting indictment of her husband, but speaking out against her husband affects change in Grisilde’s life; she has both suffering and triumph. Hermione has her reunion at the end, but according to Baldwin’s criteria, Hermione has no triumph.

Baldwin’s example of the simultaneously triumphant and suffering Griselda as proof that ‘The Clerk’s Tale’ is the most important Griselda source ignores the striking similarity between Hermione and Greene’s Bellaria in their courtroom scenes. Hermione has no desire to live, just to be remembered as an honorable woman. Shakespeare’s courtroom speech is eerily similar to Greene’s, particularly when Bellaria appeals to Pandosto:

[B]ut Bellaria, whose life then hung in the balance, fearing more perpetual infamy than momentary death, told the king if his fury might stand for a law that it were vain to have the jury yield their verdict; and, therefore, she fell down upon her knees and desired the king that for the love he bare to his young son

³⁰ Ibid.

Garinter, whom she brought into the world, that he would grant her a request; which was this, that it would please his majesty to send six of his noblemen whom he best trusted to the Isle of Delphos, there to inquire of the oracle of Apollo whether she had committed adultery with Egistus, or conspired to poison him with Franion? and if the god Apollo, who by his divine essence knew all secrets, gave answer that she was guilty, she were content to suffer any torment were it never so terrible.³¹

Given the twin concerns for infamy over life, and the subsequent deaths of both Bellaria and Hermione, it seems reasonable that Hermione's speeches to Leontes come directly from *Pandosto*, rather than 'The Clerk's Tale'.

Thomas H. McNeal approached the Griselda authorities in *The Winter's Tale* differently, finding influences from 'The Clerk's Tale' in Greene's *Pandosto*. Shakespeare, therefore, would have derived his Griselda references second-hand. McNeal argues that Greene built both the plots in *Pandosto* 'largely by turning the Chaucerian plot upside-down'.³² While much commentary, including Baldwin's comparisons of 'The Clerk's Tale' and *The Winter's Tale*, includes the analysis of parallel passages, McNeal suggests that a lack of parallel passages between 'the Clerk's Tale' and *Pandosto* accounts for why the two texts have not been previously linked.³³ He then goes on to examine comparative selections from both texts, arguing that the selections lack phrasal echo, and are therefore not necessarily parallel passages. McNeal instead draws connections in 'thought content',³⁴ not one-to-one phrases. Examples of 'thought content' similarities include passages announcing Bellaria and Grisilde's first pregnancies, *Pandosto* setting his daughter adrift and the sergeant taking Grisilde's child, as well as Dorastus first spying Fawnia and Walter first seeing Grisilde.³⁵ While comparing Dorastus discovering Fawnia with Walter finding Grisilde may seem erroneous, McNeal's inversion of character chart³⁶ helps to clarify the comparison:

³¹ Robert Greene, *Pandosto, The Triumph of Time in Greene's 'Pandosto' or 'Dorastus and Fawnia' Being the Original of Shakespeare's 'Winter's Tale'*, ed. by P.G. Thomas (University of Toronto - CRRS Library for Renaissance Studies), pp. 24-5.

³² McNeal, 453.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid, 455.

³⁵ Ibid, 456-459.

³⁶ Ibid, 454.

	Part 1	
<i>The Clerk's Tale</i>		<i>Pandosto</i>
Walter, young lord of Saluces Griselda, his lady, patient and suffering Their young son Their young daughter A sergeant, whom Walter sends to take away Griselda's babes		Pandosto, young king of Bohemia Bellaria, his queen, patient and long-suffering Garinter, their young son Fawnia, their young daughter The guard, whom Pandosto sends to take away Bellaria's babe
	Part 2	
Walter, a young lord of Saluces, who falls in love with a peasant lass Griselda, the shepherdess The ambassador from the citizens, who advises Walter to marry for state reasons Janicula, the old shepherd, father to Griselda		Dorastus, a young prince of Sicilia, who falls in love with a peasant lass Fawnia, the shepherdess Polixenes, father to Dorastus, who advises his son to marry for state reasons Porrus, the old shepherd, foster-father to Fawnia

By approaching intertextuality through thought content, McNeal is expanding his existing definition of source study and attempting to broaden and deepen textual resonances. McNeal is also beginning to move toward Burrow, who suggests – using an example from *Henry IV* and *Ad Herennium*³⁷ – that using authorities in source studies can also ‘become integrated into the analysis of dramatic texture’,³⁸ and ‘encourages us to think about how textual allusions can operate theatrically’.³⁹ McNeal, like Burrow and Clare, is recognizing that source study can and should be more expansive than mere phrasal echoes; his thought content chart points towards crucial character and structural similarities.

³⁷ Burrow, pp. 37-41

³⁸ Ibid, p. 41

³⁹ Ibid.

The chart becomes more complicated when you add *The Winter's Tale* to the mix. Certainly the royal families are accounted for, but significant figures including Autolycus and Paulina are unaccounted for. Antigonus functions as the ambassador from 'The Clerk's Tale' up to a point, but once he is eaten by the bear, the ambassador is no longer a character in *The Winter's Tale*, and neither 'The Clerk's Tale' nor *Pandosto* have an analogous character to Paulina. Greene may have been influenced by Chaucer, leading to some resemblance to 'The Clerk's Tale' in *The Winter's Tale*, but that makes 'The Clerk's Tale' two steps removed from *The Winter's Tale*, leaving space for a more immediate Griselda source. Dekker's *Patient Grissil* introduces unique new elements in the literary history of the Griselda story, and it is these elements which appear in Shakespeare.

The most obvious character comparison to make between *Patient Grissil* and *The Winter's Tale* is that between Grissil and Hermione. The less clear but equally valid comparison is that of Grissil and Perdita. McNeal argued that Greene took the characters of 'The Clerk's Tale' and doubled and inverted them to fill the characters of *Pandosto*;⁴⁰ Shakespeare has doubled and inverted Grissil in *The Winter's Tale*, revealing elements of her character not only in Hermione, but in Perdita. Perdita, like the low-born Grissil, 'smacks of something greater than herself' (4.4.158) even as a lowly shepherdess. Like young Grissil, Perdita is swept up by a young man far above her social station. Perdita, rather than being an example of the full Griselda story, represents Griselda in the first half of the tale. Additionally, and in keeping with the longer history of the Griselda story, Perdita, along with Hermione and by extension Griselda, underscore the social tensions between the roles of wife and mother.

Marriage gave medieval and early modern women legal identities, thereby containing them in their husband's authority.⁴¹ Wives were subjugated by marriage, but pregnancy often gave rise to masculine anxieties, particularly anxiety about cuckolding.⁴² A pregnant woman is not precisely a mother yet, and the infant developing within the uterus is completely and unequivocally outside of male control. Pregnancy also serves as a transitional point between patriarchally recognized stages of a woman's life; these transitions were cause for suspicion.⁴³ Shakespeare inverts the plot of Dekker's *Patient Grissil* in *The Winter's Tale*; this inversion exacerbates some problematic transition points in the narrative. The first is that of the pregnant Hermione. In the transitional

⁴⁰ McNeal, 455.

⁴¹ Monica Karpinska, 'Early Modern Dramatizations of Virgins and Pregnant Women', *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 50.2 (2010), 427-444 (p. 438).

⁴² Ibid, 439.

⁴³ Ibid, 427-430.

time of pregnancy, however, the continuation of a family line is developing in a space that is simultaneously origin and absence, leaving ample room for doubts on the part of the husband and father.⁴⁴ Leontes's jealousy regarding his perceived cuckolding is not only taken from *Pandosto*; wealthy and noble audience members could easily have related to the anxiety – the concerns of pure bloodlines and the continuation of that pure bloodline were paramount. While Grissil in the second half of *Patient Grissil* is dealing with the same obstacles that a pregnant Hermione is in the first half of *The Winter's Tale*, the threats inherent in Perdita's virginity are similar to those in the first part of *Patient Grissil*.

A simple case of a prince sowing his wild oats is no threat to the continuation of a royal bloodline; a legitimate marriage born out of a love connection is. As Monica Karpinska notes, virgins are both otherworldly (and therefore objects of worship) and worldly in that they represent physical and sexual temptation to men.⁴⁵ Perdita is repeatedly associated with flowers and divine figures; throughout the scene, she peppers guests with flowers (4.4.74, 104-5). Once Perdita has bedecked her guests and her friends with flowers, she invokes Proserpine for her friend's chastity (4.4.110-25). This direct invocation and all the flower imagery sets Perdita up as an object to be worshipped, but also prepares her to be sexualized and absorbed into the patriarchy.⁴⁶

The problem for Perdita (and Grissil) is in which class they are about to be absorbed into the patriarchy. In Dekker's play, Gwalter's men reject the idea of marrying a peasant woman, however beautiful she may be, during the course of Dekker's 'husband test' (pp. 11-13). Similarly, once Polixenes realizes that Florizel is performing a handfasting with a shepherd's daughter before his eyes, Perdita transforms from 'the prettiest low-born lass that ever / Ran on the green-sord' (4.4.156-7) into a 'fresh piece / Of excellent witchcraft' (4.4.442-3). Polixenes's brutal speech serves two functions here. First, it resets the narrative of *The Winter's Tale* (and aligns with the events of *Patient Grissil*), as a king casts out a legitimate heir, foreshortening his own line and precluding (presumably, we have little information about the state of Polixenes's wife) the chance of another heir. Second, Polixenes banishing Perdita mirrors Gwalter's casting out of Grissil:

Mar. You shall be witness of this open wrong.

I gave strait charge she should not touch these brats,

⁴⁴ Mark Breitenberg, Mark, 'Anxious Masculinity: Sexual Jealousy in Early Modern England', *Feminist Studies* 19.2 (1993), 377-398 (p. 380).

⁴⁵ Karpinska, 430, 433.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 431.

Yet has she tempted with lascivious tears
The heart of Furio: see, she dandles them.
Take that child from her. ..
Dare you thus contradict our strait command?
I shall do justice wrong to let thee breathe
For disobeying me...
Tempt me not, siren. Since you are so loving,
Hold you, take both your children. Get you gone (p. 55).

Gwalter throwing Grissil and her children out inverts and mirrors Polixenes separating Florizel and Perdita in a number of ways. First, the speech represents the splitting of a union, be it the marriage of Gwalter and Grissil, or the handfasting of Florizel and Perdita, or the separation of any of the parents and children in either play. All the pain, guilt, and loss that the women must be feeling is, in both these cases, put into the mouths of the most powerful male characters, because in the instances of breaking relationships and parental ties, the patriarchy is ostensibly what suffers the most in the long term. Had Polixenes allowed Florizel to marry a shepherdess who was not secretly a Sicilian princess, then the Bohemian royal line would have been tainted. However, Perdita and Florizel represent the best hope for the two royal lines to continue. Similarly, once Grissil is married to Gwalter, she represents the best hope for the continuation of the line.

It is easy to see elements of the Grissil figure in Hermione and Perdita, but it is less simple to determine the influence of the main male characters. McNeal aligns Walter with both Pandosto and Dorastus.⁴⁷ Baldwin also aligns Walter with Pandosto and Dorastus, and attempts to align Florizel with Mamilius, suggesting the restoration of both of Hermione's children to more closely mirror the Griselda stories.⁴⁸ None of these configurations quite ring true, and the changing source material means that some of these comparisons are essentially being made via repeated narratives. Shakespeare's choices regarding Leontes and Florizel are too specific and well-developed to have come from an echo of 'The Clerk's Tale' in *Pandosto*.

Because I argue that Shakespeare's most immediate source is Dekker, the most striking difference between Gwalter and Leontes is the reasoning (or lack thereof) behind ostracizing Hermione and Grissil. Leontes drives himself into a jealous rage over what can be described as a catastrophic misconception of friendly hospitality; Hermione's

⁴⁷ McNeal, 454.

⁴⁸ Baldwin, 206-7.

attentions to Polixenes, their ‘whispering’, ‘leaning cheek to cheek’ and ‘laughter with a sigh’ is easily explained as spending time with a guest, not committing adultery (1.2.284-95). Gwalter’s reasoning for testing Grissil is more ephemeral than Leontes’s fears of cuckoldry; he simply tells Furio that his ‘bosom burnt up with desires / To try my Grissil’s patience’ (p. 28). Unlike Leontes, who sincerely believes his own accusations until Hermione’s death, at no point does Gwalter believe that Grissil is in any way wrong. Gwalter nearly breaks his charade on several occasions, notably during the first attempt to separate Grissil from her children. Gwalter expresses a wish to shed tears, and later in the scene capitulates and returns the children to Grissil, because his heart aches at both the marital discord and the crying of the children (pp. 52, 54). Even upon his repentance to Apollo’s Oracle, Leontes fails to mention either of his children; his focus is on the wrongs he has done to Camillo, Polixenes and Hermione as opposed to the foreshortening of his line and abandonment of his children (3.2.154-72).

It is in the casting out of the children, however, where the structural authorities of *Patient Grissil* are the most strongly reflected in *The Winter’s Tale*. In *Patient Grissil*, Dekker initially allows Grissil to take her children with her when she is sent back home to Janiculo, ordering her to ‘take both your children. Get you gone’ (p. 55). Prior to this joint banishment, however, Gwalter and Furio take the infants from Grissil while she is sleeping, assessing whether the children are Gwalter’s or not. Furio, when asked whom the infant looks like, replies ‘You: there’s your nose and black eyebrows’ (p. 50). Grissil bursts in, understandably distressed that her child disappeared while she was sleeping, only for Gwalter to refuse Furio permission to let her hold her children (pp. 52-6). Later, Gwalter and Furio go to Janiculo’s home with ‘a commission for [Furio] to take away the children (p. 62). This double removal is found in no other Griselda story, but Shakespeare takes this concept and doubles it; Mamilius and Perdita are both separated from Hermione twice. Mamilius is initially banned from his mother’s presence by Leontes (2.1.55-7), which theoretically should have been an impermanent arrangement. Once Hermione’s innocence was declared, she and Mamilius ought to have been reunited with no further trouble. The second separation with Mamilius, however, is upon his death; a permanent separation (3.2.142-5). Perdita’s separation from Hermione mirrors the *Patient Grissil* double separation even more closely; Perdita is taken from Hermione almost immediately after her birth and taken to her father (2.1.33-70). This separation should have resolved itself by Paulina returning Perdita to Hermione; however, the second separation comes close on the heels of the first for Hermione. Leontes, upon seeing Perdita, immediately wishes to burn her alive (2.3.140). Eventually, and due to protests by Antigonus and his other courtiers, Leontes orders Perdita cast out, left to die in the elements (2.3.170-84). There are minimal phrasal echoes between these sequences in *Patient Grissil* and *The Winter’s Tale*, but

using Burrow's term authorities allows for a comparison of plot structures. A double removal of two children – Mamilius and Perdita separately, but the twin simultaneously – is not present in any other version of the Griselda story, and Bellaria is still pregnant in *Pandosto* when the court is attempting to convince Pandosto to spare the life of the child he imagines is a bastard.⁴⁹ Additionally, the term 'authorities' allows source studies to expand beyond literary antecedents and into dramatic ones; Dekker and Shakespeare wrote for different theatrical companies and, as Clare points out, borrowing was certainly a part of playwriting culture. Having separated parents and children, however, scrutiny must also fall on the reunion.

The reunion of the families in Dekker and Shakespeare are handled significantly differently by Leontes and Gwalter. Gwalter consciously orchestrates the entire event, from recalling his twins to ensuring the presence of Grissil (pp. 78-9; 82-7). Leontes, meanwhile, stumbles upon his daughter and her adoptive family through a combination of sheer coincidence, and Camillo's machinations (4.4.555-625; 5.1.177-230). Even the reunion with Hermione is orchestrated primarily by Paulina (5.3.1-155). Another striking difference in the reunion is in the knowledge of the daughter's identity when proposing marriage. Gwalter never had any serious intention of going through with the marriage, its entire purpose was to create a situation in which to reunite the family and reward Grissil. In *The Winter's Tale*, however, Leontes is unaware of Perdita's true identity when Florizel requests Leontes's help in swaying Polixenes's opinion. Leontes's price for helping Florizel, 'Would he [Polixenes] do so, I'd beg your precious mistress' (5.1.223), is chilling in its implications. This response highlights an incestuous undertone and can be interpreted as a veiled threat. Rather than being a signal of a forthcoming reunion, Leontes places *The Winter's Tale* on the cusp of a revenge tragedy by suggesting an incestuous marriage.

Baldwin, after aligning Walter with Dorastus as well as Pandosto, aligns Florizel with Mamilius, arguing that both the children have been (at least symbolically) restored to Hermione.⁵⁰ This assertion becomes problematic when the suggestion of marrying brother to sister casts an incestuous light over the play. The argument is romantic in the sense of having both children restored, and it underscores the similarity between *Patient Grissil* and *The Winter's Tale* quite nicely. That being said, however, Florizel is a far closer parallel to Gwalter than to Mamilius. Rather than being victimized by a parent, Florizel takes his agency into his own hands by declaring 'From my succession wipe me, father, I / Am heir to my affection' (4.4.480-1). This action is very similar to

⁴⁹ Greene, *Pandosto*, p. 19.

⁵⁰ Baldwin, 207

Gwalter insisting not only upon choosing a wife of his own, but of choosing a wife despite her class standing. Gwalter first extracts a promise from his courtiers that ‘whomsoever my fancy choose, / Of what descent, beauty, or birth she be, / Her you shall like and love as you love me’ (p. 5). When he finally chooses Grissil, Gwalter frames his choice as a game, trying to set Grissil up with Mario or Lepido. Both men scorn the idea of having a common-born wife, but Gwalter insists that ‘Since you are not for her, yet she’s for me’ (p. 13). Florizel and Gwalter both assume their agency to choose wives of whom society disapproves. Additionally, and again unlike Leontes, Florizel and Gwalter refuse to be separated from wives who are wholly willing to leave them when social disapproval threatens their positions. Perdita is ready to turn away from Florizel upon discovery, saying, ‘How often have I told you t’would be thus! / How often said my dignity would last / But till t’were known’ (4.4.474-6). Similarly, Grissil asks to be sent home as soon as Gwalter intimates that his subjects are disdainful of her birth (p. 31). Florizel is clearly a closer parallel to Gwalter than Mamilius.

One of the strongest character parallels between *The Winter’s Tale* and *Patient Grissil* is that of Paulina and Gwenthyan. Dekker is not clear about how long Gwenthyan was a widow; however, even after her marriage to Sir Owen, Gwenthyan maintains control over her own life. Similarly, Paulina is clearly in control during her marriage to Antigonus, and even once she is widowed she continues to have control not only over her own life but Leontes’s as well. Paulina maintains her power over Leontes in several ways, including controlling Leontes’s (and therefore her own) marital status and prospects, and by freely – and sometimes bluntly – expressing herself to Leontes, even if he disagrees. The widow figure is an addition that Dekker makes to the Griselda story; no other version of *Patient Griselda* nor *Pandosto* has a widow figure. The inclusion of Paulina as a widow character in the second half of *The Winter’s Tale* suggests a strong connection with *Patient Grissil* specifically.

Gwenthyan, upon being propositioned by Sir Owen, tells him that ‘If her cousin Gwalter say, “Gwenthyan, tage this Pritish knight” shall love hurdiggon; but must have her good will, marg you’ (p. 24). Gwenthyan is prepared to marry again, but only on the conditions that Gwalter order her to marry, and only if the man has her good will. During her marriage, Paulina was not ruled either by Antigonus or Leontes. When Paulina attempts to show Leontes his daughter, Leontes asks Antigonus ‘What, canst not rule her?’ (2.3.46). Both Paulina and Antigonus answer in the negative; Paulina declares that ‘he shall not rule me’ (2.3.50), and Antigonus puts up a token argument before allowing Paulina to complete her mission (2.3.52-67). Unfortunately, Paulina will not be successful, and in the midst of the courtroom scene, Hermione collapses upon hearing of the death of her son.

Once Hermione has been carried from the courtroom, Leontes repents his accusations in time for Paulina to burst in with the strongest language the audience has heard her use with Leontes:

What studied torments, tyrant, hast for me?
What wheels? Racks? Fires? What flaying? Boiling
In leads or oils? What old or newer tortures
Must I receive, whose every word deserves
To taste of thy most worst? (3.2.175-9)

This speech, Paulina's accusation of what, in her estimation, is Leontes's worst crime appears to be a lengthened and far more serious version of Gwenthyan's accusations of Sir Owen when he brings freshly cut wands into the house,

Gwe. Do, and hur tare; do and hur tare. See you, now, what shall hur do with wands? Peat Gwenthyan body, and mage Gwenthyan put her finger in me hole? Ha! Ha! By God, by God, is scradge her eyes out that tudge her, that tawg to her, that loog on her: marg you that, Sir Owen (p. 46).

Gwenthyan's suggestion of violence is played to the audience for laughs and Paulina's for drama, but both practically dare men – who would be fully within their rights to carry out these actions – to physically assault them in order to demonstrate a power dynamic outside of the social norm of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Both of these speeches could have been given by Griselda were she not 'patient', and by giving disobedient speeches to Paulina and Gwenthyan, they function as a meta-audience. The two women embody possible reactions of the audience, forcing space between the audiences and their instinctive reactions. This space allows for critical analysis of the situation, as well as instinctive reactions.

Additionally, these speeches help to establish that Paulina and Gwenthyan are unafraid to challenge men, should they feel the situation calls for it. Once the precedent is established that Paulina can say nearly anything to Leontes with impunity, the leap to controlling Leontes is not far. By controlling Leontes's marital status (as the primary female figure and possible surrogate for a wife), Paulina keeps her own situation under her control. Like the courtiers, Paulina knows Leontes must eventually remarry, but by asking for the task of choosing Leontes's next wife and having it granted, Paulina secures her own future (5.1.75-7).

Paulina was prepared to remain unwed after Hermione's reunion with Leontes, which makes her similar to Julia in that both were prepared to break with social convention (5.3.130-4). However, much like Gwenthyan, Paulina is willing to be 'assigned' a husband, with the caveat that the match is more than convenience. As Paulina prepares to step back into spinsterhood, Leontes twists Paulina's reference to Antigonus into a lament that she will never again find a mate. His remedy to this lamentation is to set her up with Camillo (5.3.136-7, 144-4). The implication is that Camillo is a love match for Paulina, and this love match mirrors Gwenthyan's insistence on a husband whom she loves, rather than a politically or financially motivated match. These character parallels are in themselves a strong argument for Dekker as Shakespeare's most immediate source; there are, however, language and structural similarities that further strengthen the argument.

If one looked for phrasal echoes of the Griselda story in other texts, assuming that an adaptation of the Griselda story would contain the word 'patient' or other forms of the word frequently scattered through the text would make a certain amount of sense. Shakespeare however, uses 'patient' sparingly and surgically. There is, in fact, a single instance of the word 'patient' in the entirety of *The Winter's Tale*; Hermione uses the word self-reflexively.⁵¹ After Leontes has cut off her access to Mamilius and sends her to prison, Hermione muses, 'There's some ill planet reigns; / I must be patient, till the heavens look / With an aspect more favorable' (2.1.105-7). Because Leontes is more concerned about Hermione's chastity and constancy than her ability to weather hardship, this particular use of 'patient' links Hermione with Griselda in general. In addition to this single instance of 'patient', the only other form of the word that appears in *The Winter's Tale* is 'patience', which appears a total of four times.⁵²

'Patience' is a word Shakespeare links to three characters: Time, Hermione and Paulina. Each character uses 'patience' slightly differently, but each instance reiterates the authorities between not only the Griselda folklore in general, but in two instances between *The Winter's Tale* and *Patient Grissil* specifically. In the case of Time, 'patience' is part of a request. Time addresses the audience, saying 'your patience this allowing, / I turn my glass and give my scene such growing/ as you had slept between' (4.1.15-16). Every single version of the Griselda story has a similar time gap; the lengths of these gaps differ, but Dekker specifically references a sixteen year gap before Griselda is reunited with her children. That Shakespeare chose the exact length of time as Dekker for the gap in the plot is too close to be mere coincidence.

⁵¹ 'Shakespeare Concordance', *Open Source Shakespeare*. George Mason University, 2003.

⁵² Ibid.

Additionally, Time's reference to an hourglass (4.1.15) is a visual representation of both the cyclical and reversible nature of time in both Shakespeare and Dekker. The hourglass signals that time in *The Winter's Tale* has turned both forward and back; forward in linear years, but back in terms of the progression of the traditional Griselda tale. The reversible nature of an hourglass also foreshadows the eventual reversal of death. Structurally, the hourglass represents the inversion of the plot between *Patient Grissil* and *The Winter's Tale*. The first half of *The Winter's Tale* mirrors the second half of *Patient Grissil*, and vice versa.

Hermione also speaks of patience, during her trial. This use reveals features of the Griselda story and functions to separate the final scene of *The Winter's Tale* from the ending of *Pandosto*. Hermione predicts that, 'if pow'rs divine/ Behold our Human Actions (as they do), / I doubt not then but innocence shall make / False accusation blush and tyranny/ tremble at patience' (3.2.30-3). By invoking not only 'patience' here, but the triumph of patience over tyranny, Hermione foreshadows the eventual reunion of herself, her husband and their daughter. This reunion is not present in *Pandosto*; Pandosto commits suicide, forcing Dorastus and Fawnia to live without a reconciliation.⁵³ If the discussion focuses on prose sources, then this instance of patience does not fit with *Pandosto*; by discussing authorities, however, Hermione's use of patience to foreshadow the eventual reconciliation and reunion clearly nods to *Patient Grissil*. Such an oblique reference to the Griselda folklore reminds contemporary readers of just how popular the Griselda tales were, and suggest another connection in a network between dramatic texts, rather than a linear progression from prose source to dramatic adaptation.

The final two instances of 'patience' come from Paulina. The first time Paulina uses 'patience' is in discussion with Leontes, shortly after Hermione's supposed death. Paulina goes perhaps a little too far too soon in remonstrating Leontes for the deaths of his wife and child, and says she will

 speak of her no more, nor of your children;
 I'll not remember you of my own lord,
 Who is lost too. Take your patience to you,
 And I'll say nothing (3.2.229-32).

⁵³ Greene, *Pandosto*, pp. 84-85.

This use of 'patience' is particularly interesting, because it can be read in two ways. First, it can be read as Paulina instructing Leontes to gather up his own inherent capacity to be patient, essentially as words of encouragement. This reading, however, undermines Paulina's authority with Leontes, and weakens her as a character. She challenged the king in public, and to apologize weakens her remarks and her authority. Another way to interpret Paulina's use of 'patience' here is instructive; Paulina instructs Leontes to take Hermione's memory to him as his patience, paving the way for the agreement between Leontes and Paulina regarding future marriages. This reading reaffirms and increases Paulina's power over Leontes, and elevates Paulina's influence over Leontes to the same level as Gwenthyran and Julia's influence over Sir Owen and Gwalter.

Paulina's second instance of use of 'patience' is also the last time the word is used in the play; when Leontes and Perdita visit Paulina to see the statue of Hermione, Leontes is overcome with emotion and moves to kiss the statue (5.1.75-80). Paulina stops Leontes with 'O Patience' (5.3.47), which is yet another reminder that there are multiple sources influencing the scene. For Ovid, the entire point of Pygmalion's statue was to represent the perfect womanhood;⁵⁴ Paulina's statue cannot be equated in terms of beauty, since Polixenes and Leontes point out signs of age on statue-Hermione's face (5.2.27-9). Additionally, Pygmalion's statue coming to life is the genesis of an entirely new relationship, whereas Paulina reviving Hermione rekindles an old relationship. The scene therefore is tonally and temporally much more similar to *Patient Grissil* than it is to 'Pygmalion'. Gwalter's lines are not quite a phrasal echo of Paulina's; however, his use of the word patience in the context of a kiss is tonally similar:

Thou gav'st me this fair maid; I, in exchange
Return thee her and this young gentleman,
Thy son and daughter: kiss with patience,
And breathe thy virtuous spirit into their souls (p. 86).

In *Patient Grissil*, the family reunion is sealed with a 'patient kiss'; Shakespeare uses patience to delay a kiss until the proper moment for a family reunion. In both cases, however, patience is the point on which the authorities of the Griselda Story pivot in *The Winter's Tale*.

Having Leontes and Hermione reunite diverges from *Pandosto*, but all the Griselda stories contain a reunion scene. The strongest connection here between *Patient Grissil*

⁵⁴ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, p. 232.

and *The Winter's Tale* is in the resurrection motif. What makes Shakespeare's reunion scene, and Paulina most immediately reminiscent of Dekker is that Paulina is the vehicle through which the reunion is able to come about. In *Patient Grissil*, it is the children who are 'resurrected', in *The Winter's Tale*, the wife. Paulina actually surpasses the control over the story that Gwenthyan commands; without Paulina orchestrating the final scene of *The Winter's Tale*, the ending more logically sees a reunion between father and daughter, followed by the father's suicide then a family joyfully reunited. Paulina, by resurrecting Hermione, wields a striking amount of power, and in no other source, barring *Patient Grissil*, is there a female character in such a specific position of power.

In the eight hundred years the Patient Griselda narrative has existed in written form, it has gone through periods of huge popularity in popular culture, and periods of relative obscurity. Moving from Boccaccio to Petrarch and finally through the English literary tradition up through William Shakespeare, Patient Griselda went from popular tale to trope. The story was produced and reproduced to reflect changes to the story over time; changes due to current events and past iterations of the tale. While the story was a popular, cultural staple for many years, literary critics have paid little attention to the Griselda stories over the years. Many critics who engaged with versions of the Griselda story focused on textual explications, or contextualizing the story in a given time period. Notable exceptions to this tradition are Anna Baldwin, E.A.J. Honigmann and Thomas H. McNeal, all of whom engaged with *The Winter's Tale* in order to pin down Shakespeare's Griselda source. Preconceptions about sources being primarily literary, however, led to a narrowing of the field of potential authorities within source studies. Expanding the pool of authorities to include structural and character resonances in addition to phrasal echoes, and exploring authorities rather than simply prose sources, creates new avenues for intertextualities to be recognized. Baldwin, Honigmann and McNeal were primarily looking at 'The Clerk's Tale' and *Pandosto* as Shakespeare's most immediate Griselda source, based on character similarities and phrasal echoes. However, Clare's focus on intertextualities between playwrights and Burrow's widening the scope of source study by exploring authorities suggests that the most compelling conclusion is that Shakespeare's most immediate source for the Patient Griselda story was Thomas Dekker's play.