

Early Modern Literary Studies

Propaganda or a Record of Events? Richard Mulcaster's *The Passage Of Our Most Drad Sovereigne Lady Quene Elyzabeth Through The Citie Of London Westminster The Day Before Her Coronacion*

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1. In 1978, the discovery of new evidence regarding Queen Elizabeth I's pre-coronation procession of 1559 led David Bergeron to question certain statements he had previously made about her in his seminal *English Civic Pageantry: 1558-1632*. In this earlier work, Bergeron's reading of the pamphlet officially produced in order to commemorate the procession, written by Richard Mulcaster, led him to state that the behaviour of Elizabeth at the pageant devices which took place showed her to be an "unscheduled actor" (15). Following Mulcaster's pamphlet, Bergeron emphasised the spontaneous pleasure demonstrated by the Queen in response to each of the pageants performed for her, confirming the fact that the procession itself was characterised by the mutual, unforced love felt between Queen and audience. The new evidence he discovered forced him to change his opinion however, and suggested rather that, as part-patron, the Queen was "no mere passive spectator or grateful recipient of the event" ("Elizabeth" 3). Instead, Bergeron felt that Elizabeth must have been aware of what was to take place because she had helped decide the content of the pageants, in the form of providing a number of costumes for the pageant players. Though Bergeron does not say as much, the revelation that Elizabeth was a part-patron of the pageant devices compromises certain aspects of Mulcaster's specially commissioned pamphlet, which repeatedly insists upon the Queen's spontaneity in response to the performed events. This new evidence undermines the suggestion that the procession was an instinctive celebration of love between the Queen and her people, and puts into question the notion that the pamphlet is a reliable source of historical accuracy. Rather than being a mere record of events, the pamphlet can be regarded as less

than disinterested, and for a more compelling reason than that it was written on a commission. For, apart from the discovery that Elizabeth was involved in formulating the pageants, there are a number of other examples in his report which compromise Mulcaster's version of events. One instance is particularly troubling, and further serves to undermine his entire project.

2. Whilst passing between two of the major pageant devices prepared for the procession, Mulcaster informs us that the Queen "came againste the Great Conduite in Cheape, which was bewtified with pictures and sentences accordinglye against her Graces coming thether" (46). In his own study, Bergeron reproduces Mulcaster's observation, and informs us that in the *Repertories* of the Corporation of London there is a record that shows "payments to painters for decorating the Conduit in Cheapside..." (*English* 12). However, if we return to the precise record he quotes, we find that it states something rather different. The record in fact reads as follows:

Itm for as much as the painters of this City *did utterly refuse* to new paint and trim the Great Conduit in Cheapside ... for the Queen Majesty's coming to her Coronation for the sum of 20 marks... (emphasis added). (folio103b)

A wide ranging search through the various accounts of the pre-coronation procession has brought to light only one acknowledgement of this refusal by the painters, and that occurs in R. R. Sharpe's *London And The Kingdom*, which is effectively a history of the City read precisely from these original *Repertories* (and thus would be difficult to ignore). Sharpe records it as the "curious instance of a strike among painters" (1: 485), though he gives no reason as to why the painters decided on such action. However, the strike meant that:

the surveyors of the city were instructed to cause the same [Conduit] to be covered with cloth of Arras having escutcheons of the queen's Arms finely made and set therein and the wardens of the Painters' Company were called upon to render assistance with advice and men for reasonable remuneration. (485-6)

This final "reasonable remuneration" suggests the reason for the painters' refusal, and the wardens being called in shows that the Painters' Company was no doubt held responsible for the problem. Bergeron's failure to register this refusal, in a record to which he directly refers, is obviously both troubling and confusing. Most importantly however, there is evident ambiguity concerning Mulcaster's original description of the relevant pageant being "bewtified with pictures." If the

instructions in the *Repertories* are to be believed, the pageant stage was "covered with cloth of Arras," which could indeed have been decorated with pictures of some sort. The question arises, however, whether Mulcaster was in fact referring to painted pictures that he expected the Conduit to display, as was the case with other pageants in the procession that had been prepared according to the original plan. Thus the Conduit in Fleet Street, the "fifte and last Pageaunt erected," was, Mulcaster writes, "bewtified with painting" (53). If this is the case, the suspicion arises that Mulcaster in fact did not witness the earlier pageant device, took no account of the problem caused by the painters' strike, and reported the event according to prior instructions he had received and which detailed what the stage should have looked like. If it is true that he did not see this particular pageant device, it is possible that he did not see some or all of the others, and that whether he saw them or not, he did not report them accurately. The possible mis-reporting of this specific instance questions Mulcaster's total endeavour, particularly when combined with the possible inaccuracy of his representation of the Queen's reactions. If nothing else, these instances arouse the suspicion of any modern reader as to the truth-value of Mulcaster's observations. Further investigation bears out such a suspicion.

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3. Richard Mulcaster's pamphlet produced in order to commemorate Elizabeth's pre-coronation procession, *The Passage Of Our Most Drad Sovereigne Lady Quene Elyzabeth Through The Citie Of London To Westminster The Daye Before Her Coronacion*, was commissioned by the London Corporation in order to celebrate the occasion as well as to disseminate the message of the spectacle enacted in the streets of the capital. The existent record of Mulcaster's payment for his commission is interesting in many ways, not least in the fact that it is made clear that the Queen herself received a copy of his pamphlet:

Itm yt was orderyd and agreyd by the Court here this day that the Chamblyn shall geue vnto Rychard Mulcaster for his reward for makyng of the boke conteynynge and declaryng the historyes set furth in and by the Cyties pageaunte at the tyme of the Quenes highnes comyng thurrough the Cytie to her coronacon xls wch boke was geuyn vnto the Quenes grace. (folio 143)

The pamphlet appeared nine days after the procession itself, and seems also to have been reprinted at some point later in the year, indicating its popularity. The pamphlet provides us with a precise record of the route taken between Fenchurch and Temple Bar, and describes the pageant devices that took place en route, dramatic interludes performed on specially erected scaffolds. Each of these devices took place as the Queen reached them, who then proceeded further once each

(interconnecting) interlude came to an end. These theatrical performances took the form of various allegorical representations of the Queen and her perceived functions:

Elizabeth's descent was illustrated in a vast rose tree of the houses of York and Lancaster, there was a pageant in the form of Virtues defeating Vices, another celebrated the Queen's devotion to the biblical beatitudes, another showed a withered and a flourishing landscape to typify a good and bad commonwealth and, finally, there was a vision of Elizabeth as Deborah, consulting with her estates for the good of her realm. (Strong, *Splendour* 25)

On reading the text in which these events are described, one is struck particularly by the tone used, in terms of the emphasis that Mulcaster puts upon the adoration and love shown by the procession's audience for their new Queen.

4.

Mulcaster's opening sentence records the entrance of the Queen into the city, "richely furnished," and "most honourably accompanied" by the splendour of "Gentlemen, Barons, and other the Nobilite of this Realme, as also with a notable trayne of goodly and beawtifull Ladies, richly appoynted" (Mulcaster 38). This immediately communicates the spectacular nature of the event, a reality that Mulcaster demonstrates by his recording of the audience's response to the procession's entrance in his next sentence:

And entryng the Citie was of the People received marveylous entirely, as appeared by the assemblie, prayers, wishes, welcomminges, cryes, tender woordes, and all other signes, which argue a wonderfull earnest love of most obedient subjectes towarde theyr soveraigne. (38)

Mulcaster makes it clear that this is not a love that travels in one direction, but insists on its mutual nature, the Queen demonstrating her love for the people "so that on eyther syde there was nothing but gladnes, nothing but prayer, nothing but comfort" (38). He continues in the same manner, perceiving the circulation of this mutual adoration:

The Quenes Majestie rejoysed marveilously to see that so exceedingly shewed towarde her Grace, which all good Princes have ever desyred. I meane so earnest love of subjectes, so evidently declared even to her Grace's owne person, being carried in the

middest of them. The People again were wonderfully rauished with the louing answers and gestures of theyr Princesse, like to the which they had before tryed at her first comming to the Towre from Hatfield. This her Grace's loving behaviour preconceived in the People's heades upon these considerations was then throughly confirmed, and indede emplanted a wonderfull hope in them touchyng her woorthy Gouvernement in the reste of her Reygne. For in all her passage, she did not only shew her most gracious love toward the people in generall, but also privately, if the baser personages had offered her Grace any flowers or such like as a signification of their good wyll, or moved to her any sute, she most gently, to the common rejoycing of all lookers on, and private comfort of the partie, staid her chariot, and heard theyr requestes. So that if a man shoulde say well, he could not better tearme the Citie of London that time, than a stage wherein was shewed the wonderfull spectacle, of a noble hearted Princesse toward her most loving People, and the People's exceding comfort in beholding so worthy a Sovereigne, and hearing so Prince like a voice ... could not but enflame her naturall, obedient, and most loving People....Thus therefore the Quenes Majestie passed from the Towre till she came to Fanchurche, the People on eche side joyously beholdyng the viewe of so gracious a Ladye theyr Quene.... (38-9)

This account of an exchange of reciprocal love has been reproduced at some length in order to show how Mulcaster delineates for the reader an occasion characterised by its unproblematic and implicit acknowledgement of degree, indeed its effusive celebration of hierarchy. In this account, the Queen has already been successful in gaining the support and love of her subjects, has already won them over, is already the fulfilment of their desire to be justly and nobly ruled. However, while this excerpt articulates both the skill with which Elizabeth presented herself publicly, and the sense in which this presentation took place in a theatrical setting, it is the question of Mulcaster's accuracy that I wish to focus upon. This accuracy is compromised when his version is juxtaposed with the two other eye-witness accounts of the event.

5.

The letters of the Venetian Ambassador to England of the time, Il Schifanoia, to the Castellan of Mantua, and a two page entry which appears in Henry Machyn's *Diary* constitute these accounts, and they enable us to gain a more coherent picture of the entire procession. Machyn's short entry in his *Diary* describes the spectacular impression made by the procession, as well as giving some detail about the pageants that took place. Particularly useful in this context, however, is the account

of Il Schifanoia, which allows us to determine the approximate size of the procession, the number of horses preceding the Queen being, in the Ambassador's opinion, one thousand. He goes on to write that the houses along the route were decorated in the Queen's honour, and that lining this route were "merchants and artisans of every trade ... in long black gowns lined with hoods of red and black cloth ... with all their ensigns, banners, and standards, which were innumerable, and made a very fine show" (12). Each participant in the procession also displayed their symbols of office; keys, chains, pennants, and various uniforms of status and affluence. The Queen's ceremonial guards were all dressed in crimson silk, and there was also much satin, velvet, and fur in evidence. The Queen herself, he says, appeared in "an open litter, trimmed down to the ground with gold brocade" (12), and that she was "dressed in a royal robe of very rich cloth of gold, with a double-raised stiff pile, and on her head over a coif of cloth of gold, beneath which was her hair, a plain gold crown without lace ... covered with jewels..." (12). The importance of Il Schifanoia's account in this present study, however, lies in his observation of one particular pageant device and its difference from the same pageant as reported by Mulcaster. The device in question is that which showed certain virtues defeating their opposing vices, and the two accounts bear close examination.

6.

According to Mulcaster, after enjoying the first major pageant device, entitled "The uniting of the two Howses of Lancastre and Yorke" (42), the Queen proceeded to the Conduit in Cornhill, where she found a child "representing her Majesties person, placed in a seate of Governement, supported by certyne vertues, which suppressed their contrarie vyces under their feete..." (44). The Queen's name and title were displayed, as was the name of the pageant, "The Seate of worthie Governance" (44). The figure representing Elizabeth sat in a chair that was held by four "lively personages," each of whom in turn represented a virtue, and each having "a table to expresse their effectes..." (44). These virtues were named Pure Religion, Love of Subjects, Wisdom, and Justice, and they

did treade their contrarie Vices under their feete; that is to witte, Pure Religion did treade upon Superstition and Ignoraunce; Love of Subjectes did treade upon Rebellion and Insolencie; Wisdome did treade upon Follie and Vaine Glorie; Justice did treade upon Adulacion and Bribery. (44)

Each of these, according to Mulcaster, had their name clearly displayed, and were also "aptly and properly apparelled," so as to "expresse the same person that in title he represented" (45). Every empty space was "furnished with proper sentences," each "commendyng the seate supported by Vertues, and defacing the Vices..." (45).

The verses spoken at this pageant give voice to the obvious allegorical meanings desired by the pageant devisers, to the effect that "Vertues shall maintayn thy throne, / And Vyce be kept down still..." (45). The Queen is seen as the embodiment of all of these virtues and thus the enemy to those vices. The use of these allegorical figures from the medieval morality plays also has a further ideological effect here, virtue being seen to reside in the Protestantism supplanting the Catholicism associated with Mary's reign. While the drama of the pageant device, along with the spoken verses and the posted explanations clarify the overall ideological thrust of this representation, Mulcaster ensures that the message is quite clear by informing us further:

The ground of thys Pageant was, that like as by Vertues (whych does abundantly appere in her Grace) the Quenes Majestie was established in the seate of Governement; so she should sette fast in the same so long as she embraced Vertue....For if Vice once gotte up the head, it would put the seate of Governement in peryll of falling. (46)

Here various virtues, physically represented though, as the pageant explanation tells us, embodied in Elizabeth, are shown to tread upon and defeat their opposing vices.

7.

The observations of Il Schifanoia are interesting in this respect, as he reports that this particular pageant showed slightly different figures to those outlined by Mulcaster. According to the Ambassador, the vices presented were named "Ignorance, Superstition, Hypocrisy, Vain Glory, Simulation, Rebellion and Idolatry," concluding that the general message of the pageant was "that hitherto religion had been misunderstood and misdirected, and that now it will proceed on a better footing" (13). This religious interpretation of the device differs from Mulcaster's political interpretation, and reveals allegory's inherent plenitude of meaning. The Spanish Ambassador interprets the allegorical device in his own way and according to his own (religious) concerns. This plenitude is increased when it becomes clear that the Ambassador actually read the name of one of the vices - "Hypocrisy" - differently from Mulcaster. This could, no doubt, be a problem of translation rather than mis-reading by either of the observers. However, this is doubtful in that, of the vices named by Mulcaster, only "Bribery" both resembles "Hypocrisy" and does not appear on the Ambassador's list. Yet "Bribery" ("corruzione") does not translate as anything like "Hypocrisy" ("ipocrisia"), the two being in no way commensurate, but delineating rather different vices. While it is possible that no deception was intended by either the Ambassador or Mulcaster (unfortunately Machyn does not note the names

given to the allegorical figures), the latter may have wished to avoid using the term "Hypocrisy" because of something which occurred later in the procession and which gives the Ambassador's naming of it a much deeper significance. For if "Hypocrisy" is set in the context of the "Truth/Tyme" pageant device which was subsequently performed, the procession itself becomes compromised by meanings that Mulcaster, as the official recorder, had no wish to produce.

8.

Elizabeth proceeded to the Little Conduit in Cheape, to the "Truth/Tyme" pageant, which most analyses of the pre-coronation procession agree to be the most important. Jean Wilson calls it the "crucial show" (6), David Bergeron the "dramatic climax" (*English* 21), Sydney Anglo a "critical juncture" (351), and Helen Hackett the pageant that generated the "greatest excitement" (43). Indeed, the centrality of this particular device is clear given that it is described in some detail in Machyn's *Diary*. The perceived importance of this particular pageant is predominantly due to the fact that Elizabeth made what is for many critics a crucial interjection in the proceedings that demonstrated her ability both as an actress and a wily political manipulator. The crucial moment, which has so impressed critics throughout the ages, actually occurred before the allegorical display had begun. Mulcaster writes that as Elizabeth reached the pageant stages, she inquired what the pageant was meant to signify. On being told that it represented "Time," Elizabeth felt compelled to respond: "'Tyme?' quoth she, 'and Tyme hath brought me hether'" (38). The importance of this interjection, where Elizabeth associates herself with Time, is fully realised when it becomes clear that in the action that then proceeded to unfold upon the pageant stage, an allegorical figure representing Time brings forth a further allegorical figure, the latter representing Truth. Thus Elizabeth clearly associates herself directly with the embodiment of truth itself. While this may indeed demonstrate Elizabeth's awareness of what would be contained in this particular performance, for many critics this represents a master-stroke in terms of self-representation. Thus Bergeron tells us that here "the queen rises triumphantly to the dramatic occasion" (*English* 20), while Anglo believes she "played her part to perfection," demonstrating that she "was a true heir to her father in crowd-pleasing showmanship" (351). However, these plaudits are not based on Elizabeth associating herself with Truth alone, but upon a further piece of showmanship that occurred later in the action of the performance.

9.

The pageant device itself was made up of the representation of two hills or mountains, the one on the north side being "cragged, barreyn, and stonye; in whiche was erected one tree, artificiallye made, all withered and deadde..." (49).

Under the tree sat a mourning figure in rags, over whose head was written his name, "whiche was, '*Ruinosa Respublica*,' 'A decayed Commonweale'" (49). Upon the tree hung sentences "expressing the causes of the decaye of a Common weale" (49). The southern hill in contrast was "fayre, freshe, grene, and beawtifull, the grounde thereof full of flowers and beawtie," upon which stood a healthy tree, and under whom stood an "uprichte" figure named "'*Respublica bene instituta*,' 'A florishyng Commonweale'" (49-50). Between the two hills stood a cave out of which, as the Queen arrived, "issued one personage, whose name was Tyme, apparaylled as an olde man, with a sythe in his hande ... leadeinge a personage of lesser stature than himselfe," namely "'*Temporis filia*,' 'The Daughter of Tyme'" (50). These two figures then proceeded to the flourishing southern hill, the latter figure with her true name, "*Veritas*" (Truth) written upon her breast. In her hand she carried a book upon which was written "'*Verbum Veritas*,' 'the Woorde of Trueth'" (50). A child standing upon the southern hill interpreted the pageant in verse, to the effect that the barren hill represented Mary's reign, and the flourishing hill, now that Father Time had brought forth his daughter Truth, that of Elizabeth. The verse proceeds to state that this truth is embodied in the Word of Truth, the English Bible. This was then passed to Elizabeth, her reaction upon receiving it being that further example of her ability to be acutely politically manipulative. For, "as soone as she had receyved the booke, [she] kissed it, and with both her handes held up the same, and so laid it upon her brest, with great thankes to the Citie therefore" (51). The dramatic nature of Elizabeth's behaviour here underlines this political astuteness, demonstrating a commitment to Protestantism, as well as to a general concept of legitimacy. And, in this moment, she links those commitments both to the institution of her monarchy, and to the powerful civic authorities.

10.

The importance of this particular pageant, where the allegorical figure of Time brings forth his daughter Truth, who embodies a flourishing commonwealth, and whose presence dispels a decaying one, was indicated by Mulcaster as a dramatic climax. Bergeron writes that Mulcaster

suggests that the meaning of this pageant is dependent on the previous ones, the queen having already been instructed about unity, the virtues which support the seat of government, and the blessings which accompany her. (*English* 21)

The message of the pageant is quite clear: Elizabeth, the personification of truth, brought forth by Time, relying on virtue and the word of truth (the English Bible), will oversee the return to a flourishing nation and the banishment of the decaying commonwealth representing Mary's rule.

11.

The quintessentially climactic moment for most pageant analysts comes when the allegorical figure of Truth hands Elizabeth the English Bible, which she proceeds to use with dramatic aplomb. According to Mulcaster, a child who had recited verses explaining this pageant had held the Bible and "reached his booke towards the Quenes Majestie, whiche, a little before, Trueth had let downe unto him from the hill; which by Sir John Parrat was received, and delivered unto the Quene" (50). This is both an interesting and defining moment. In descriptions of the pre-coronation procession, the presence of "Sir John Parrat" is frequently omitted, or he is referred to merely as an unnamed Gentleman of the Queen. When he is named, it is, following Mulcaster, purely as a conduit between "Truth" and Elizabeth, a mechanical agent allowing the pageant message to be successfully accomplished. However, in J. G. Nichols' study *London Pageants*, there is an interesting footnote in his (confused and misleading) description of this pageant. The footnote, appearing in connection with "Sir John Perrott" in the main body of text, reads thus: "Who is supposed to have been a bastard brother to the Queen; he was afterwards Viceroy of Ireland" (*London* 56). That is to say then that the English Bible, "the Woorde of Trueth," was passed from Truth, an allegorical figure, to the sovereign, already both implicitly and explicitly identified with "Truth," by the real figure of her bastard half-brother. At the very centre of this valorisation of truth personified therefore is a troubling representation of "Un-truth."

12.

The presence of the real in these allegorical circumstances is a defining moment, not least because it is not (only) a symbolic presence. Sir John Perrot was no doubt chosen to play a central role in this display because of the fact that he had sheltered Protestants during the reign of Mary, an act that had seen him spend a short time in prison. However, according to Hiram Morgan, "Perrot is best known ... for who he may have been - the reputed son of Henry VIII..." (109). Morgan stresses that "Perrot was popularly held to be his [Henry's] son, being large in frame, choleric in temper, tyrannical in government and a lady's man by inclination" (109). As proof, Morgan informs us that there exist a number of records that show he was the son of Henry, and he even floats the idea (which he finally rejects) that Perrot's parentage (and thus claim on the throne) may well have been the reason for his execution towards the end of Elizabeth's reign. Given his bastard status, his appearance in the pre-coronation procession could have cast a rather dim light on the tenuous nature of Elizabeth's claim to the throne, as she had been disinherited by her (and Sir John's) father. A contemporary audience would have been aware of Perrot's ambiguous position, both in terms of such claims to legitimacy, and as a bearer of Truth.

13.

The presence of Perrot thus compromises this particular dramatic climax and could be interpreted as encouraging the production of an alternative message for a contemporary audience than that desired. Indeed, the hypocrisy of the ruling elite could have been an entirely understandable and relevant reading. Furthermore, such a reading produced in this allegorical moment undermines the entire ideological project of the procession. If we recall that, according to the Venetian Ambassador, one of the vices that Elizabeth was to crush underfoot was indeed "Hypocrisy," and that Mulcaster, in his official interpretation of the event did not delineate such a vice, there emerges a counter-force in terms of interpretation that problematises Mulcaster's official reading. Perrot's presence demonstrates the hypocrisy that the ruling elite personified, and clarifies Mulcaster's desire to avoid the use of this term. In reality, Perrot was not associated with Mulcaster's "Bribery," but rather with Il Schifanoia's "Hypocrisy."

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14.

The impact of the above examples on the truth-value of Mulcaster's record of events extends to the most apparent aspect of his project, the spontaneous adulation of the audience for their Queen. As stated earlier, Mulcaster constantly emphasises this point, observing the "earnest love of subjectes, so evidently declared even to her Grace's owne person," and the "common rejoycing of all lookers on," so that "there was nothing but gladnes" (38-9). Such emphasis continues throughout his pamphlet, the crowd being won over by the obvious virtue of the Queen. The other eye-witness accounts of the procession cast doubt on Mulcaster's observations in this respect however, when it is realised that of the three accounts it is only Mulcaster who mentions the crowd at all. In both the account of Il Schifanoia, and that which appears in Henry Machyn's *Diary*, there is not a single mention of the audience that defines the content and tone of Mulcaster's report and that in many ways constitutes the ideological thrust of his whole project. For Mulcaster, the presence of the audience is determining, emphasising the mutual love that circulated between population and sovereign, defining for us a unified population, content in its certainty of a rigid, secure and natural hierarchy.

15.

The absence articulated by these two eye-witness accounts obviously needs to be considered and negotiated. What they fail to record is not proof that the audience

described by Mulcaster was in fact absent. Perhaps they suggest rather something similar to what Glynne Wickham has observed with regard to medieval processions:

The starting point [of a ruler's claim to rule] was the physical manifestation of the ruler's person to the subjects assembled within the capital city. This could most conveniently be achieved by a procession through the streets which were lined for the occasion with beholders. I say 'lined' rather than 'thronged' because the fullest discipline that medieval civic administration could achieve was enforced on these occasions. (1:53)

The early modern period had a much more sophisticated system of communication (and coercion), but Wickham's observation is relevant. It should be remembered that the decoration and gravelling of the streets, as well as the actual presence of the members of the Guilds had been ordered by the Lord Mayor. Thus the "City was at very great charge to express their love and joy" (Nichols, *Elizabeth* 1:35), an order that the Guilds were careful to adhere to for, as contemporary evidence demonstrates, their failure to do so would have consequences: "Not failinge hereof, as you will answer the contraire at your perill" (folio 104). Such information concerning the presence of the Guilds compromises the notion of the implicit agreement of all sections of Elizabethan London to play their part in the event. Furthermore, it questions the idea of the spontaneity of the celebration that is said to have characterised the procession. The Guilds were simply ordered to follow certain instructions.

16.

Returning to the theme of audience, perhaps because it would have generally been constituted by common people, they are absent in Machyn's and Il Schifanoia's accounts. These recorders of the event, members of the higher orders of society, perhaps viewed the procession in such a way as to remain blind to the presence of the mob. It is possible that the crowds of "adoring subjects" were simply not seen, or not recorded, because it was felt that they were not important. Alternatively, perhaps they were not recorded because they were, in fact, rather quiet, rather uncelebratory, as the crowd had apparently been in 1533 for the entry of Anne Boleyn (Smuts 76).

17.

Whatever we wish to surmise regarding this absence, the reading of these documents compromises Mulcaster's text, especially in terms of what it actually

makes out of the status of the audience. The emphatic manner with which Mulcaster represents that presence is particularly apparent in certain sections of the procession where Elizabeth continually has difficulty in hearing and requests the crowd to be silent to enable her to hear what is being said (to her) at the pageant devices. Elizabeth is shown to be interested in listening to the lessons that were being enacted, thus giving her the impression of being a good and obedient sovereign, one who takes the views of her subjects into account. Her ability as an effective actress is also stressed in this context, as is her skill in manipulating the crowd. Finally, the fact that there was so much cheering is interpreted as an indication of the love felt for her by her subjects. However, not only are the crowds absent in the other accounts of the procession, there is also no mention of the Queen having to halt and quieten anybody, or having to send a messenger forward to request silence at each pageant device as she approached, as it appears in Mulcaster:

And ere the Quenes Majestie came wythin hearing of thys Pageaunt, she sent certaine, as also at all the other Pageauntes, to require the People to be silent. For her Majestie was disposed to heare all that shoulde be sayde unto her. (44)

The final section of Mulcaster's pamphlet is particularly interesting in this context, and reveals in its textual form the constructed nature of his undertaking. This section takes the form of an addenda or an appendix and is entitled "Certain notes of the Queenes Majesties great mercie, clemencie, and wisdom, used in this passage" (58). This appendix contains a number of examples of the Queen's interchanges with certain members of the crowd during the procession, and lists her responses to certain situations and comments she had overheard. Among other things, she cheers up a crying man, smiles at the mention of the name of her own father and confirms the authority of the city. These various examples attempt to personalise the Queen, to underline her caring nature, and to instil a sense of her integrity through communicating the nobility of her thought even when expressed spontaneously. The fact that they are tacked on to the end of the record of the procession induces the perception that they could, in fact, have been invented events. They appear almost as an afterthought, as though her humanity and approachability had not been made apparent enough in the main body of the text. Yet again however, none of these events are present in the other eye-witness accounts of the procession, neither in the main texts nor in the form of appendices. This is another example of that absence noted above, but now with an added dimension. For stress should be laid upon the fact that the report of Il Schifanoya is a very full description of the procession and the pageants performed for the Queen. As such, it is relevant that, within the context of such a full description, certain defining moments and events (for Mulcaster) are entirely absent.

18. The importance of re-reading Mulcaster's pamphlet becomes clear in the light of the fact that his delineation of the audience, as well as his version of the constitution of the pageant devices, have been transmitted throughout history, being reproduced in a manner characterised by a focusing upon the dominant and dominating figure of Elizabeth. This conventional reading of the procession began almost immediately, as is demonstrated by its coverage in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, where it is evident that Mulcaster's pamphlet has simply been reproduced word for word. It begins:

At hir entring the citie, she was of the people receiued maruellous intierlie, as appeared by the assemblies, praiera, wishes, welcommings, cries, tender words, and all other signes which argued a wonderfull earnest love of most obedient subiects towards their souereigne. (4: 159)

The text continues in this manner, mutual love obviously once more being the overriding theme. Holinshed commissioned his *Chronicle* in 1570, and it finally appeared in 1577, and was for many years regarded as historically accurate. The propagandist nature of this work is underlined however by the fact that it merely reproduces Mulcaster's report. It is important also in the way that, through this reproduction, it initiates the construction of a credibility around the truth-value of the events as produced by Mulcaster. An incremental integrity is apparent in the casting as "truth" of the initial "truth" of an earlier text, a reality that is visible in the further transmission of those "truths" to our own day. In his influential study of *The Reign Of Elizabeth 1558-1603*, a part of The Oxford History Of England series, J. B. Black demonstrates precisely this process of transmission, whereby assumed knowledge is passed off as fact. Regarding the pre-coronation procession he writes: "From the first day of her arrival in the capital ... the young queen revelled in the enthusiastic loyalty of her subjects, feasting their eyes with equipages....The popular rejoicing reached a climax on the eve of the coronation..." (5-6). This is typical of the sort of statement regarding the record of events that has traditionally appeared in historical writings, as is clear from the influential works of J. B. Neale, E. C. Wilson, Frances Yates, and Roy Strong. This is further evidenced by that most highly regarded examination of processions to date, David Bergeron's *English Civic Pageantry 1558-1642*, where, despite the disclaimer that Mulcaster's pamphlet is indeed "a marvellous piece of propaganda" in which "Elizabeth is seen in an extremely favourable light" (13) he writes that from "Fenchurch to Temple Bar the sovereign has moved through the city amid the shouts and acclamations of London's citizens" (22). This behaviour demonstrates "a give-and-take ... an intimacy of reaction," so that one "is impressed with how the elements of actor, audience, and honoured guest fuse into a single compound of entertainment..." (15).

19. This kind of admiration reaches its peak in the more hagiographic, popularising studies of Elizabeth such as Alison Plowden's *Elizabethan England: Life In An Age Of Adventure*. Here there is an attempt to bring the occasion to life, filling it with pathos and melodrama: "It was a cold January day, with flurries of snow in the air and muddy underfoot, but no discomforts of cold or wet feet could dampen the enthusiasm of the Londoners as they waited to greet their Queen..." (13). Plowden grounds her observations in a historical context by then quoting from a "contemporary account," the author of which (Mulcaster) she does not name, nor indicates had written this account on a commission. She continues: "Bells pealed, musicians played and everywhere the crowds cheered in ecstasy as they caught their first glimpse of the slim, red-headed young woman in her sumptuous robes..." (15). Much of the contemporary account is further referred to until the procession comes to an end: "And so, as the winter dusk closed in, borne along on a great warm emotional wavecrest of love and joy, England's Elizabeth came home..." (17). Plowden's study happens to be one of the most pervasive accounts of the pre-coronation procession, and is certainly one of the most accessible. It would indeed be possible to suggest that its status as popular history disqualifies its being taken seriously, and that its methodology and its aims do not require the attention to bibliographical detail that more scholarly studies do. The desire behind its use here is an attempt to outline the wide range that this conventional knowledge covers, the success which typifies the transmission of this body of evidence. And, with regard to Plowden's absences, it is interesting to note that Stephen Greenblatt, when quoting from the very same source in an attempt to support his theory of Elizabeth as successful actress and processions as successful sites for impressing the population, informs us that it was written by "one observer" (168). There is no mention in Greenblatt's analysis, one of the most important modern academic studies of the period, of who this observer was, nor indeed of the status of his contemporary account.

20. The failure of Greenblatt and Plowden to state the ideological positioning of their source material is important in terms of a further, similar lack that is discernible. For while those scholars who acknowledge their use of Mulcaster further agree that they are drawing upon a text characterised by its function as propaganda, they immediately allow a slippage that enables them to accept much, if not all, of what it says as fact. Thus we can read Bergeron's disclaimer about the pamphlet being "a marvellous piece of propaganda," and then, within the same sentence, that it is "in addition ... a record of the events..." (*English* 13). As such, it is necessary to take it seriously not just as a record of events, but as propaganda also. Indeed, given the evidence presented above, Mulcaster's record of Elizabeth's pre-coronation procession should not primarily be regarded as a record of events, but rather as a work of propaganda.

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