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## Volume Five

# *The Many Lives of William Shakespeare Biography, Authorship and Collaboration*

edited by

William Leahy and Paola Pugliatti

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## Editorial

The idea of this volume was born in 2014, when celebrations of Shakespeare centenaries started to take place. In the month of April, a Conference entitled ‘Shakespeare 450’, celebrating the four hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Shakespeare’s birth, organised by the Société Française Shakespeare, took place in Paris. On that occasion, the editors of the present volume chaired a seminar whose intent was to discuss issues of authorship, co-authorship and collaboration, the achievements (and pitfalls) of attribution studies, as well as the theme of biography, which we considered a different but complementary issue aiming at the construction of authorship, or at least of the Author.

In the call for papers, we stressed the problematic nature of all these themes, both when oriented towards the reconstruction of texts and when directed towards the construction of the authorial persona. The contemporary increase in and technological development of attribution studies and the surge of biographies published during the last twenty years appeared to us as part of the same project of authentication: on the one hand, attribution studies – especially when computer-assisted – promise to identify that which is irrefutably (scientifically?) Shakespeare, the outcome of which possibly leads to the restoration of the ‘genuine’ text created by Shakespeare’s sole genius; on the other, biography aims at reaching the Author by giving body to an idea of the Person.

At the same time, however, and in mute opposition to the mainstream tendency of attribution studies, a new ‘disintegration’ theory is gaining ground. This trend of study, rather than considering the texts themselves and identifying and isolating the various hands which may have taken part in their composition, re-reads the whole process of the production of plays, from plot-writing to performance, intending to show that the writing of early modern English theatrical texts was, in the final analysis, a ‘play-patching’ (Stern 2009) by several hands working in collaboration. Thus, as has been argued in the case of the Italian *Commedia dell’Arte*, which was an experience in which the apparently authorless text seemed to be created during performance as a joint collaboration of the players, the figure of a ‘collective author’ is emerging also as far as Shakespearean theatre is concerned. The idea is that of a ‘dispersal’ of authorship and of author-ity (Masten 1997), which tends to replace the doubling or tripling of identifiable and separable hands which is at the basis of attribution studies. However, as we evaluate this quasi-heretical point of view, we should acknowledge that the shift in perspective it suggests may have consequences on the way in which we regard and assess texts and on the way in which we describe the material organisation of the Elizabethan-Jacobean theatrical enterprise; and it also – and more importantly – may

have consequences on the way in which we conceptualise the idea of the Author and authorship itself. In addition to these caveats, and as a further threat to the identification of the ‘genuine’ hand of the author, in the case of early modern texts, manuscripts of which have not been preserved, we should consider the additions and idiosyncratic options and habits introduced by what Roger Chartier calls ‘l’esprit de l’imprimeur’ (2015); that is, the intellectual component of the decisions taken in the printing house and the many and diverse traces it left on the printed text.

Traditionally, an Editorial should explain what each of the contributions achieves and how the issues discussed by authors and their points of view respond to the whole project. However, Professor Chartier has done this for us as editors in his superb Introduction, devoting space and attention to each of the texts, with an insight and knowledge of both general and particular problems that we would never be able to master. What remains for us, therefore, is simply a retrospective glance at the occasion on which our project took shape and an explanation of the way in which we decided to organise the whole volume.

Speakers at the Paris seminar with their papers, and the audience with the numerous interventions from the floor gave life to an intense debate that confirmed the relevance and topicality of the issues proposed. Many of the papers presented on that occasion appear in this volume, with the addition of other essays gathered in the months that followed the Paris Conference. What became clear, both at the conference itself and subsequently, when collecting the various contributions for publication here, was that the aspects of Shakespeare studies which appeared in our call for papers – Authorship, Biography, Collaboration – are not only arenas of great contestation, but are indeed those which, at this moment in time, are at the forefront of progressive cultural and literary criticism of Shakespeare and his works. Further, the work being undertaken in these fields is so varied, so specific and so topical that the three proposed categories simply could not contain all of the essays submitted. It is for this reason that we have decided to ‘expand our brief’ and organise our submissions into the four categories shown.

Naturally enough in the year of the 400<sup>th</sup> centenary of Shakespeare’s death, and after Roger Chartier’s ‘Introduction’, we begin the volume with ‘Biography and Biographism’, a section which attends to and discusses many of the characteristics and properties of what is probably the most plenitudinous genre/sub-genre in the history of literature. It is very likely that this genre/sub-genre will expand exponentially in this year of celebration of Shakespeare’s life and thus the essays within this section are a timely intervention in this whole (contested) field of study. This is followed by what would appear to be the more conventional study of ‘Authorship, Co-Authorship and Collaboration’, but which, given the contributions therein, is anything but conventional. This category is the register of emerging and significant approaches to the study of Shakespeare’s writings and indeed to the whole notion of authorship itself.

This field of study has become so fertile in recent years that the approaches taken to the subject matter here are many and varied. A number of these essays border on classification as ‘Attribution Studies’, our next section, a field which has seen a re-emergence of interest not witnessed since the great studies of the early twentieth century. We have categorised them thus in an attempt to identify and capture the essential theoretical underpinning of the various essays. Our final section, ‘Appropriation and Authorship’ discusses the construction of authorship by early readers and editors, in the process fusing our earlier groupings, the contributions therein looping back perhaps in a circular re-connection with our first section on biography in their (unstated) preoccupation with that most important of analytical concepts in the context of Shakespeare, the ‘author function’ (Foucault 1987). In this circularity and this plenitude, the many essays contained within this collection demonstrate that in this year of the marking of the fourhundredth centenary of the death of Shakespeare, more than one life (and the work of more than one author) will be celebrated and remembered. We will be commemorating not just the life of one man, perhaps not *even* the life of one man. Rather, we will be commemorating the historical, social, personal and cultural uses to which this man and his works have been put. We will be celebrating not the life, but rather ‘The Many Lives of William Shakespeare’.

We wish to express our gratitude to the friends and colleagues who presented and discussed their papers at the Paris seminar and agreed to publish them in the present volume, and also to those who later joined the project; to the numerous audience that, on that occasion, enlivened the debate with interventions that were in many cases passionately polemical, thereby convincing us that the topicality of the issues raised deserved publication in a substantial volume; to our referees for their constructive criticism that, in many cases, helped significantly to improve the quality of the articles; and to the Journal Manager, Arianna Antonielli, and her unique, dedicated team of student-editors that once again made the publication of *JEMS* possible.

Special thanks go to Luca Baratta, John Denton and Alessandro Melis for their invaluable collaboration.

William Leahy and Paola Pugliatti

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# PART ONE

## Introduction



# Everything and Nothing: The Many Lives of William Shakespeare

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## *Abstract*

The essay is devoted to an analysis of the contributions gathered in this issue of *JEMS*. It begins with the scarcity (or total absence) of literary archives and autograph manuscripts for the English playwrights of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (and among them Shakespeare). Such a diagnosis leads to stress the conditions ruling the composition and publication of plays: collaborative writing, reuse of the same stories and commonplaces, use of the author's name as a commodity, publication based on memorial reconstruction, prompt books, or corrupted copies, etc. The consequences of these practices (so different from the romantic textual ideology of the author's singularity, originality and propriety) are discussed in relation with the criticism of the traditional criteria of attribution studies and the operations necessary for writing the literary biography of an author without (literary) archives and (quite) any autograph remains (whence the discussion about Shakespeare's signatures, his holograph – or not – will, and his hand in the manuscript of *Sir Thomas More*). Two perspectives could enrich these issues: on the one hand, a literary geography of Shakespeare's works mapping the publication and circulation of the performances, editions, and later translations of his plays; on the other hand, comparative approaches locating the specificity (or not) of English drama and Shakespeare's plays within the European context of Spanish *comedias* and Italian *commedia dell'arte*.

*Keywords:* Attribution Studies, Author's Hand, Biography, Collaborative Writing, Publication

'There was no one in him', but 'nobody was ever as many men as that man'. Thus Borges, inspired by Keats, designates, in his story *Everything and Nothing* the tension which is intrinsic in all Shakespearean biography. To be all human beings, both on the stages and on the pages, and to be nothing. This nothing is, in the first instance, the nothing of archives. Documents proving his purchase of estates, either in Stratford or in London, his activity as a moneylender and the suits brought against bad payers, or the allotment of his heritage in his will of March 1614 are not missing. What is missing are the traces of his aesthetic creation, those of his thoughts and feelings, the first drafts of his works, the letters, the personal diaries, or the memoirs which make genetic criticism and literary biography possible.



Such absence is not unusual. Before the eighteenth century, archival sources which permit us to retrace the paths or the hesitations of fictional writing and to inscribe them within the sorrows or the blisses of authors' lives are rare. Certainly, as Diana Price recalls, for some of Shakespeare's contemporaries, traces of their writing, either epistolary or literary, as well as numerous signatures, have survived. But, as she equally highlights, for none of them first drafts or jottings, the tokens of the writing toil (Greg's 'foul papers') have survived; nor, generally, the copies used by printers, or – with the only exception indicated by Paola Pugliatti – the scripts or 'plots', which summarised an intrigue later developed by the composition of the play. The manuscripts that have survived are 'fair copies', clean copies, generally written by professional scribes and, sometimes, by the playwrights themselves.

The autograph manuscripts left by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English playwrights cannot therefore be considered as the equivalent of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century novelists' first drafts. Authors acted as scribes of their own works in order to present and give to their patrons or protectors copies of a text which could be also the object of a printed edition. Their manuscripts may, then, be located, paradoxically, among the copies compiled by professional scribes that constitute the majority of early modern literary manuscripts. This is the case, for instance, in five out of the six manuscripts of *A Game at Chess*, or in those of three other plays by Middleton: *The Lady's Tragedy*, *Hengist, King of Kent*, and *The Witch*. Five of these manuscripts have been copied by the same copyist, Ralph Crane, who was also employed by Shakespeare's company. In this sense, playwrights must be considered as copyists of themselves, and their manuscripts must be considered not as the traces of the writing process, which is the main object of genetic criticism, but as copies of the work meant either for the protectors or for the companies. They cannot be distinguished from the productions of scribes who, too, composed elegant copies for presentation and proposed to the readers the more or less numerous copies of what Harold Love calls 'scribal editions' (2007, 103).

The absence of properly literary archives becomes intolerable when the author is one of the geniuses consecrated throughout the centuries, one of the most rare 'ocean men', universal because solitary and unique, as Hugo said in his *William Shakespeare* (1864). Thence, as Andrew Hadfield strongly indicates, the insuperable tension between the post-Romantic view of the writer and the absence of documents that might allow us to follow the development of his genius. Thence, again, the divergence between the modern conception of 'literature' and the circumstances of composition of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century poetic or dramatic works.

The order of literary discourse established in the eighteenth century is founded on the individualization of writing, the originality of the works and the idea of intellectual ownership. These notions achieve their association at

the end of the century, by the time of the writer's consecration, of the fetishistic exaltation of the autograph manuscript and of the obsession for the author's hand that became the guarantee of the work's authenticity. Shakespeare and his contemporaries composed plays and poems within a different discursive system. It stood on very different practices: collaborative writing, as was required by patrons, by the companies, by the theatre entrepreneurs, or pursued by the playwrights themselves; the re-use of stories already told, of shared commonplaces, of inherited formulas, or, also, the continual revisions or continuations of ever-open works. It is within this system of constraints and creative opportunities that Shakespeare composed his works. It is also within this system that, very early, the construction of Shakespeare's *persona* as poet and, later, playwright began. But this process goes together with the strong conscience of the collective dimension of all textual productions (not only theatrical) and of the distinction between the writer's activity and the uses of the author's name, as underlined by Donatella Pallotti. If the name is not marketable it does not appear, and the plays and poems remain anonymous; but, if it becomes famous, celebrated, respected, then it can be handled as a 'commodity', as a commercial argument, printed on the title page of works that the writer has not written, or that only contain a few texts by him.

Since 1598, Shakespeare's growing reputation, witnessed by the often-quoted *Palladis Tamia* by Francis Meres, encourages booksellers and printers to make a vendible name visible. There are several tokens of this. On the one hand, the name of Shakespeare appears on the title-pages of reprints of previously published plays which did not bear the author's name: thus, the Quarto editions of *Richard II* and *Richard III* in 1598, or that of *1 Henry IV* the following year. On the other hand, Shakespeare's name or initials appear on collections of poems where he is only one author among others (this is the case of *The Passionate Pilgrime*, published by Jaggard in 1599, which is said to be 'By W. Shakespeare', while the anthology only contains five poems by him); or on plays which are generously attributed to him (and which, in fact, will become part of the Shakespearean corpus since the second issue of the third Folio in 1664, before being excluded, with the exception of *Pericles*, by the eighteenth-century editors). The booksellers' assertion of Shakespeare's authorial authority is expressed in a paroxysmal, but unique form by the 1608 *King Lear* Quarto, whose first lines of the title are: 'M. William Shakespeare: HIS True Chronicle Historie of the life and death of King LEAR and his three Daughters'. The claim ('His' *King Lear*) is not to be attributed to the author's hubris, but it recalls a competition among stationers, since the issue, for Nathaniel Butter, was that of launching into the market his edition of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, at the expense of the one published in 1605 by John Wright, who had circulated the same story staged by another playwright.

The eagerness in mobilizing Shakespeare's name after 1598, however, should not forsake two strong realities concerning the publication of theatrical

texts. It is certain, in the first place, that this is not the case with all the printers or all the editions. Thus, the Quarto reprints of *Titus Andronicus* of 1600 and 1611, or those of *Romeo and Juliet* of 1599, 1609 and 1622, do not in any way mention their author's name. On the other hand, the playwright must, usually, share the title page with the bookseller publisher and the printer, but also with the theatrical company and, to a certain extent, the spectators, whether royal or not. This is the case with *Hamlet* Q1, which appeared in 1603, where the text's ascription to 'William Shakespeare' is accompanied by the indication of those who represented the play and where: '*As it hath beene diverse times acted by his Highnesse servants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Vniversities of Cambridge and Oxford and else-where*'. This is the case, even more significant, of *King Lear*'s Quarto, '*HIS King Lear, of which it is specified: As it was played before the Kings Majestie at Whitehall upon S. Stephans night in Christmas Hollidayes. By his Majesties servants playing usually at the Globe on the Bancke-Side*', which, all in all, means to inscribe the play's performance within the twelve-days' festivities cycle, and to evidence the royal protection. Therefore, even within the publishing logic which exploits the reputation achieved by certain playwrights, the published texts are still presented as a record of multiple collaborations.

The essays here presented allow us to deepen the nature of these collaborations. In the first place, as is done by Andrew Hadfield, it is necessary to distinguish among the collaborations in the composition of plays shared by two or more authors, those imposed by the theatrical practice, as shown by Henslowe's *Diary* and those, unconscious and involuntary, implied by the rivalries existing between playwrights. In the second place, following Tiffany Stern (2012), it is necessary to detail the modalities of collaboration as regards writing. Eilidh Kane, in turn, distinguishes the 'consecutive collaboration' which transforms a 'plot' into a play, or which enlarges or corrects a text which already exists, and the collaborations in which two or more authors compose, at the same time, in a form of 'co-writing', the different parts (acts, scenes, passages) of the same play.

These distinctions are connected to many essential questions. Which are the works that were composed in collaboration and by whom? How can we distribute the different parts of a text among the playwrights who collaborated in writing it? How should we position Shakespeare's writing practices within the pervasive paradigm of collaborative writing? On the basis of meticulous analyses, Eilidh Kane confirms the collaboration between Shakespeare and Middleton in *Timon of Athens* and Marina Tarlinskaja Shakespeare's share as co-author, in 1592, of *Arden of Faversham*, whose second author is perhaps Thomas Kyd, and as sole author of the 'Additions' to *The Spanish Tragedy* in the 1602 reissue. On the contrary, Darren Freebury-Jones tends to think that *2 Henry VI* is by Shakespeare alone, while Diana Price questions his presence in *The Book of Sir Thomas More* and challenges the generally accepted identification

according to which the 'Hand D' in the manuscript would be his. Gary Taylor, in turn, restates his certainty which leads him to acknowledge the hands of Shakespeare and Fletcher in *Double Falsehood* by Lewis Theobald and to conclude accordingly that both playwrights collaborated in the lost play *The History of Cardenio*, represented in 1613, of which Theobald kept some vestiges in his adaptation published in 1728.

Beyond the conclusions of these case studies, what is important is the critical discussion that is here developed about the criteria utilised by 'attribution studies'. The older criteria, even before resorting to the statistics allowed by electronic databases, are the differences in spelling, in the contractions, in exclamations, and the lexical associations, the 'word sequences', or the 'multi-word units' which are typical of this or that author. Three kinds of criticism are here addressed to these traditional procedures of textual attribution. The first refers to the very documents these procedures utilise. In the vast majority of cases, the authors' assumed preferences can only be read on the pages of printed editions. But between the author's hand and the reader's eye, the interventions which transform the text are numerous: those of copyists who compose the manuscript's fair copy for the censor or the printer, those of 'copy editors' who prepare the copy used in the printing workshop, those of typographers who compose the text according to their preferences and habits or to the constraints imposed by composition by formes<sup>1</sup>, and not *seriatim*. As highlighted by Marcus Dahl, the exceptional case of the play *A Game at Chess* by Middleton, of which several manuscripts are extant, shows that the decisions of the scribes who copied the work prevent a doubt-free identification of the spellings, or of the contractions found in printed editions as if they were assured 'authorial markers'. It is possible to acknowledge that certain authorial preferences resist the text's transformations entailed by the process of publication itself. However, the instability or uncertainty of those conclusions which establish the attribution of texts on the basis of the authors' spelling or lexical preferences remains, and, as is underlined by Joseph Rudman, the difficulty of giving a scientific statute to stylistic statistics persists.

A second kind of criticism is related to the very writing practices themselves. These, throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, are located within an aesthetic norm that is not that of originality, but that of invention within imitation. Consequently, all playwrights used the same rhetorical forms and the same linguistic formulae. Christy Desmet underlines the fact that several rhetorical styles are available to authors – for instance, the

<sup>1</sup> Many books were composed, not according to the order of the text, or *seriatim*, but by formes – that is, by setting types for all the pages that were to be assembled within the same wooden frame, or *forme*, in order to be printed on the same side of a sheet. An example of this practice, that allowed to print the pages for one side of a sheet before the pages for the other side were set but required a previous casting off the copy, is Shakespeare's 1623 *First Folio*. Cf. Gaskell 1972, 40-43.

style of brevity and rapidity which is used in *Hamlet* Q1. Different authors may thus employ the same style and, thus, may wipe out their peculiarities in works written in collaboration, whereas the same author, in relation to the play's genre, or to its main destination, for the stage or for the print, may vary their writing accordingly. Lene Buhl Petersen, in turn, insists on the orality of the transmission of the plays, on the stage and by the actors, that should lead us to identify, as happens in the case of folkloric tales, those lexical associations that are 'ready-made units' common to a whole linguistic community, from rare and original combinations that may indicate personal invention.

A third kind of criticism addressed to 'attribution studies' laments the fact that they restore the idea of the authors' individualization in works which erase it and which are the outcome, as Jeffrey Masten (1997) maintains, of a collaboration between playwrights who were affectively linked, in their writing and also in their life, and who must not be separated. The re-examination of the case of Shakespeare, as performed by Katherine Scheil, allows us to deepen this observation by reflecting on the places in which the writing was done. In London, Shakespeare took part in all forms of collaboration imposed by the theatre: with other playwrights, with other shareholders of his company, with the players, with the mighty and with audiences. But, while it is true that he wrote in collaboration perhaps more frequently than we suppose, he composed however by himself most of his plays (perhaps twenty-eight out of thirty-seven), in particular those written between 1604 and 1612, when none of his plays seems to have been written in collaboration. Hence the hypothesis that his large house of New Place in Stratford, bought in 1597, was certainly the site of a writing activity removed from the constraints (or the pleasures) of London. The divide between the collaborative networks of the capital and the family environment and literary milieu of Stratford implied frequent travels between these two places. Katherine Scheil suggests that the collaborations prior to 1604, or those that belong to the last years of Shakespeare's life do not necessarily imply an immediate proximity among the different authors of the same play. According to Rosalind Barber, this presence in Stratford, that was more important than has been thought, did not however imply the use, in his works, of a lexical repertoire characteristic of Warwickshire.

Conscious of the limits and uncertainties of the traditional criteria employed to attribute scenes or passages, several authors suggest new ones. Thus, for Eilidh Kane, the bent of each author for certain 'patterns of figurative language', certain images or metaphors may either confirm or invalidate some attributions made on the basis of 'authorial markers'. Thus, according to Marina Tarlinskaja, the 'versification analysis' identifies every playwright's own way to place the accents, to mark the syntactic breaks, or to end the lines in their construction of the iambic pentameter. Thus, and in a way which is more daring and risky, the suggestion by Thomas Betteridge and Gregory Thompson of an attribution methodology inspired by the rehearsal technique

of theatrical troupes, which is based on hearing the acknowledgement of the 'sound of Shakespeare'. Such original attempts bear witness of the fact that, although challenged, attribution studies remain intense, undoubtedly because it is not easy, even not possible, to get rid of the romantic conception of literature, that constructed the author as the unique, energetic and sacred creator. Shakespeare's biographies are a further testimony of this.

These, of whatever kind they are, cannot be separated from the mutation that imposed a new way of considering the relationship between the authors' lives and their works. Since the eighteenth century, literary works are no longer conceived as based on the reutilization of plots already written, the quotation of commonplaces, shared because sublime, or the necessary or wished-for collaborations. They are by now conceived as original creations expressing the most intimate, the most personal feelings of the writer, linked to his or her most personal experiences. The first consequence of this mutation was the desire to publish the works of the same author by following their chronological composition, in order to grasp the development of his or her genius; the second was the writing of literary biographies.

As regards Shakespeare, and as has been shown by Margreta de Grazia (1991 and 2014), Edmond Malone was the first to associate the two projects. He based his *Life of William Shakespeare* on authentic documents, breaking with the compilations of anecdotes inaugurated by Nicholas Rowe in his 1709 edition. He proposed the first putative chronology of Shakespeare's works, published in his 1790 edition. Consequently, the plays must be published in the order in which Shakespeare composed them rather than according to the division between 'Comedies, Histories and Tragedies', lastingly inherited from the 1623 Folio. Boswell followed Malone's wish in his 1821 edition of Malone's 1790 edition, but he made an exception for the 'Histories', that are still arranged according to the chronology of the kings, as if sovereigns were forever more important than their poet.

But the double task addressed by Malone was not easy, given the absence of autograph documents left by Shakespeare (with the exception of a few signatures and, maybe, of his will). It required that one drew upon the only procedure available in order to write authors' biographies in the absence of authorial manuscripts: to locate the works within the life requires finding the life in the works themselves. In place of archival documents, it was thought that the plays and sonnets should be considered as sources of information on the author's life. After Malone, none of Shakespeare's biographers could evade this vicious circle, connected to the retrospective use of a literary paradigm constituted only during the eighteenth century, that imposes categories that are anachronistic for works composed within a textual production and circulation system that was profoundly different.

As shown by William Leahy, the contrast between the richness of the work, that is 'everything', and the blank of the life, of which almost nothing

is known, the 'nothing' that has been pointed out by Keats and Borges has many consequences that cannot be ignored by Shakespeare's biographers. The idea of recovering the life within the work forces the biographer to carry out an exercise of historical imagination which multiplies hypotheses and conjectures and establishes possible relationships, but that are not witnessed by any document. In this effort to reconstruct a past reality that cannot be caught, biography becomes the self-portrait of the biographer, who projects onto Shakespeare's imaginary life his or her own obsessions or nostalgias. It is this 'narcissistic identification' that renders acceptable an impossible challenge: that of writing the life of a writer with no archives as if the archives existed, and that founds the interpretation of the writer's works on some personal experiences of which no sure traces are extant outside the works themselves. Thus, as Leahy writes, 'this nothing (the man) does not exist except as a fictional product of the everything (the works)'. This observation is equally well-grounded both for scholarly biographies and for fictional works: they both build up a Shakespeare 'of the mind', who is either the singular hero of an extraordinary story, that of a glove maker's son, with no heritage and qualification who became the leading playwright of his time before ending his life as a rich country gentleman, or – as in the plays and movies analysed by Robert Sawyer – a man caught in multiple nets of constraints, social dependencies and necessary collaborations as many other men.

The tension between the specificity of individualization and shared practices equally characterises the different forms of writing, starting from the signature. Diana Price underlines the difficulty of holding the signature as the expression of a person's identity at a time when it could be delegated to somebody else, both in parish registers and in notarial documents, and when the same individual could sign with different signatures – which is the case with Shakespeare's six signatures, applied on four documents (three being applied on the will), between 1612 and 1616. Hence, for Price, the impossibility of establishing that the 'Hand D' in the manuscript of *Sir Thomas More* is Shakespeare's.

Another example of the relationship between personal writing and shared practices is given by the readers of Shakespeare's poems in John Benson's 1640 edition. Inside or outside the book, they appropriate the poems by annotating them in the margins, by changing their titles, by suppressing certain of their lines, or else by copying some of them into manuscript miscellanies. But, as Jean-Christophe Mayer shows, these writing practices that present the traces of personal readings are inscribed within certain collective models that are dictated either by moral or religious requirements, or by the intellectual technique that asks readers to extract from each book they read certain universal truths or commonplaces. Manuscript writing and printed editions thus share the same practices that produce collections of maxims, anthologies of excerpts, or compilations that gather works of different authors. Donatella

Pallotti recalls that, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the verb 'to compile' may mean to compose an original work – this was the case of Jaggard, when he published *The Passionate Pilgrime*, and of the readers who gathered in their miscellanies certain hand-copied works.

The superb dossier gathered in this volume also suggests two more original and promising research perspectives. The first is that of Shakespearean geography; a geography that would not simply be, *à la manière de* Franco Moretti (1998), a geography of the circulation of Shakespeare's works, based on a chronology and a cartography of the Shakespeare editions, translations, performances or adaptations; or else a geography internal to the plays, that considers the places where the plots are developed or the characters' travels and wanderings; but also a geography of the creation itself. It is true to say that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have not experienced the fetishisation of writers' homes that, from the eighteenth century on, became the destination of literary pilgrimages and touristic curiosities. However, to track the places of the composition of the works and the constitution of what Katherine Scheil designates as a 'geography of collaboration' could be important. In the case of Shakespeare, few are the documents which allow such a geography, divided between London and Stratford, but for other writers the data available may help to situate the writing of their plays, poems or novels in different spaces: the cabinet, the library, the theatre, the court, the public square.

Such a geography might have a place in a second research perspective, the one suggested by a comparative approach. Paola Pugliatti outlines it by confronting the theatrical practices of the *commedia dell'arte* and those of the English stage, and by stressing the companies' organisational forms, the part left to improvisation (which is not absent in the English theatrical performances, as is shown by the Clowns' jokes, that are condemned by Hamlet in the 1603 Quarto edition), or to the role of women (players and often authors in Italy). This analysis is an invitation to expand the space of comparisons, for instance considering the Spanish *comedia* (women are actresses in it, but, as spectators, they have their own place in the *corrales*, the *cazuela de las mujeres*), or the French theatre between the end of the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth (which has nothing similar to the London public amphitheatres, but practises, as English playwrights do, the technique of commonplaces and the permeability among genres). Such an approach may suggest an expansion in a morphological perspective, by comparing the places and the audiences of the theatre, but also in historical terms, by tracking the companies' itineraries, the reciprocal borrowings among playwrights, the translations or adaptations. Such a perspective could avoid the anachronisms sometimes introduced by literary history. For example, if, in Shakespeare's time, English drama is largely Spanish, since it often draws its plots from the *comedias*, the short stories and novels (as proven by Shakespeare and Fletcher's – and Taylor's – *Cardenio*, inspired by *Don*

*Quixote*), on the contrary, the English repertoire is almost unknown outside of England, apart from some performances by English troupes in the Low Countries and the German Empire.

It is only in the eighteenth century that Shakespeare starts to be known and translated in France and, if one thinks of Voltaire, not always to his advantage.

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PART TWO  
Case Studies



# *Biography and Biographism*



# ‘the dreamscape of nostalgia’: Shakespearean Biography: Too Much Information (but not about Shakespeare)

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## *Abstract*

Shakespearean biography has a long and colourful history, with a new edition of the life of the world’s greatest ever poet published at least once a year. Yet, the records are hardly full with details of his life and are indeed almost non-existent with regard to his *writing* life. If this is the case, then what are these various biographies made up of? What are they constituted by given that, it seems, their basic foundations are absent? This essay considers these questions in the context of the most important intervention in the field of Shakespearean biography in recent years, Brian Cummings’ essay ‘Shakespeare, Biography and Anti-Biography’. The conclusion it reaches is that the entire sub-genre can be regarded as ‘the dreamscape of nostalgia’, constituted by works of fictional narcissism.

*Keywords:* Biography, Everything, Narcissism, Nostalgia, Nothing

## 1. *Introduction*

In what is perhaps the most significant intervention in recent years in the scholarly study of Shakespearean biography, in his Folger Institute Shakespeare Birthday Lecture, 2014, entitled ‘Shakespeare, Biography and Anti-Biography’, Brian Cummings ponders at length the relation of biography to literature. His desire is, he says, through the consideration of the sub-genre of Shakespearean biography, to ‘have something to say about the art of biography ... and certainly about the art of literary biography in particular’ (1).<sup>1</sup> He articulates this desire in broadly philosophical terms:

<sup>1</sup> Page numbers as given in this article refer to the printed version of Cummings’ lecture that was readable at the address given in the ‘Works Cited’ section by the time the link was accessed (September 2014), and that was later substituted by an audio version.



It is in the desire to memorialise life through writing, and the simultaneous apprehension that memory is withdrawing from us all the time, such that memory is synonymous with loss, that the oblivion that surrounds Shakespeare comes to have its most painful meaning. We mourn for Shakespeare even as we are surrounded by him; we cannot get rid of him, and yet we have forgotten almost everything about him. (2)

Cummings goes on to say, albeit in ambiguous terms, that this desire to remember Shakespeare can lead to a reliance on ‘what psychologists call “false memory.” We remember things not the way they were, but the way we want them to have been’ (2). He proceeds to demonstrate his point by suggesting that certain ‘monuments’ commemorating Shakespeare embody this will to false memory, such as the Birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon and the Globe Theatre in London. He considers also as his third monument the very building in which his talk is taking place, the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington D.C. His conclusion regarding this particular monument is that, of all three it gives us the greatest access to Shakespeare as it ‘lays its foundations on the First Folio’ (3). This monument is, he feels, for this reason the most significant as the ‘First Folio outgrew its author. It is the First Folio that now best represents the life’ (4). As such, he continues,

the life of Shakespeare is posthumous. As an act of homage and mourning, his friends turned him into a book, and the book still lives among us. My argument, in brief, is that we respect this fragmentariness of historical memory, and also return to the literary, return to the book itself. (4)

Cummings makes two multi-dimensional and critically important points in this opening of his talk, both of which I will argue define the constraints of Shakespearean biography as a sub-genre today. The first is that captured in this ‘return to the book’ as he calls it, this ‘retreat’ to the First Folio and the ways in which biographers now regard this version of the collected works as the ‘best [way to] represent the life’ of Shakespeare. I will argue that confusion between the literary output and the factual life of Shakespeare is not quite, as Cummings puts it, founded in this will to ‘false memory’, but rather in a conscious will to mythologise. The difference between the two is crucial as, in this mythologising process, we witness the ‘nothing’ that is Shakespeare’s recorded writing life being constituted by the ‘everything’ that is contained in his plays and poems. I shall return to this point. The second linked argument of Cummings lies in this idea of the literariness of the form and the ways in which this allows biographers to ‘remember things not the way they were, but the way [they] want them to have been’. This, I will argue, gives rise not only to a will to mythologise, but also to a trend in which we see the substitution of the biographer him/herself for Shakespeare, in the process producing a defining generic characteristic of

this sub-genre: a tendency to narcissism. In this process, we see the 'nothing' of Shakespeare's recorded writing life filled with the 'everything' of the respective biographer's narcissistic urges. I will argue that these two points are implicit in the perceptions of Cummings and enable us to say something valid about the sub-genre of Shakespearean biography as a whole. It is interesting to note that, in his formulation of the various arguments in his talk, Cummings finds himself dismissing much biographical writing itself and instead considering what novelists have said regarding Shakespeare's life. It is to this fiction that I will first turn my attention.

## 2. *Everything and Nothing*

In his short 2009 article, entitled 'What Was He Really Like', which ponders the true nature of Shakespeare as an artist, Stanley Wells quotes Keats' famous analysis of the character of the poet: 'It is not itself – it has no self – it is *everything and nothing* – It has no character – ... A poet is the most unpoetical of any thing in existence, because he has no identity – he is continually in for – and filling some other Body ...' (109; my emphasis). Wells goes on to say that if 'Keats is right in his assessment of what makes a poet, encapsulated in his famous phrase "negative capability", we might well throw up our hands in despair before the task of trying to discover what Shakespeare was really like' (109). Wells plays with the idea of there being little or no point pursuing any kind of biography of Shakespeare given that there is essentially no information to go on, that there is 'nothing' there. But then, like so many biographers of Shakespeare who suggest the same, just one page later he puts that 'nothing' to one side and imagines Shakespeare growing up:

As a boy he howled and wept, smiled and laughed. He played games with his siblings and was irritated when they could not keep time in their recorder playing. He walked to and from school with his satchel on his back, he learned to read and write, to swim and to ride a horse, and he struggled with Latin grammar. He went regularly to church, and thought, as any intelligent boy would, about what he heard there. He ate and drank, belched and farted, urinated and defecated (you can substitute the Anglo-Saxon terms if you wish). As adolescence came on he began to experience erections and to feel desire. He masturbated and, earlier than most of his contemporaries, copulated. He suffered from headaches and toothache ... (110)

And on he goes, taking us right through in fact to Shakespeare's death. Wells provides a lot of information here about this Warwickshire lad, and much of it is very personal; but of course, as we know, it is all made up. None of what Wells says is recorded and none of it can be verified. As the passage progresses we could indeed wish that Wells would resist his imaginative urge as we feel that perhaps there is, as the modern everyday parlance would have it, 'too much information'. Perhaps; but none of this information is

about Shakespeare. Rather, it could be surmised that this ‘information’ is about something else and informs us about the very practice of producing Shakespearean biography itself.

What Wells has produced here and the motivation for its production is, I would suggest, a microcosm of the entire sub-genre of Shakespearean biography. The vast majority of biographers of Shakespeare would also admit that there is ‘nothing’ (or almost nothing) there – and then proceed, normally over hundreds and hundreds of pages to articulate the fact that there is in fact ‘everything’ needed for a comprehensive biography of Shakespeare. Anthony Holden provides us with an excellent example in the opening sentences to his 1999 biography of 366 pages, entitled *William Shakespeare: His Life and Work*:

There are no great biographies of Shakespeare, according to the American scholar Harold Bloom, “not because we do not know enough, but because there is not enough to know”. Such resonant truths have never deterred well-meaning bardolaters, both amateur and professional, from climbing on each other’s shoulders ... (1)

Or perhaps we need look no further than Stephen Greenblatt’s famous opening to his own 2004 biography, *Will in the World: How Shakespeare became Shakespeare*, ‘Let us imagine ...’ (23), as he begins his 430 page journey. This is indeed a most strange phenomenon, not least because the problems involved in attempting to write a biography of Shakespeare have been well-rehearsed over the years. There unquestionably are ‘profound lacunae in the biography of western civilisation’s greatest writer ... [which] produce enormous difficulties when attempting a coherent narrative tracing the life and work of this individual’ (Leahy 2010, 116). Some of these difficulties, such as the fact that we have no records for Shakespeare at all between his baptism and his marriage some eighteen years later should certainly, I would suggest, give Wells pause for thought; we have nothing on record for the period he imagines above. There are other profound difficulties when considering a biography of Shakespeare and none of the records which do exist help us to understand his life as a writer. There are no records of his receiving payment for writing, no manuscripts, diaries or letters; indeed, even trying to get some idea of the correct chronology of the plays is doomed to failure. As Diana Price has shown, when we examine the records of Shakespeare’s life, we generally find him deeply involved in business dealings and not in literary pursuits. Thus, the very first record in existence of ‘Willelmus Shackspere’ in London in 1592, has him lending £7 to John Clayton (Price 2001, 15). In 1597, he is listed as ‘owing taxes’ in Shoreditch, London, and as purchasing ‘New Place, a big house, for at least £60 in Stratford-upon-Avon’ (15-16). In 1598, he is ‘listed as owing taxes ... in Bishopsgate’, and in Stratford is ‘cited for hoarding grain during a famine’ (16). In the same year he is recorded ‘as a tax defaulter’ and as receiving ‘ten pence for selling a load of stone’ (16).

In 1599, he becomes a shareholder in the Globe theatre and in 1600 'takes action to recover his 1592 loan to John Clayton' (16). In 1602, he buys land and a cottage; in 1604 he 'sells malt to Philip Rogers' and lends him two shillings. He then 'sues Rogers to recover the amount owing plus damages' (17). In 1605 he 'invests £440 in tithes' (17) and in 1608 he 'sues a man named John Addenbrooke for a debt of £6 plus damages' (18). In 1614 he 'is listed as a landowner in Stratford, and his name appears in a series of documents concerning the proposed pasture enclosures in nearby Welcombe' (19). Finally, in 1616, 'Lawyer Francis Collins draws up and witnesses Shakspeare's last will, which makes detailed provisions for the distribution of real estate, clothes, silver, and other assets. Shakspeare's wife is left "the second best bed"' (19). These are just some of the business dealings on record for Shakespeare, where we see him speculating, buying and selling property; constantly busy as a money-lender; willing to go to court to claim any money lent that was not repaid on time and with interest; evading tax; hoarding grain and enclosing land. We do not find him, in the records at least, writing plays.

The problems in composing a biography of Shakespeare the writer are thus legend and some of the most important Shakespearean scholars have acknowledged this. Samuel Schoenbaum raised the matter nearly 50 years ago: 'Perhaps we should despair of ever bridging the vertiginous expanse between the sublimity of the subject and the mundane inconsequence of the documentary record. What would we not give for a single personal letter, one page of diary!' (1991, 568). E.K. Chambers likewise avoided any attempt at a life of Shakespeare, as many years before him did the great Edmond Malone. Despite this acknowledgement by some of the most influential scholars, biographies of Shakespeare have always been popular and continue to appear regularly; indeed, nowadays at least one is published every year. In the last fifteen or so years we have seen such books by Michael Wood (2003), Stephen Greenblatt (2004), Peter Ackroyd (2005), James Shapiro (2005), Bill Bryson (2007), Charles Nicholl (2007), René Weis (2007), Jonathan Bate (2008), William Baker (2009), James Shapiro (2010), Catherine Alexander (2011), Lois Potter (2012) and many more. This list contains, broadly speaking, scholarly biographies; there are also any number of children's editions, exhibition editions, fictionalised versions and so on. Indeed, the field is so densely populated that leading Shakespearean scholar David Bevington felt moved enough to produce a history of the form in his book, *Shakespeare and Biography* (2010). No doubt, the year 2016, the 400<sup>th</sup> year since Shakespeare's death will see this output reach some kind of peak. One would assume, given the fact that the basis for any coherent narrative of Shakespeare's writing life (such as records) does not to any extent exist, that the production of biographies of this kind would be next to impossible. Such seems not to be the case, however, and one ponders why this should be so. Perhaps the consideration of the dichotomy of what Keats calls the 'everything' and the

‘nothing’, so common when authors and scholars consider Shakespeare, will enable us to understand this phenomenon more clearly.

In *Bingo* (1974), his play about the last days of Shakespeare, Edward Bond depicts a disillusioned and unhappy husband and father, a man so dissatisfied with his life achievements that he finally kills himself. It is a grim play and the portrayal of Shakespeare is so unremittingly unsympathetic and unflattering, that we can perhaps understand why this work by one of the most highly respected playwrights of the last 50 years or so is rarely performed and discussed. It is an original and convincing piece of theatre all the same and does give us a picture of Shakespeare very different to that imagined by any other writer, whether fictional, critical or biographical. Michael Coveney, writing in *The Independent* newspaper in 2010 captures this, reviewing a rare revival of the play in Chichester, UK, where he says that Shakespeare ‘is frozen immobile in a Warwickshire landscape of domestic unhappiness, civil riot and dispute over the enclosures. He has 100 acres and many rents, and he does nothing. He writes nothing. He cares for no one. He kills himself’ (Coveney 2010). While the play says something quite profound about (this version of) Shakespeare and the society in which he lived, it is its final traumatic moments which are of interest in this essay. I reproduce them at length:

*Shakespeare.* How long have I been dead? When will I fall down? Looking for rings on beggars’ fingers. Mistakes ... mistakes ... Was anything done? (*He takes another tablet.*) Years waiting ... fed ... washing the dead ... Was anything done? ... Was anything done? (*He looks at a tablet in his hand.*) Dead sugar. (*He swallows it.*) Was anything done?

*He falls from the chair onto the floor. JUDITH comes into the room. She sees SHAKESPEARE. She controls her panic. The funeral bell begins to toll. It is close, but not so loud as in the garden. JUDITH goes to SHAKESPEARE and quickly makes him comfortable on the floor. He twitches and jerks.*

*Judith.* Nothing. A little attack.

*She hurries to the bedside stand. She searches through it agitatedly. She throws papers aside. She tears some. SHAKESPEARE whimpers and shivers.*

*Judith.* (*to herself as she searches*): Nothing, Nothing.

*JUDITH runs to the door and shouts up.*

Nothing. If he made a new will his lawyer’s got it.

*JUDITH runs back to the bed. She is crying. She searches under the pillows. SHAKESPEARE has killed himself.*

*Judith.* (*crying*): Nothing.

*JUDITH searches under the sheets. She kneels down and searches under the bed. She cries. She stands and searches under the mattress.*

END

(Bond 1974, 51-52)

This is a depressing end to a surprising and disturbing play, structured by Shakespeare’s constant refrain of ‘Was anything done?’ This becomes

Shakespeare's mantra in his dying moments, the final mundane words of a man who produced so many words of so much beauty in his life. They form, along with their further articulation earlier in the short final Act – where they are repeated another four times; thus eight times in all – the final poetic repetitions of this greatest of all poets. Yet, as in so many of the words produced by Shakespeare, they resound with ambiguity and with potential meaning. On the face of it, they would seem to refer to his doubt as to the impact of his life's work – which he probably regards as 'civilising' – on a society (as depicted in the play) that is wholly divided and debased. This point is made especially clear in Judith's actions as her father lies dying, searching desperately for a revised will that she could financially benefit from. However, given the use of the passive tense, Shakespeare's words are rich in potential. The answer to his repeated rhetorical question: 'Was anything done?' within the confines of the play is precisely that which Judith herself repeats a number of times; 'Nothing'. Indeed, this is the most commonly used word in the play, as demonstrated, for example, in Shakespeare's earlier dialogue with a visiting Ben Jonson:

*Jonson.* What are you writing?

*Shakespeare.* Nothing.

*They drink.*

*Jonson.* Not writing?

*Shakespeare.* No.

*Jonson.* Why not?

*Shakespeare.* Nothing to say.

*Jonson.* Doesn't stop others. Written out?

*Shakespeare.* Yes.

*They drink.*

*Jonson:* Now, what are you writing?

*Shakespeare:* Nothing. (29-30)

Given that 'nothing' (spoken by Judith) is the final word of the play, as well as its repetition throughout, Bond wishes to communicate something important through its repeated use. He seems fixated on this word when considering Shakespeare, determined to clarify that the richness of the plays and the poems, their depth, breadth and profundity are hard to connect with this desolate and desperate man, this being suffused with 'nothing'. As Bond says in his introduction to the play:

Shakespeare's plays show this need for sanity and its political expression, justice. But how did he live? His behaviour as a property-owner made him closer to Goneril than Lear. He supported and benefited from the Goneril-society – with its prisons, workhouses, whipping, starvation, mutilation, pulpit-hysteria and all the rest of it. (ix)

For Bond, a Marxist playwright working in a modern, capitalist society, Shakespeare the man appears at odds with the Shakespeare who wrote the plays and poems. For Bond, these great works of literature are ‘everything’, the man himself ‘nothing’. This dichotomy/contradiction would seem to be the very reason Bond attempted such a play; as some kind of rationale for the unbridgeable gap between the literature and the man, between this ‘everything’ and this ‘nothing’.

The same dichotomy that Edward Bond feels defines Shakespeare is interestingly mirrored by Henry James in his 1903 short story, ‘The Birthplace’ (2001). In the story, Morris Gedge, the custodian of the said Birthplace (clearly modelled upon the Shakespeare Birthplace in Stratford-Upon-Avon) begins to doubt the ‘bardolatrous’ truth of what he is required to tell visitors to the attraction as he shows them around. These doubts crystallise over time and he begins to articulate them in a way not too dissimilar from Bond, in trying to make sense of the difficulty apparent when trying to match Shakespeare the man to his writings. This comes to a head when Gedge, conversing with a sympathetic visitor, says: ‘all I want – [is] to let the author alone ... there *is* no author; ... There are all the immortal people – *in* the work; but there’s nobody else’ (486-487). The dichotomy is clear in this exclamation and James delineates this, though more enigmatically, in an earlier exchange which closes section three of the story in a dialogue between Gedge and his wife. Gedge begins:

“Do you know what I sometimes do?” And then as she waited too: “In the Birthroom there, when I look in late. I often put out my light. That makes it better”.

“Makes what-?”

“Everything”.

“What is it then you see in the dark?”

“Nothing!” said Morris Gedge.

“And what’s the pleasure of that?”

“Well, what the American ladies say. It’s so fascinating!” (475)

In his Folger Shakespeare Library talk, Brian Cummings is very exercised by this particular exchange and by what he perceives as Gedge’s ‘moment of crisis’ (2014, 16). He writes:

Gedge ... is tragically caught up in the paradox of reading, of sharing at once the astonishing proximity with the writer that reading brings, and yet with it also the haunting sense of absence. The birthroom is an empty shell, yet it is also the place where Gedge’s imagination is brought to life. Sitting with his eyes closed, this is the one place where his mind is free and most full, he says. (17)

Cummings believes that for Gedge the birthroom is a ‘place of mystical sanctity ... an empty tomb ... and now the Gedges come to the terrible

conclusion that not only is nothing there, but nothing, especially not the birth of the master, ever happened there' (16). While this is all evidently true, and it is worth noting Cummings' repeated use of the word 'nothing', I do not believe that Cummings goes nearly far enough in this analysis. For it would seem that Gedge's realisation that 'nothing' is there is in fact liberating; it is not a crisis that he experiences, as Cummings would have us believe but rather an epiphany. Gedge is 'freed' by this understanding, not cast into a pit of depression by it. And though there is an air of the mysterious in James' story, it would seem that Gedge seeing 'nothing' makes 'everything' better. Or, more precisely, Gedge's recognition that there is 'nothing' in the sense that the author 'does not exist' makes 'everything' possible, and the dark emptiness that is the birthroom enables him the space, the intellectual freedom to see the truth. And so, for Gedge, most clearly, the thoughts of Keats are crystallised and the birthroom enables his understanding that the author 'is not itself – it has no self – it is everything and nothing' (Keats quoted in Burwick 2001, 40). And it could be possible to surmise that Cummings' perception of a crisis rather than an epiphany is perhaps his own contribution to the will to mythologise.

The phrase, 'Everything and Nothing' is, of course, the title of a famous short parable by Jorge Luis Borges, published in 1960. It is clear that Keats is the major influence on Borges in this piece, as Shakespeare is described essentially (according to Cummings' reading of Borges) 'as a cipher or an Everyman' (17). The strange dichotomy between the profound richness of Shakespeare's works and the profound absence of the author is something I have imagined elsewhere as a dichotomy characterised by there being two William Shakespeares; one who we could call 'Will of the Works' and the other 'Will of the Records' (Leahy 2014). In Borges' story, it is captured in the opening sentences:

There was no one in him; behind his face (which even in the poor paintings of the period is unlike any other) and his words, which were copious, imaginative, and emotional, there was nothing but a little chill, a dream not dreamed by anyone. (1964, 46)

Borges tells us that Shakespeare was all of his characters, was 'so many kings who die by the sword and so many unhappy lovers who converge, diverge, and melodiously agonize' (47). This echoes Gedge, of course, as does Borges when he says that as a man, a real human being, Shakespeare is nothing. At the end of his parable, Borges has him meeting God who, it seems has also read Keats when he says that Shakespeare is 'many persons – and none' (47).

In these great fictional contemplations of the clear tension between the richness of the works and the emptiness of the life of Shakespeare there is a recognition that there is perhaps 'no author' as it were. By this, I mean

there is a recognition that in biographical terms at least, 'Will of the Records' lacks significance when related to the works of literature he produced. It is clear that the received relationship between the two Wills is almost impossible to make or, as in Bond, the writer is devoid of the humanity that defines the works. Of the two Wills, the one is 'nothing' (Records) and the other, the one who 'does not exist' (Works) is 'everything'. Given this, it would seem, as Cummings says, that it 'is the First Folio that now best represents the life' (4). And *this* is the critical intersection when it comes to Shakespearean biography. For it is *here*, in this moment, at this interface of 'everything' and 'nothing', that the sub-genre of Shakespearean biography is brought into existence. It is here, as the richness of the works meets the poverty of the recorded life, where the complexity of the plays and poems meets the empty vessel that is the life of the author, that the sub-genre is born. And it is here that the empty vessel becomes filled with details, filled with anecdotes, filled with life events that did not, as far as we know, happen. It is here, for example, that Stephen Greenblatt (2004), Richard Wilson (2004) and Michael Wood (2003) fill the empty vessel with Catholicism; here that Katherine Duncan-Jones fills it with ungentle and unrecorded 'scenes from his life' (2001); here that Carol Chillington Rutter fills it with 'the [unevidenced] mental imprint of the grammar school' (2013, 144); here that René Weis (2007) fills it with a profound relationship with the Earl of Southampton; here that Stanley Wells (2009) has the empty vessel masturbating and copulating. And so on. But why is this? Why do biographers admit to the emptiness of this vessel and then proceed to fill it with supposition, anecdote, academic guesswork and aspects of their own obsessions? In the remainder of this essay I will attempt to answer this question.

### 3. The Tragedy of Arthur

Apart from the public appetite for biographies of Shakespeare, which seems to be almost insatiable and which cannot be underestimated as a driver for such output, biographers who together produce the works that make up the sub-genre of Shakespearean biography look to the plays and poems for biographical detail. In short, they build the life of Shakespeare from his surviving literary works. Indeed, these biographers have little choice but to do so if they wish to produce a biography of any length. As the actual records do not exist but the plays and poems do, the real literary life of the Bard is built from the imaginative literature he left behind. This point is perhaps most pointedly made by Park Honan, the author of the well-respected *Shakespeare: A Life* (1998), who states: 'my understanding of his [Shakespeare's] growth or development was helped by research, but as much as anything else by his plays' (2009, 106). It would be possible to claim that such reference to the creative works of a writer is both a normal and an appropriate methodology when writing a biography. However, the problem for Shakespearean biographers is that the factual context within

which this use of the creative works can be structured is simply not there. As Scheil and Holderness remind us, 'the confessional material that is their [biographers'] stock-in-trade is virtually absent: there are no letters, diaries, or directly reported conversations; no testimonies from family, friends, and neighbours...' (2009, 1). This being the case, the orthodox scholarly biography – like those listed earlier – can be said as a general rule to be characterised by its use of the fictional to construct the real.

This is not the only fictional element that characterises Shakespearean biography, however. One other element that typifies the form is the use that is made in the construction of his real life of anecdotes that are widely accepted as either having no basis in truth or which can in no way be verified. Certain examples, such as the idea that Shakespeare was a Catholic are central to Michael Wood's biography, to Stephen Greenblatt's and Richard Wilson's. This is the case, despite the fact that there is no evidence that Shakespeare was a Catholic at all. Or the argument, central to the René Weis' biography that the Earl of Southampton paid Shakespeare £1000 for writing *Venus and Adonis*, which again has no basis in fact. Indeed, there is no record that the two men knew each other, ever met or ever spoke. The most important point here, however, is that *Weis knows this* and yet continues to build a significant aspect of his biography around the argument that the payment took place. Likewise, the case with the anecdote of Shakespeare being caught deer-poaching on the land of Sir Thomas Lucy as a young man; with his drinking bouts in the company of Ben Jonson; with his relationship with the 'Dark Lady' of the sonnets; with his (sexual) relationship with the Earl of Southampton; with his (non-sexual) relationship with Queen Elizabeth I; and so on. As one wades through these sorts of claims, one cannot help but be reminded of Michel de Certeau, describing contemporary mediated reality: 'Fiction defines the field, the status, and the objects of vision' (2002, 187). Yet, Shakespearean biography is supposed to be a field determined by the interpretation of facts, one where truth and accuracy – at least broadly speaking – are important. But, as Certeau continues and as can be applied to this field of study: 'fiction claims to make the real present, to speak in the name of the facts and thus to cause the semblance it produces to be taken as a referential reality. Hence those to whom these legends are directed ... are not obliged to believe what they don't see ... but rather to believe what they see' (187). In Shakespearean biographical writing, we are presented with a Shakespeare who is not real, but it would seem we believe what we see. The sub-genre of Shakespearean biography is therefore, I suggest, characterised by the constant iteration of fictional forms and what could be regarded as simulations. In order to investigate this further, I will follow Cummings' example and enlist fiction itself to help understand and explain Shakespearean biography. Rather than turn to any of his examples, I will look at a recent novel by the American writer Arthur Phillips, *The Tragedy of Arthur* (2011).

In order to fully grasp the relevance of this novel to the subject under scrutiny in this essay, it is worth outlining its (convoluted) plot in some detail. The title of the novel, *The Tragedy of Arthur* refers to the novel itself, to a newly discovered five act play by William Shakespeare which is reproduced in full in the book and, this being a quintessentially postmodern work of fiction, also to the upbringing of the narrator, naturally enough named, like the author himself, Arthur Phillips. The title also refers to the adult life of the narrator's father, the central figure in the novel and who is also named Arthur Phillips. The topic of the novel is clarified for us in that Arthur (the narrator) shares a birthday with Shakespeare (though 400 years apart), has a twin sister (twins of course being important in a number of Shakespeare's plays), has a mother who is called Mary Arden Phillips and is a writer. The novelistic aspect of the book essentially forms the introduction to the newly discovered play which as a whole is supposed to replicate a typical scholarly edition. The publishers (Random House both in reality and in the novel) have asked the narrator to write this introduction although he is not a scholar; he is a novelist. He does not do this easily, but it is essential for the novel as a whole to work. The narrator explains: 'I admit that this seems a long way from an Introduction to a newly discovered Shakespeare play; the essay is fast becoming an example of the most dismal genre, the memoir. All I can say is that the truth of the play requires understanding the truth of my life' (35). This last sentence touches on our subject for this essay, the 'truth' of the life in relation to the 'truth' of the play(s) and I shall return to it. Before doing so, more explanation of the actual story is needed.

The main thrust of the plot lies in two things: the deep and pervasive love of Shakespeare expressed by the narrator's father and sister and the fact that the father is a con-artist who spends most of the narrator's formative years in prison on various charges of fraud. Near the end of his life and in prison, Arthur senior shares with his son a secret treasure that he has kept for over 50 years; a previously unknown play by Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Arthur*. The narrator, his father and his sister wish to publish the play and reveal it to the world – which they do as part of the novel, faithfully and with full scholarly annotations provided by one Professor Roland Verre (a jokey reference no doubt to the Shakespeare Authorship Question and the championing of Edward De Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, as the author of the Shakespeare canon) and the introduction takes us through the uncertainties of the narrator in relation to the authenticity of the newly discovered play, given his father's history of fraudulent practices.

The play itself, which takes up the latter quarter of the book, is presented as being proven as a Shakespeare play in a clever move by the author concerning the tricky matter of verification. The Random House editors preface the entire novel with this justification:

Many people have worked with great dedication to make this book possible. It could not have come to pass without the academic leadership of Professor Roland Verre, who has overseen the research and tests that have confirmed the play's authenticity and William Shakespeare as its sole or primary author. Professor Verre submitted the text to a battery of computerized stylistic and linguistic examinations, solicited the critical opinions of his peers on three continents, and supervised the forensic study of the 1597 document's paper and ink. (viii)

They go on to thank their advisory board which consisted of 'dozens more professors of English language and literature, theatre directors, linguists and critics, historians and Shakespeare experts', and include among these actual living academics: 'The contributions of Professors David Crystal, Tom Clayton, and Ward Elliott (whose Claremont Shakespeare clinic conducted the stylometry tests) demand particular recognition' (viii). An accurately reproduced title page to the 1597 quarto is also lovingly included.

The novel as a whole is an interesting and supremely clever consideration of a number of themes, from truth and authenticity to familial love and betrayal. Each of these themes (and more) is considered with a good deal of complexity and without definitive answers or sentimentalism. The narrator is surrounded by lovers of Shakespeare but says about himself: 'I have never much liked Shakespeare' (1). This allows him to examine with great clarity 'the daffy religion that is the world's mad love of him [Shakespeare]' (2) and his conclusions here are interesting. For he feels that it is we, Shakespeare's readers, who find ways through endless discussion to 'justify' Shakespeare's writing. In a good example of this, the narrator quizzes his sister Dana, an actor, when she and her fellow actors discuss the motivation for Gertrude in *Hamlet* to insert an inappropriate sexual innuendo in one of her speeches in the play:

Look, look: you have a weak spot where Will's not thinking very clearly, and the character rambles on, and Will sticks in a joke ... [that] ... doesn't belong there. Any editor would cut it. It breaks the rhythm and the logic of the scene.... If I wrote it, they'd send me home to re-work it. Instead, what do you all do? You talk it out until you make it make sense for him. He wrote it, so he must be right.... You ... form a committee to offer him your help, and when you've done the best you can, consulting old books of other would-be helpers, when you actually come up with some clever solutions, you marvel at *him* for composing such a subtle moment. (94)

While this, one of the book's central themes, is a satire on academic and scholarly readings of Shakespeare's works, it also functions to explain the trend which, over years, has led to the mythologisation of Shakespeare. He continues: 'You're part of a vast, unconscious conspiracy of enablers, all of whom operate without central control but to the same end: to make a man who died four centuries ago into a god' (95). Phillips (the author) plays this out in the reproduction of the play itself, where the scholarly footnotes by Professor

Verre are full of such circular arguments and justifications. In this example, the text of the play does not scan, leading Verre to write in footnote 23:

Arthur's mysterious business in York is never entirely clarified in the text. I can see four alternative explanations for this: (1) The 1597 text is corrupt. (2) We are meant to see the arrival of Philip in Act IV as the denouement to a sexual adventure here in Act II. (3) There was some stage business in the original production which is now unclear to us (and modern directors will no doubt find their own interpretations). (4) Shakespeare allowed a mystery to sit at the heart of his character's behaviour, as he later did in *Othello*, for example [RV]. (298)

The novel is interesting in a wider sense on the very nature of academic work in the field of Shakespeare studies and how, historically, this sort of questionable analysis and circular reasoning has become both accepted and orthodox. Arthur, the narrator, will have nothing to do with it: 'These professors! Once they wager their egos, they never quit. More than a reputation or tenure is at stake. They bet their souls' (238). The narrator simply cannot abide what has happened: 'William Shakespeare was ... a man, a working writer, one of many. So why is he now forced on us as the single greatest? How did he pull this scam, and who abetted?' (225). His answer to this is clear: the scholars. And this will to mythologise, so clearly outlined by Phillips in his novel goes part of the way to explain the everything/nothing dichotomy discussed earlier, in the sense that in these analyses the understanding of the works is immersed in the proposed intentionality of Shakespeare. The text is discussed and then its perceived dynamics transplanted onto the author's intentions, discussed in terms of what the man was attempting to say and, finally, in the belief that what he was saying (and the way that he said it) was always, in some sense, perfect. But this is only part of our explanation. The other part is explained by considering the central structuring element of Phillips' novel: a father who is defined by his pathological narcissism.

Very early on in his 'Introduction', Phillips captures the essence of the rediscovered Shakespeare play and, by extension, of his novel itself:

In *The Tragedy of Arthur*, King Arthur is portrayed as a charismatic, charming, egocentric, short-tempered, principled but chronically impulsive bastard. He is a flawed hero, at best, who succeeds then fails as a result of his unique personality. Unable to find a solid self upon which to rely, he ricochets from crisis to crisis, never quite seeing how he caused the crisis until it is too late, and then flying so far to the opposite extreme in a doomed effort to repair his mistakes that he inevitably makes things still worse. This description also fits my father, Arthur Edward Harold Phillips. (9-10)

In essence then, this is not primarily a play about Shakespeare, or even about a lost and found Shakespeare play. It is a novel about the character of Arthur

Edward Harold Phillips, the narrator's father. More concisely, it is a novel about a character who is the embodiment of this pathological narcissism. It is a novel about this aspect of pathology traced through the impact the chaotic life of this character has on those around him and his inability or unwillingness to recognise this impact. It is not in the manifestation of this chaos that Shakespeare is important in the novel, but rather in a further aspect of the narcissistic tendency that he becomes significant. As Lasch writes: 'According to Kernberg, [narcissists] "often admire some hero or outstanding individual" and "experience themselves as part of that outstanding person." They see the admired individual as "merely an extension of themselves"' (1979, 84-85). Arthur senior identifies very closely with Shakespeare his hero, to the extent that he lives his life according to the nobility and creativity he finds in the works and, in the end, to the extent that he wishes to pass off his own creative work as that of Shakespeare. He aspires to emulate Shakespeare and, in doing so, in the classic way of narcissists, he believes himself to be more noble, more creative, more special than those around him; indeed, more special than most of humanity. To be precise then, *The Tragedy of Arthur* is a novel about Shakespeare to some extent, about Shakespearean scholarship to some extent, but especially it is a novel about narcissism. This is why it is so pertinent to the argument of this essay regarding the nature of Shakespearean biography and the tendency for biographers to find their (heroic) selves in Shakespeare's unrecorded writing life.

#### 4. 'the dreamscape of nostalgia'

When considering writing his own biography of Shakespeare in the late 1960s, Samuel Schoenbaum says the following:

I embarked on my work without any preconceived theme or thesis ... But I quickly recognized the truth of the observation that biography tends towards oblique self-portraiture. How much must this be so with respect to Shakespeare, where the sublimity of the subject ensures empathy and the impersonality of the life-record teases speculation! I remember once mentioning this pattern to the late John Crow in the familiar columned portico of the British Museum, and he reminded me that Desmond McCarthy had said somewhere that trying to work out Shakespeare's personality was like looking at a very dark glazed picture in the National Portrait Gallery: at first you see nothing, then you begin to recognize features, and then you realize that they are your own. (1991, viii)

Schoenbaum goes on to find that Shakespeare 'biographers' recurring self-identification with their subject' supplied him 'with a leitmotif' (viii), one which begins indeed with Shakespeare's first biographer, Nicholas Rowe; 'Is it too fanciful that perhaps this author ... is gazing into his own mirror and finding there his subject's reflection?' (89) When the Romantics looked

at Shakespeare, it would be fair to say that what they essentially found was themselves – thus the obsession with Hamlet; marginalised, melancholic and misunderstood, like them a poet of nature rather than artifice. Schoenbaum makes the point forcefully when considering Thomas Carlyle’s famous lecture on Shakespeare, ‘The Poet as Hero’ (1840): ‘Carlyle fixed on Shakespeare . . . and . . . created a polemic – it is no biographical sketch in the usual sense of the term – memorably devoid of facts and dates’ (188). But even more important in this current context is what Schoenbaum goes on to say: Shakespeare ‘has always been a spring in which men discover, Narcissus-like, their own reflection, and so we need feel no surprise that Carlyle, who came from Ecclefechan peasant stock, should seize on the myth that Shakespeare was a “poor Warwickshire Peasant”’ (188).

This ‘Narcissus-like’ process is one we see continue today. One need only consider *Will and Me: How Shakespeare Took over My Life* (2006), the autobiography of the Artistic Director of the Globe Theatre, London, Dominic Dromgoole. The back cover blurb reads: ‘Shakespeare has always been a big part of Dominic Dromgoole’s life. This is the story of how he stumbled, shambled and occasionally glided through the years with the bard as his guide . . . Along the way he shows us what Shakespeare’s rough-and-ready genius can teach us . . .’. What we find in this book is a rough-and-ready (though romantic at heart) Dromgoole finding a rough-and-ready (though romantic at heart) Shakespeare – built up through reading the plays and poems. Gary Taylor, reviewing Stephen Greenblatt’s *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare* writes: ‘What purports to be an image of Shakespeare is really an idealised image of the biographer himself’ (2004, 9). Graham Holderness has noticed this tendency and considers it thoughtfully: ‘Restless under the constraints of the historical record, biographers end up telling us about many things besides Shakespeare, and filling the empty spaces with their own preoccupations’ (2011, 9). Holderness notices how Jonathan Bate describes a ‘rustic Shakespeare’ in his biography *Soul of the Age* (2008), much as the biographer sees himself (10). In contrast, he believes Peter Ackroyd depicts a Shakespeare whose temperament is ‘urban, secular, modern, rather than rural, pious and medieval’ (10). Ackroyd had earlier written *London: The Biography* (2001) and Holderness sees his Shakespeare as ‘more like a modern professional writer than an early modern dramatist; more like Peter Ackroyd himself, than like William Shakespeare’ (10). Holderness’ biography of Shakespeare, *Nine Lives of William Shakespeare* (2011) in which these views are expressed, is itself a case in point. Holderness attempts something different (he says) as the book consists of a scholarly essay on each of nine significant moments in Shakespeare’s life, followed by nine fictional narratives re-imagining these moments. The book is offered as a negotiation of the problematic nature of the sub-genre of Shakespearean biography itself, but could rather be seen as Holderness ‘filling the empty spaces with his own preoccupations’ (9). In 2002, Holderness attempted a fictional prose re-

writing of *Hamlet*, entitled *The Prince of Denmark* and his biography can be regarded as an opportunity for him to continue with his creative ambitions. In this scenario then, it becomes clear that when biographers look for the man Shakespeare they often find themselves in a narcissistic identification with the object of their admiration. They find, as Schoenbaum tells us, 'Narcissus-like, their own reflection' (1991, 188).

It is worth pointing out here that Schoenbaum and indeed all those critics who believe that biographers and scholars find themselves in Shakespeare are referring to the ways in which they find themselves in aspects *of the works*, not in the man; which they then transfer and project onto the emptiness that is the recorded writing life of Shakespeare. Graham Holderness demonstrates this at length in his contemplation of Stephen Greenblatt's reading of *Hamlet* in relation to the death of Shakespeare's son Hamnet in his essay 'Shakespearean Selves', where we see a close connection between Shakespeare's grief at a dead son mixed up with Hamlet's grief at the death of his father *and* Greenblatt's grief at the death of his own father (2010, 104-113). Given all of this, my contention then is that the crucial and defining aspects of Shakespearean biography as a sub-genre are twofold. Firstly, they rely on the fictional in building a life from the works, and secondly they are structured by the (often unconscious) narcissism of the individual biographer. Such would seem to be a common reality in the sub-genre of Shakespearean biography, the 'nothing' of the empty vessel of Shakespeare becoming filled with authors' fictionalised and idealised extensions of their own egos.

In his talk 'Shakespeare, Biography and Anti-Biography', Brian Cummings believes that we 'have constructed a biography ... of Shakespeare not so much to explain him, as to explain our relationship to him, his relationship to us' (17). If we return to our theme, for Cummings it seems that the 'everything' that fills the 'nothing' of Shakespeare is our culture's need for explanation of our relationship to and with him. That is no doubt true. However, again I do not feel that Cummings goes far enough. For although in his allusion to the significance of the place in which he is speaking, the Folger Library, now regarded as the 'home' of the First Folio, what he does not say, but what is clear is that we are actually involved in a process – the biography – that attempts to explain not our relationship to Shakespeare, but rather our relationship to Shakespeare's works. More specifically, it is a process that attempts to explain our relationship to and with the works *and* their relationship to and with us. We want to explain the works – their depth, their broadness, their intellectual span. This essentially is the driving force for Shakespearean biography then: to explain the works. Majorie Garber evocatively captures this drive for unity and wholeness in Shakespearean criticism as whole when she writes: 'What is it about ... Shakespeare ... that calls up this nostalgia for the certainties of truth and beauty – a nostalgia which, like (I would contend) *all* nostalgias, is really a nostalgia for something that never was?' (2008, 110). Garber goes on

to suggest that 'Shakespeare is the dream-space of nostalgia' (111), a phrase, I wish to claim, that captures the over-riding characteristic of the sub-genre. The suggestion is that the Shakespearean biographer, in their 'dreamscape of nostalgia' mirrors that realist process perceived by Linda Hutcheon as *Narcissistic Narrative*: 'The classic realistic novel's well-made plot might give the reader the feeling of completeness that suggests, by analogy, *either* that human action is somehow whole and meaningful, or the opposite, in which case it is art alone that can impart order or meaning to life' (2006, 19).

Thus Shakespearean biography is about bringing order to the 'chaos' of literary work, or at least, in Foucauldian terms about assigning 'truth' and thereby constraining the 'proliferation of meanings' (Foucault 1987, 119). It is about a desire for wholeness and bringing order and comfort. As Andrew Bennett writes, 'if authors don't exist ... we have to invent them ... we make them in the image of our desire for transcendent originary unity' (2005, 35). Marjorie Garber agrees; 'Shakespeare is ... the fantasy of originary cultural wholeness, the last vestige of universalism ...' (2008, 111). Shakespearean biography does not, in any way explain the life; it cannot. It is rather an attempt to explain the 'chaos' or the plenitude of the works, their amazing depth, breadth and diversity. The end product is, as we have seen, a genre which does not attend to its own constraints; it is not, essentially biography at all, but something rather more akin to that perception of Garber's 'dream-space of nostalgia' (2008, 111). *There* is the moment where we understand the dichotomy of the 'everything' and the 'nothing', where the overwhelming desire for order meets the narcissistic tendencies of the author, there where the plenitude of the works meets the emptiness of the life, there where as Arthur Phillips (the narrator) coins it, 'Shakespeare [becomes] the greatest creator of Rorschach tests in history' (94).

Before ending with a final statement regarding Shakespeare biography itself, I wish to suggest that this understanding of the narcissistic drive at the heart of this sub-genre can perhaps tell us something greater about Shakespeare studies as a whole and of the way in which Shakespeare is used in our culture. This suggestion is alluded to by Cummings, when he says that 'Shakespeare's life has always been a construction after the fact' (2014, 5). However, it is in fact Marjorie Garber who, once again, articulates it most perceptively. In her essay 'Shakespeare as Fetish', she writes:

But what makes Shakespeare fetishized and fetishizing, a scenario of desire that has to be repeated with exactitude for every generation, is the way in which he has come to stand for a kind of 'humanness' which, purporting to be inclusive of race, class and gender, is in fact the neutralising (or neutering) of those potent discourses by appropriation ... (2008, 118)

In this fetishisation perceived by Garber we see an important defining aspect of Shakespeare studies as social practice, in this use of Shakespeare as a register

of our contemporary concerns. As Michael Bristol says, 'the real Shakespeare ... doesn't actually exist at all, except as the imaginary projection of an important tradition of social desire' (1999, 490). And so Shakespeare becomes this register, this smorgasbord of contemporary social desire, through which we critical narcissists ponder those concerns which are pertinent *to us*, here, now. For us, Shakespeare is the 'ventriloquized voice of us all', or, to put it another way, we speak through Shakespeare, 'Narcissus-like' *about ourselves*. In terms discerned by Bourdieu (1993), Shakespeare becomes the legitimising cultural authority through whom we talk about ourselves to ourselves in a process which allows us to agree with Lasch (1979), that the Shakespearean scholarly community can be determined as being defined by its 'Culture of Narcissism'. In this process, the 'nothing' that is the recorded writing life of Shakespeare becomes filled by the 'everything' of the contemporary 'issues' of the scholar, issues filtered through the themes and characters of the works. The 'everything' is thus, in one sense, 'nothing' to do with Shakespeare at all, and each consideration of Shakespeare is merely an exercise in atomised and narcissistic ventriloquism. And when each paper ends it has no effect other than the beckoning of the next paper, which beckons the next and so on. Such is true, most particularly of the sub-genre of Shakespearean biography.

Arthur Phillips (the narrator) rejects all this. He writes: 'I don't hate Shakespeare ... But I cannot find myself in his works. I identify with none of them, no matter how many fawning critics bleat to me that he captured all of humanity in his eye and pen' (2011, 232-233). One need not hate Shakespeare to reject the narcissism at the heart of much Shakespeare criticism and which forms the very basis of the sub-genre of Shakespearean biography. But one must be brave to resist this dominant form of Shakespearean biography or, as I term it (with due acknowledgement of its reliance upon the idea of 'bardolatry'), 'bardography'. 'Bardography' is reverential and uncritical; is characterised by fictional, religious and narcissistic elements and tends towards a hero worship of its (reflecting) object of desire. Park Honan admits to 'Having a crush' on Shakespeare (2009, 103); Harold Bloom (1998) famously believed that Shakespeare 'invented the human'; Stephen Greenblatt exemplifies the form when he says that the 'work is so astonishing, so luminous, that it seems to have come from a god and not a mortal' (2004, 13). And, to end where I began, we can see this at work in that passage by Stanley Wells, with his dreamscape of Shakespeare farting, defecating and masturbating. To complete Wells' description of Shakespeare moving through life that began this paper:

He suffered from headaches and toothache, from bereavement and, no doubt, many of the other ills that flesh and spirit are heir to. He grew bald. He experienced joy and grief, envy and lust, boredom and ambition, pride and shame. He worried about money and how to earn his living, he had to make himself agreeable to people he disliked, to accept responsibility for his dependents, and to order his affairs. (2009, 110-111)

Wells does not, in this passage, look to the works for his man (though he does, brilliantly, elsewhere; see 2001); nor does he reiterate the same (fictional) story (though he does elsewhere; see 2002). Nor, indeed does he explicitly find himself in his subject of study (though he does elsewhere; 2008). Rather, in this passage I would argue that Wells, as is typical of this sub-genre, captures the true overarching reality of ‘bardography’, in the sense that imaginative prose is mobilised in order to fill page after page with information that tells us *nothing* of the subject being written about. It tells us something about its author and something too, about the nature of Shakespeare studies at this moment in time. It tells us what concerns this author and that there is nothing to say about the writing life of Shakespeare. It tells us that there is nothing and there is everything, and that this nothing (the man) does not exist except as a fictional product of the everything (the works). In ‘bardography’, this ‘dreamscape of nostalgia’, there is always a lot of information. Indeed, there is too much information – but not about Shakespeare.

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## William Shakespeare, My New Best Friend?

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### *Abstract*

New trends in biographical writing often make readers imagine that they can understand and directly experience the presence of historical figures as if they knew them intimately. The essay reconsiders Shakespeare's life and career in the light of these developments arguing that thinking that we can know Shakespeare well invariably leads to ignorance rather than enlightenment because the past can never be quite like the present. The post-romantic model of the lone genius or solitary author stubbornly remains even when critics accept that Shakespeare wrote collaboratively and that his work was created 'in company'. Examining Shakespeare's career and the conditions under which his work was produced reveals a writer who was always responsive to prevailing trends and whose writing has to be understood in its context. Shakespeare played an important role within his theatrical companies; worked with other actors; and always had one eye on what his fellow writers – and rivals – were doing, facts that are often obscured but which explain how he became what he was.

*Keywords:* Authorship, Biography, Literary Career, Shakespeare, Sonnets

It now appears impossible to imagine early modern history without recourse to fiction. In some ways this is a good thing: in times when the arts and humanities are under attack, when science models are being imposed on research into the humanities, and, most importantly, when the current economic hardships are pressurising high achieving students into making choices based on fear for the future, the generation of a measure of interest in a subject that does not have an obvious purpose or the promise of immediate rewards seems like a welcome relief. But we might want to pause and take stock at some point. Surely something is awry when the wealth of new books on the court of Henry VIII and the actions of Thomas Cromwell are judged in terms of Hilary Mantel's best-selling novels. Diarmaid MacCulloch's review of Tracy Borman's new biography (2014) opens with 'Thomas Cromwell's ghost must be blessing Hilary Mantel for her two novels so far, and one more to come, restoring him to a life by turns engaging and



intimidating' (2014).<sup>1</sup> The historical novel that has inspired the new crop of historical works is now held up as their exemplar and judge, a strange example of circular logic. Few readers and reviewers would judge scholars of Norman England in terms of Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* – well, at least not today.

The problem is that, however hard historians work to change our understanding of the past in terms of social, political, diplomatic, ecclesiastical, religious, local, environmental, popular, cultural, art or any other form of history, broadening our terms of engagement with times long ago, the great men and women always seem to pull us back into their orbit. History is invariably cast in terms of the dominant modern literary form, the novel, so that the life of, say, Queen Elizabeth, can be read alongside a fictional treatment of Æmilia Lanyer, as if they were almost the same thing, the only difference being the truthful nature of one and the imaginative cast of the other. Popular history increasingly looks like fiction, and popular fiction increasingly looks like popular history. As pressures are put ever more strongly on academics to engage with the public, the danger that a popular understanding of history and literature will subsume any academic resistance is obvious enough.

Indeed, the field where the most danger lies is in the writing of biography itself. When lives cannot easily be reassembled from the fragmentary facts, a familiar danger for anyone working on early modern figures, the biography is assembled as though it could be known (Hadfield 2014). Of course, this can be a legitimate enterprise, a case in point being the robust defence of filling in the gaps by the leading historian, Natalie Zemon Davis (2006), who had to work hard to reconstruct the life of Al-Hassan ibn Mohammad al Wazzan el Fassi (Leo Africanus). Zemon Davis took risks that a historian had to explain and defend but did so on the grounds that not writing al Wazzan's life was more problematic than actually doing so because it was necessary that a crucial hidden voice of Mediterranean history, that of a 'converso', was brought to light. Even so, it is a dangerous precedent and it is worth wondering whether the much praised reconstructed biography of John Aubrey, the father of biography, is really a good idea (Scurr 2015). One surely has to be a little worried about what has happened to the critical process of writing when reviewers praise a work because the author has become the subject's friend (with the implication that the reader can also be Aubrey's friend).<sup>2</sup> This may be one logical conclusion of Stephen Greenblatt's stated desire that he wished

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to the two anonymous readers for the journal who pointed out some errors and made useful suggestions.

<sup>2</sup> 'She describes him in her acknowledgements as a "wonderful friend", but *John Aubrey: My Own Life* makes it abundantly clear that she has been a wonderful friend to him, too' (Hay 2015, <<http://goo.gl/Ic4sHf>>, accessed 23 March 2015); 'Scurr allows us to feel we are in Aubrey's company, which is a generous gift indeed' (Harris 2015, <<http://goo.gl/KNWUKg>>, accessed 23 March 2015).

to speak with the dead, but it is surely not quite what Greenblatt meant or intended and is a popularising – and rather dangerous – extrapolation of one strand in biographical writing. Given the class-ridden nature of past English society, it is problematic to imagine that an ordinary modern reader could easily be the friend of Georgina, Duchess of Devonshire, Thomas Cranmer, or Aphra Behn. Moreover, should we even want to be friends with such people? Shouldn't we have enough of our own anyway? And surely learning about the past is more useful than empathising with it.

Imagining and reconstructing the past in terms of a series of people who seem to be like the people who we know and recognise is a common and deep-seated problem. It is comforting to think that we can effortlessly glide from our living room where we are reading to the adjacent rooms of the past but really a dangerous fallacy. The past is not a warm, comfortable place full of our friends, but another country entirely in which people did things differently. The problem becomes especially acute when we turn to Shakespeare and the vexed issue of his biography and its relationship to his writing. Shakespeare has been the subject of more biographies than any other writer even though there is not a great deal of information that survives about his life for us to reconstruct it easily. There are legal records, a fragment of his handwriting, birth and death records, and clearly a large circle of people who stand as witnesses to Shakespeare as actor, writer and Stratford burgher (Edmondson and Wells 2016). But the absence of personal letters – something that should really not surprise anyone who works on early modern England – means that there will always be a complicated and unsatisfactory link between the life and the writing, one that leaves matters open for speculation, informed, misinformed and deluded.

The real problem may be the need to have a life that we can hold onto as a means of anchoring the work in a real person. The process began in the eighteenth century as Shakespeare's already rising star grew to obscure all others (Taylor 1991). More and more pieces of information were collected in a variety of forms and all manner of ways until there was no clear distinction between known knowns, unknown knowns and known unknowns (Schoenbaum 1991, 1992). Shakespeare's life was constructed in terms of who it was felt important that he should be rather than who he actually was or might have been. Until the twentieth century Shakespeare was most frequently imagined as an untutored genius, a feature of his life and works that was regretted throughout the eighteenth century and seen as a limitation of his achievement, and celebrated throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth. This change should give pause for thought to all those writers, critics and enthusiasts who wish to see Shakespeare as their friend, especially because now the question often asked is whether a man who did not go to university could have written such erudite and well-informed works.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> I owe this point to many fruitful discussions with Neil Rhodes.

Even so, probably the most influential critical work of the post-war period was Jan Kott's *Shakespeare Our Contemporary* (1964), a rare case of a critical work which directly influenced stage and screen productions of Shakespeare when it was adopted by Peter Brook, for his versions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1970) and *King Lear* (1972). Kott's work still has much to recommend it but it runs the familiar risk of imaging that Shakespeare was really one of us in his prediction of the bleak ills of the Holocaust and understanding of the bestial sexuality that lay beneath every romantic illusion. Biographies similarly flirt with danger in closing down the gap between present and past. Anthony Holden's popular work (2000), for example, casts Shakespeare in the familiar role of man of the people, a good-natured boozy heterosexual who had no time for academic pretensions; Katherine Duncan-Jones' interesting work (2001), based on the known evidence, risked making Shakespeare into a modern cynic, motivated by the desire for gain through his shareholding and grain hoarding.

There are a number of issues that we need to consider when thinking about Shakespeare's life and its relationship to his works, issues that are far from unique but which assume a particular importance in Shakespeare's case given his pre-eminent cultural status and the level of interference and noise that such fame inevitably generates. Claims that Shakespeare is not the man/writer who people assume they know almost always cause irritation and distress because the ingrained assumption is that understanding the works serves to define the individual's identity. The first issue is to ask whether we can imagine writing drama in late sixteenth-century and early seventeenth-century England is a similar process to writing now. More Shakespeare plays are now assumed to be co-authored than ever, making the first folio of 1623 an unreliable guide as a record of his authorship even as it was a sign of his success and the recognition Shakespeare achieved in his lifetime because jointly-written works were attributed to Shakespeare (Vickers 2002). It is worth reminding ourselves at this stage just how many of his works appear to have been co-written.

Shakespeare wrote or co-wrote forty plays.<sup>4</sup> Of these, the following are now, at a conservative estimate, generally assumed to be jointly-authored: 1-3 *Henry VI*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Sir Thomas More*, *Macbeth*, *Timon of Athens*, *Pericles*, *Henry VIII*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and two more, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *King John*, have very close relationships to other plays of similar titles, which means that one or other version was revised from existing

<sup>4</sup> The figure can be disputed. I am including the lost *Cardenio* (but not *Love's Labour's Won*); *Sir Thomas More*; and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, but no possible apocryphal works such as *Edward III* or *A Yorkshire Tragedy*. It does need to be noted that some of these apocryphal plays must surely bear traces of Shakespeare's work which only serves to make my point more secure.

material.<sup>5</sup> Put another way, ten out of forty plays were created in co-operation with other writers: 25% of Shakespeare's dramatic career, quite possibly rather more, evidence which has informed important recent critical work. As Bart Van Es has argued in a major study (2013), what makes Shakespeare special and unique is the fact that he is always in company, working as part of a busy collaborative playhouse, his co-operation with other writers simply one part of his interaction with others who helped stage plays. Shakespeare was a central figure in a theatrical company where he was a shareholder; he collaborated with other writers; and he clearly also worked with actors for whom he wrote different parts and adapted his plays to suit their acting styles and preferences. As Van Es points out, the departure of the chief clown of The Chamberlain's Men, Will Kemp, for unknown reasons in 1599, and his replacement by Robert Armin transformed the nature of the plays that Shakespeare wrote and signalled a change in the company's policy and style of production. Actors obviously played a role in determining not just the parts they played but the nature of those parts, which suggests that, although it may be impossible to reconstruct the exact nature of the process, actors helped compose the drama in which they performed.

The point is that we do not really know how people wrote in early modern England, but we do know that they would have had little opportunity to write in isolation. Writing was undoubtedly a more co-operative activity than it later became when it was possible to have a room on one's own. Virginia Woolf, in *A Room of One's Own* (1929), was exceptionally astute in signalling the lack of private space as the central issue for writers in early modern England but her assumption that it was only women who did not have access to places where they could easily compose is probably slightly wide of the mark. The truth is that very few people had access to private space and one of the main aspects of early modern life that most people today would find most strange, alien and, probably, troubling, is the lack of privacy and the need to spend most parts of most days in the company of others (Orlin 2007). The advent of efficient chimneys with more than one flue enabled rooms to be heated from a single source and made it possible to divide houses up into smaller rooms. People could have some measure of privacy and house design changed to something more recognisably modern from the traditional medieval pattern of a large hall heated from a central fire – with smoke escaping through the thatched roof – the relatively open plan bedrooms situated on the second storey. There were concomitant advances in the technology of glass making which also made it easier to have individual rooms for different members of the household. Lighting became more efficient and cheaper which further increased the possibility of working alone. In early modern London the stark choice was between expensive

<sup>5</sup> On this last point see Clare 2014, 1-2.

wax candles and cheap but noxious ones made of tallow. It is reasonable to assume that anyone writing in the dark evenings was working surrounded by people either in a central area of a large house, or in a tavern.

It is at least arguable that such technological changes had as significant an impact on the history of writing and literature as more intellectual factors. In early modern England people were in company most of the time, whether they lived in towns or cities or in the country. The sheer volume of work in early modern England further meant that people simply had to co-operate and it is hard to imagine that producing plays for the theatre was any different from running a household. The problem with our fundamental assumption about literary writing, Shakespeare being perhaps the most important example, is that we think of an individual authoring a work even as we acknowledge that such a model does not really fit the known facts. Put another way, a post-romantic notion of authorship is imported backwards into a time when work and writing – especially writing for the theatre – was much more obviously collaborative than it has subsequently become.

What is especially confusing is that things changed rapidly even during the short period – just over twenty years – that constitutes Shakespeare's writing career. The first commercial theatre in England, the Red Lion, was built in Whitechapel in 1567, twenty years before Shakespeare began writing. Theatre only really seems to have become a mass pastime in London in the 1580s. Towards the end of Elizabeth's reign more theatres were built – two existed prior to 1580, two more were built in the 1580s and six in the 1590s – and by James' reign there were very different types of playhouses staging different types of plays in a variety of spaces. Plays were only printed in any numbers in the mid-1590s and it took some years before they were commonly attributed to specific authors, obviously a response to market forces as readers started to buy works by particular authors (Erne 2003). It is likely that some works which we now know to be collaborative – such as the three *Henry VI* plays, *Timon of Athens* and *Henry VIII* in the first folio – were attributed to one author because of his particular fame when they were published.

Publishing a play in 1616 was a far cry from publishing one in 1590. Printing had become more sophisticated and techniques more advanced (roman type was now used more than the old-fashioned English black letter); paper was starting to become slightly cheaper; more books were produced; and the market for print was expanding (Barnard and McKenzie 2002). The printed book appears to have helped facilitate the development of a more individualistic culture in which a particular work was associated with a specific author (Eisenstein 1979, I, ch. 2). Furthermore, developments in the technique, cost and culture of portrait painting meant that it was far easier and more socially acceptable to produce portraits of the 'middling sort' – which included writers and playwrights – in the second half of James' reign than it had been during Elizabeth's. Accordingly, there was

a significant rise in ‘citizen portraiture’, enabling us to put faces to names and actually see what many Jacobean people looked like (Cooper 2012). There are hardly any portraits of non-aristocratic major Elizabethan writers apart from woodcuts in books – we do not know what Edmund Spenser, Thomas Nashe, Gabriel Harvey, or Barnabe Googe, looked like – but there are a wealth of portraits of writers of the next generation: Ben Jonson, John Fletcher, John Donne, and, of course, William Shakespeare (Cooper and Hadfield 2013). When literary historians looked back from the eighteenth century eager to assemble a series of images of authors to accompany editions of their works they were often bemused that none seemed to exist for those in Elizabethan England and so found possible likenesses, invariably optimistically matching writers and pictures, as was the case with Edmund Spenser. Changes that had been dramatic and pronounced around 1600 were no longer visible to later readers.

The end of Shakespeare’s career, therefore, bears little resemblance to the start. The theatre was now big business; playhouses were a staple form of entertainment for many Londoners; and authors were more celebrated and powerful and had an independent existence in print and were not necessarily as dependent on patrons as they once had been but had a more direct relationship with readers and audiences. A vital and vibrant period of collaborative authorship was coming to an end, one that did not always leave distinct traces of what had happened for later generations to reconstruct the culture out of which such writing and performing emerged.

We need to bear these factors in mind when we consider Shakespeare’s career or his role as the pivotal figure in English literary history. Harold Bloom claimed in 1998, somewhat hyperbolically, that Shakespeare actually invented the human. But, as with Virginia Woolf’s argument that privacy prevented women from becoming significant writers, there is a serious point that needs to be considered. Shakespeare became the pre-eminent figure in English literature in large part because he created characters that seemed to encapsulate the ways in which people wanted to understand literature as it was transformed from a predominantly rhetorically-based art to one based on ideas of the self. Shakespeare, being the genius who had created King Lear, Richard III, Falstaff and Hamlet, had to have a particular personality, he had to be a character like the ones that he had created. Although not enough evidence remained, a life had to be produced, which is the main reason why, just as portraits had to be found to show what writers looked like, anecdotes and vignettes had to appear to provide the author with the personality that the characters he had created possessed. It is no accident that the famous stories of the juvenile deer stealing from Sir Thomas Lucy’s estate, and Shakespeare’s sexual contest with Richard Burbage when he beds the actress instead of the leading actor with the taunt, ‘William the Conqueror came before Richard III’, date from the same period that faces were put to the names of writers.

History and fiction have always had a close relationship – which is not to suggest that they are the same and can or should be equated. The reception of Shakespeare's work has been intimately bound up with his perceived/imagined character in a symbiotic relationship. Indeed, it should come as no surprise that *Hamlet*, his most famous character, has often been seen as the key to unlocking the mysteries of Shakespeare's mind.<sup>6</sup> A belief that *Hamlet* is a key play in Shakespeare's oeuvre is something that connects both Shakespeare scholars and Shakespeare authorship enthusiasts.<sup>7</sup> As James Shapiro (2010) has argued, such links should not surprise us because the establishment of modern literary critical ideas in the nineteenth century was founded on the assumption that understanding an author's works enabled the reader to understand his or her character. The authorship question is the *doppelgänger* of the traditional literary establishment.

The central irony of this history of literature and criticism is that the conditions under which the works of Shakespeare appeared have been obscured from view. Shakespeare's writing life has not so much been distorted as inverted or even obliterated. We are still beset with images of the solitary Shakespeare in his garret, virtually blank paper on his desk, searching for inspiration. The most potent example of this is probably that of Joseph Fiennes as the young Shakespeare, desperately trying to finish a play in John Madden's *Shakespeare in Love* (1998), a frequently reproduced image, notably on the cover of Paul Edmondson and Stanley Wells' *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt* (2013). One should probably not be too critical of such a cunningly knowing script which made so many jokes at the expense of common beliefs about Shakespeare and his world, flattering and mocking its audience at the same time. Shakespeare's play is called 'Romeo and Ethel the Pirate's Daughter' until he falls in love with Viola De Lesseps and his personal experience transforms the play into *Romeo and Juliet*, cleverly mirroring what happens to Romeo in Shakespeare's play when he abandons Rosaline for Juliet and consequently improves the nature of his verse (see below). It is Viola who understands the beauty of the poet's writing and who manages to persuade him that plays should not concentrate on fight scenes and dog jokes. Moreover, we should note that it is in company that John Madden's Shakespeare finds his inspiration and transforms himself into Shakespeare.

Even so, Shakespeare is represented as a man we might well know and who we are undoubtedly supposed to like: he is a slightly confused youth, ambitious but also eager to please, and his undoubted literary talent lacks focus until he finds the right vehicle for his desire for love and writing. He is governed by passions which he struggles to contain and which simultaneously

<sup>6</sup> For the history, see Foakes 1993.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Beauclerk 2010.

advance and hinder his literary progress. Shakespeare is shown to be both everyman and a poetic genius, ambitious but surprised by the nature of his talent; and, despite more nuanced versions of his character, especially works that pay attention to the collaborative nature of writing for the theatre, this is probably the principal way he has been characterised since the eighteenth century, especially in popular culture.<sup>8</sup> For all its surface brilliance and smart plotting, *Shakespeare in Love* reproduces a very familiar version of the Shakespeare story. Shakespeare narrates the stories of characters who are true to life and it is in the light of these that we should read his own personality. Shakespeare, more than any philosopher or psychologist, is one of us who somehow manages to show us who we are, which is the peculiar nature of his genius and why he is the most famous author in the world. He is so pre-eminent that he is a mystery (one reason why his authorship is often questioned), and our friend, a normal bloke. We might want to have a beer with Ben Jonson or Christopher Marlowe, but we would discuss them afterwards with William Shakespeare.

This version of history/literary history has the plays emerging *ex nihilo* rather than out of a context, a convenient belief that makes more extensive analysis often seem like ungenerous carping. But, as many recent studies have pointed out, Shakespeare looks like many other dramatists in the early 1590s and only becomes Shakespeare later in that decade. Why? First the issue of his stake in the Globe as a shareholder needs to be considered, a transformation of Shakespeare's status as a writer that gave him control over his plays and direct dealings with actors, enabling him to change the nature of his plays, and having to change the nature of his plays through direct interaction with the stage (Shapiro 2006, chs. 6-8). The forces that shaped Shakespeare's career directed him towards the creation of character as the most notable feature of his drama. Indeed, Shakespeare's plays show a remarkable interest in character, one that is later rivalled by Webster and Middleton, who probably had the best claim to be Shakespeare's literary heirs (Neill 2008, 23-27). Shakespeare's predecessors, Kyd and Marlowe, were more interested in rhetoric, argument and plot than character. Most importantly, his most significant rival as a playwright, Ben Jonson, created a series of clever moral and satirical plays and developed the comedy of humours. Shakespeare's romantic comedies, as has long been recognised, were staged as conscious rivals to Jonson's comedies, theatre companies trying to establish distinct identities in order to attract theatre-goers by making the public aware of what they had to offer (Harbage 1952; Bednarz 2001).

Shakespeare's literary achievement was shaped by his interaction with other writers and other companies, producing his plays and poetry as part of a wider literary culture. It is not immediately obvious but *As You Like It*

<sup>8</sup> For a nuanced assessment of Shakespeare's individuality see Knapp 2007.

(1599-1600) and *Twelfth Night* (1601-1602) probably owe much to Ben Jonson's *Every Man In His Humour* (1598) and *Every Man Out of His Humour* (1599). Shakespeare's plays are shape-shifting comedies that make significant play with the gender identities of the actors and characters so that we witness a male actor pretending to be a woman character who pretends to be a man in both plays. This important plot device stands as a pointed contrast to the significance of caricature in Jonson's plays and the stress placed upon the unchanging identity of the characters in his satirical comedy. Jacques in *As You Like It* has been given a name that appears to signal sophistication through its Frenchness. But it would also have sounded like Jakes (privy) reminding theatre-goers of a more basic requirement/problem of the playhouses, the difficulty of relieving oneself (Partridge 2009, 165). The bathetic contrast high and low status mirrors the names of Jonson's character and the plots of his plays. More significantly, Jacques' melancholy humour and disaffection throughout *As You Like It* would have reminded the audience of what they would have witnessed on Jonson's stages, most notably in the character's most famous speech:

All the world's a stage,  
 And all the men and women merely players:  
 They have their exits and their entrances  
 And one man in his time plays many parts,  
 His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,  
 Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms;  
 And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel  
 And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
 Unwillingly to school; and then the lover,  
 Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad  
 Made to his mistress' eyebrow; then a soldier,  
 Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,  
 Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,  
 Seeking the bubble 'reputation'  
 Even in the cannon's mouth; and then the justice,  
 In fair round belly with good capon lined,  
 With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,  
 Full of wise saws and modern instances -  
 And so he plays his part; the sixth age shifts  
 Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,  
 With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,  
 His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide  
 For his shrunk shank - and his big manly voice,  
 Turning again toward childish treble, pipes  
 And whistles in his sound; last scene of all,  
 That ends this strange eventful history  
 Is second childishness and mere oblivion,  
 Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything. (1.7.139-166)

The speech is frequently reproduced as if it were meant to be read as a piece of profound wisdom about the human condition, perhaps slightly whimsical, but nevertheless full of the bard's insights about the basic nature of life. But the comparison in the opening sentence to acting, with men and women cast as merely players, should alert us to the more satirical purpose of Jacques' words. Jacques is suffering from an excess of black bile, which in humoral theory causes introspection, an excessively rational approach to life and detachment from one's fellow humans: i.e., melancholy. What Jacques says may be true but his words have a particular cause and similar sentiments could have been witnessed at *The Curtain* as Jonson's early plays appeared on stage. At one level *Every Man in His Humour* works as a tutorial on humoral theory outlining the absurdities of each character's views when in the grip of a particular humour. Stephano, a country simpleton, tells Matheo, another fool who dabbles in poetry, that he is seized by melancholy, which Matheo explains may well be to his advantage:

*Steph.* Ay, truly, sir, I am mightily given to melancholy.

*Math.* Oh Lord, sir, it's your only best humour, sir. Your true melancholy breeds your perfect fine wit, sir. I am melancholy myself divers times, sir, and then do I no more but take pen and paper presently, and write you your half score or a dozen of sonnets at a sitting. (2.3.64-68)

Shakespeare is calling his rival's bluff in writing melancholy literature parodying Jonson's work. Jonson wants to sneer at the poor literature produced by fools who know that melancholy is the poetic temperament and so imagine that by simply thinking they are melancholy they will be able to write good poetry. In Jacques' lines Shakespeare is showing that he can actually write good poetry, imitating the sort of poetry that melancholy poets produce, enabling his discerning audience to laugh at melancholy fools, humoral plays, and to enjoy his fine words all at once.

Shakespeare's varied career as a poet and playwright shows him to have been always keenly aware of what his rivals were doing.<sup>9</sup> Shakespeare's sonnets are hard to date with any precision and it is not known whether they can really be read as a carefully designed sequence. They may have been written in the 1590s or in the early 1600s nearer their publication date of 1609. What is clear, however, is that they are written with an acute understanding of other sonnet sequences. The genre had been inaugurated by Sir Philip Sidney's narrative of thwarted passion, *Astrophil and Stella* (1591), the story of the star-gazer's love for the star who had once nearly been his but who now made another man rich: at one level an easily decodable version of Sidney's

<sup>9</sup> On Shakespeare's career, see Cheney 2008.

own life and the plans that were made for him to marry Penelope Devereux. *Astrophil and Stella* tells the tale of a desire that becomes ever more adulterous until the woman, perhaps more out of duty than conviction, repels his attempts on her married honour. Sidney's sequence led to a host of similar literary works by other writers, the most important of which were Edmund Spenser's *Amoretti* (1595), which celebrate through an elaborate series of literary, religious and numerological features his courtship and marriage of his second wife, Elizabeth Boyle, and end with the *Epithalamion*, the first marriage hymn that celebrates the poet's own marriage written in English; and Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* (1621), the work of Sidney's cousin, who transformed the poetry of her long dead uncle into a lament for the hypocritical treatment of women in love.

Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, like those of Spenser and Wroth, are alive to the possibilities of poetry as well as love and sexuality. While Spenser transforms Sidney's sequence into an autobiographical account of his own marriage, in doing so showing how Sidney's pre-eminent status as a poet had now passed on to him, Shakespeare cunningly tries to outdo both poets. He first tells of his homosexual passion for a younger man, then for a mysterious dark lady, and then has the two of them making love behind his back:

Two loves I have, of comfort and despair,  
Which like two spirits do suggest me still:  
The better angel is a man right fair;  
The worser spirit a woman coloured ill.  
To win me soon to hell, my female evil  
Tempteth my better angel from my side,  
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,  
Wooing his purity with her foul pride.  
And whether that my angel be turned fiend  
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell,  
But being both from me, both to each friend,  
I guess one angel in another's hell.

Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,  
Till my bad angel fire my good one out. (sonnet 144)

The sonnets may well have a basis in Shakespeare's experience as Paul Edmondson and Stanley Wells (2004) argue. But surely the main thrust of this poem is literary, an attempt to show that whatever the major poets of the time had done he (Shakespeare) could do better.

Shakespeare was certainly eager to have his skill as a poet recognised, and a strong case can be made that he was as keen to be acknowledged as a poet as he was as a dramatist and might well have continued his career had circumstances not dictated that it was easier to make money as a shareholder in a theatre company than as a poet. In *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579), the

work that announced his arrival as a major poet, Edmund Spenser's alter ego, Colin Clout, is in love with a mysterious young woman, Rosalind. Although she is discussed at considerable length by the shepherds in the eclogues, she never appears in the poem. Instead, she inspires a number of the songs and lyrics in a work designed to show off its author's impressive command of English verse forms and styles.

By the time that Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet* (c.1595, published in the first quarto, 1597), Spenser had emerged as the dominant English poet of the 1590s, with the publication of the first part of *The Faerie Queene* (1590). In Shakespeare's play Romeo is in love with a young woman, Rosaline, who, like Spenser's lady, does not appear on stage. Romeo is first seen praising her beauty in the hackneyed oppositions of stock Petrarchan conceits:

Alas that Love whose view is muffled still,  
Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will!  
Where shall we dine? O me! What fray was here?  
Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all:  
Here's much to do with hate, but more with love:  
Why then, O brawling love, O loving hate,  
O any thing of nothing first create!  
O heavy lightness, serious vanity,  
Misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms,  
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health,  
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!  
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.  
Dost thou not laugh? (1.1.162-174)

Only in the next scene do we learn that the lady who has caused such suffering for Romeo is called Rosaline. Given the unusual nature of the name, employed in literature only by Spenser and, after him, his schoolfellow Thomas Lodge in the prose romance that served as the principal source for *As You Like It*, Shakespeare was surely making a deliberate reference to Spenser. Furthermore, Shakespeare ensures that we do not miss the significance of the name. The exchange between Romeo and Friar Laurence in 2.3 forcefully reminds the audience that the absent Rosalind no longer features in Romeo's plans. When asked by the friar, 'wast thou with Rosaline?' (44), Romeo replies 'I have forgot that name, and that name's woe' (46), only for the friar to express surprise and ask Romeo again in the next speech, 'What a change is here! / Is Rosaline, that thou didst love so dear, / So soon forsaken?' (65-67). Romeo claims that he has now forgotten Rosalind but her name is repeated six times in thirty-seven lines in this exchange (44-81). He may be trying to forget her but the audience is forced to remember her.

There is a vast difference between the hackneyed poetry that Romeo utters at the start of the play and the inspired verse that he produces after he

has met Juliet. In calling attention to that difference, Shakespeare relies on a standard joke in Elizabethan times (exploited in parodic works such as Sir John Davies' *Gulling Sonnets* [c.1594]), that the tired, unimaginative Petrarchan conceit was the antithesis, as the lover protested that he burned in ice and froze in fire. This is exactly what Romeo states in a variety of forms in his praise of Rosaline, so that she could be any lady and he any lover imagining that he can write poetry. In fact, the twelve lines that Romeo produces in praise of Rosaline can be read as a rather half-hearted sonnet, with botched rhyme schemes, and broken off before the end with no proper concluding couplet. As soon as he meets Juliet the couple point the way towards their impassioned relationship by producing a perfect Italianate (Petrarchan) sonnet, each speaking alternate lines:

*Romeo* [*To Juliet*]. If I profane with my unworhiest hand  
This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this,  
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand  
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

*Juliet*. Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,  
Which mannerly devotion shows in this,  
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,  
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

*Romeo*. Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

*Juliet*. Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

*Romeo*. O then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do:  
They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

*Juliet*. Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

*Romeo*. Then move not while my prayer's effect I take. (1.5.92-105)

This sonnet (by contrast to the first, botched one) is a literary tour de force, showing that Shakespeare could write dialogue that was as sophisticated as the best poetry produced by the finest living English poets. The interlaced rhyme scheme, abab cbc b cd cd ee, sees the lovers produce two quatrains that echo each others' rhymes, as well as produce new ones alternately to produce the octave dextrously interweave their lines in the sestet, ending with alternate rhymes for the concluding Shakespearean couplet. The subject matter of the poem is daringly blasphemous, comparing their forbidden love to the holy devotions of a pilgrim, and arguing, sophistically, that as a pilgrim touches the body, shrine or statue of a saint as a means of communicating with the almighty, so should their lips kiss as a similar form of loving devotion. The theme is apposite for daring young lovers, especially those whose union is expressly forbidden, and shows them aware that their passion is pushing new boundaries. It is also appropriate for Shakespeare the poet, showing that he too can take risks in a play and pull them off, eclipsing the achievements of rival playwrights and making a case for his pre-eminence as a poet.

If we want to understand Shakespeare we need to take his literary work seriously. In this obvious way biography and literary output cannot be separated. What we should not do is rely on a post-romantic understanding of literary authorship in order to unlock the secrets of Shakespeare's life and art. Rather, we need to think carefully about how he did produce his work, an enterprise that will of necessity require us to try to understand how he wrote. Shakespeare was an intermittent collaborator in his writing – he worked with other writers at the start and end of his career and on his own in between – but was clearly keen to work with others in the playhouse. He was also a writer who always had one eye on what his rival poets were doing, and was happy to absorb and use their ideas and writing when it suited him, but also assert his own status as a writer when necessary. Our current understanding of literature as a collaborative act serves more to bring Shakespeare the writer to life than to make his literary persona disintegrate. It is a wonderful irony of literary history that the conditions that helped Shakespeare to create the array of characters that have become the main focus of his literary identity have been obscured in part because of the very success of Shakespeare's mode of writing. We do not have a great enough distance between fiction and reality when we imagine people of times past, a conflation that has obscured Shakespeare's real identity beneath his literary one. I would dearly like to understand Shakespeare better; but I don't think we'll ever really be friends.

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# Shakespearian Biography and the Geography of Collaboration

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## *Abstract*

The essay looks at the possibilities for reconciling two vibrant strands of Shakespeare studies. Many scholars have persuasively argued that Shakespeare's plays were created within the collaborative environment of the London playhouses, involving a variety of influences within the performance network of early modern London. Conversely, recent archaeological work at New Place, Shakespeare's home in Stratford, convincingly maintains that Shakespeare would have spent the majority of his time here, and not in London. Could Shakespeare have collaborated if he was not based in London? And if his primary residence was in Stratford, how could he have contributed as a collaborator with other playwrights? Resolving the contradictions between these two divergent models is particularly urgent for biographers, who have to chart a geography of Shakespeare's writing career amid his two locales.

*Keywords:* Biography, Collaboration, Shakespeare, Stratford-upon-Avon

## 1. *Introduction*

The growth of two recent strands in Shakespeare studies has opened up space to ask fruitful questions about the geography of Shakespeare's career as a writer, and about the relationship between collaboration, geographical space, and biography. In this essay, I examine the various options to explain some of Shakespeare's life events, inspired by developments on Shakespeare as a collaborative writer, and on recent archaeological discoveries at New Place, his last home in Stratford.

Most scholars now agree that Shakespeare was a collaborative writer, composing many of his plays with the influence of other playwrights, actors, musicians, theatre personnel, and various urban stimuli. Here, in the heart of the London literary scene, he was able to create some of the greatest works in the literary canon.<sup>1</sup> At the same time scholarship is expanding on Shakespeare

<sup>1</sup> Just such a scenario is the basis for the 1998 film *Shakespeare in Love*.



as a collaborative writer,<sup>2</sup> the Stratford components of Shakespeare's life have also come into closer focus. Archaeological findings at New Place, Shakespeare's Stratford home, suggest that this property should have a larger role in Shakespeare's life story. As Paul Edmondson puts it, 'New Place was too fine a house for Shakespeare to have been most of his time away from it' (2013, 98).

These two alternatives, Shakespeare as a collaborative dramatist in the heart of the London theatre scene, and Shakespeare as a Stratford-based writer living in a manor house, are difficult to reconcile. Models of collaboration as a process dependent on input from fellow playwrights, actors, theatre personnel, theatre space, political and social developments in London, are incompatible with a Warwickshire-based writer, isolated from the London literary scene, living in a manor house in which a brewing business and cottage industries likely took place, along with his wife, parents, town clerk and his family, children, and their families.

This essay explores the contradictions between these two models – how could Shakespeare have written collaboratively if he was based primarily in Stratford? Conversely, if Shakespeare was based in Stratford, in what ways could he have collaborated? This is a crucial issue for biographers, who have to chart a geography for Shakespeare's life between Stratford and London, and in the second part of this essay, I look at how biographers have negotiated between these possibilities. While I do not claim to have a magical solution to resolve these dissonances, it is nevertheless important to ask what's at stake in locating Shakespeare's creative space in either place, or in both, and to give closer attention to the geographical narratives that we construct about Shakespeare's life. The conclusion to this essay elucidates the crucial differences between a Shakespeare who lives primarily in London and only occasionally returns to Stratford to recharge his batteries, and a Shakespeare who resides mainly in Stratford and travels to London only when absolutely necessary.

## *2. The Case for Collaboration*

In a recent essay on collaboration, Gary Taylor declares: 'Anyone interested in Shakespeare must care about collaboration' (2014, 1). Several recent contributions to Shakespeare studies have made persuasive arguments that this method of writing was the norm rather than the exception. Brian Vickers contends that 'Every major playwright in this period worked collaboratively at some point in his career', and 'it would have been remarkable had Shakespeare

<sup>2</sup> The majority of essays in the 2014 volume of *Shakespeare Survey*, for example, are devoted to the topic of 'Shakespeare's Collaborative Work' (Holland 2014).

not sometimes worked like this' (2002, 25, 18-19).<sup>3</sup> Likewise, Paola Pugliatti points out that 'collaboration was so intrinsically inherent in the practice of playwriting (in all the phases of the process) that individual style markers cannot be extracted from the "finished" texts which we possess' (2012, 125).

Collaboration did not mean only writing with another playwright; it involved 'a host of associations that enabled literary production in the early modern period, not simply two or more writers working on one fictional text' (Hirschfeld 2001, 619). Thus, the environment for literary production is crucial for collaboration studies. Ton Hoenselaars has argued that Shakespeare's 'creativity' was dependent on the atmosphere of what he calls 'interactive collaboration' and was 'inseparable from his interaction with colleagues on the workfloor' (2012, 99). Julie Sanders also contends that the early modern theatre that shaped Shakespeare's writing was

a commercially driven, collaborative enterprise, not just between writers and the wider personnel of any theatre company or printshop (players, seamstresses, tirewomen, feathermakers, scribes, booksellers, to name just a few) ... but also frequently between the writers themselves who produced plays both with and in competition with each other in the hothouse environment of the public theatres. (2014, 153)

If Shakespeare's plays 'were realised as part of a concentrated process of interaction with others, in a profession that was and remains "radically collaborative"' (Hoenselaars 2012, 97), does that preclude Shakespeare from writing anywhere other than in the heart of the London theatre scene? Such a process would seem to rule out Stratford as a place of collaboration. After all, aside from the occasional touring players, there was no theatre space to test out, fine tune dialogue based on performance, or work with actors in Stratford, let alone other theatre personnel.<sup>4</sup> Will Sharpe's description of the 'highly reciprocal creative relationship between Shakespeare and his company' is even harder to envision in Stratford: 'He was the company's principal writer, though his responsibilities also included acting, working with fellow sharers and actors on his and others' texts in what we might call rehearsals, not to mention the administrative responsibilities involved in the running of a business' (2014, 33, 32). Without modern technology to telecommute, these administrative tasks would also be nearly impossible to do long distance.

By Gary Taylor's count, twenty-eight plays survive written solely by Shakespeare, and these single-authored plays are more feasible to imagine

<sup>3</sup> Gabriel Egan offers a caution 'to temper the recent enthusiasm for treating Shakespeare's plays as essentially collaborations made in the theatre' (2014, 23).

<sup>4</sup> Bart van Es traces a new form of writing in Shakespeare around the mid to late 1590s, due to Shakespeare's 'new position as owner and controller of the dramatic life of his plays', where 'control over casting enabled the creation of psychological depth' (2013, 98).

being written outside of London (2014, 1-2).<sup>5</sup> According to Henslowe's diary, plays took four to six weeks for completion (Vickers 2002, 43),<sup>6</sup> which would have given Shakespeare enough time to travel to Stratford to write, and then return a play to London. Accounts of Shakespeare travelling back and forth from London to Stratford do survive, though none dates from the period of his own lifetime.<sup>7</sup>

Even if Shakespeare could have written single-authored plays in Stratford, it is hard to imagine how he could have been involved in a theatre process where dramatists 'appear to have had nearly continuous contact with the companies for which they worked' (Ioppolo 2006, 29).<sup>8</sup> Similarly, it is hard to picture how, as Bart van Es (2013) and many others have contended, Shakespeare wrote for a particular company with particular actors and theatre spaces, and was immersed in the climate of early modern theatre world where 'in the small and intensely competitive arena of late Elizabethan theatre' playwrights like Jonson and Shakespeare 'were clearly observing each other's practice with a sharp eye' (Donaldson 2011, 158). While the evidence seems overwhelming that Shakespeare *did* collaborate, both Gary Taylor and Will

<sup>5</sup> I have relied on Ton Hoenselaars' excellent survey of collaboration (2012, 105-107). *1 Henry VI* includes material by Thomas Nashe, *Titus Andronicus* was co-authored by George Peele, both *Henry VIII* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* were co-authored with John Fletcher. Middleton had a hand in *Timon of Athens*, *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, and possibly *All's Well that Ends Well* (Maguire and Smith 2012, 13-15). *Pericles* was co-authored with George Wilkins, and other plays not in the First Folio, typically *Arden of Faversham*, *Edward III*, *Sir Thomas More*, and *Cardenio*, are frequently attributed to Shakespeare and others. For an hypothesis of attribution as regards *Arden of Faversham*, see Marina Tarlinskaja's essay in this volume.

<sup>6</sup> In the Prologue to *Volpone* (1607), Jonson claims he 'five weeks fully penned it / From his own hand, without a coadjutor, / Novice, journeyman, or tutor' (16-18), though Grace Ioppolo remarks that Henslowe's records show a great variety in time allotted for dramatists to complete plays (2006, 25).

<sup>7</sup> William Oldys reports that 'Shakespeare often baited at the Crown Inn or Tavern in Oxford, in his journey to and from London', and John Aubrey, in his *Brief Lives*, contends that Shakespeare 'was wont to goe into Warwickshire once a yeare, and did commonly in his journey lye at this house in Oxon' (Schoenbaum 1970, 101-103). Most biographers have assumed that Shakespeare returned to Stratford once a year at the end of the theatre season, and also during the plague when theatres were closed. Bate remarks that 'plague was a key factor in determining the frequency' of Shakespeare's travels between London and Stratford (2008, 7). See Barroll 1991 for a discussion of the consequences of London playhouse closings on Shakespeare.

<sup>8</sup> Based on the Henslowe and Alleyn papers as well as letters of playwright Robert Daborne, Ioppolo contends that 'authors worked closely with the acting company during a play's composition', and that dramatists took into consideration factors including the acting company, number of actors, characteristics of audiences, and performance venues (2006, 42, 71). Will Sharpe argues that 'both writing alone and in collaboration were facts of Shakespeare's working life, and delineating between the two practices is a desirable outcome of studies of Shakespeare's material authorship' (2014, 34).

Sharpe pose the still unanswered question of *why* Shakespeare collaborated on some plays and not others, including an eleven year period in the middle of his career with no collaboration (Sharpe 2014, 40; Taylor 2014, 2).

### 3. *The Case for New Place*

Jonathan Bate has pointed out that ‘we cannot formally prove that Shakespeare was in London between autumn 1604 and early summer 1612’ and that ‘we tacitly assume that he was present to hand over his works and for script meetings regarding his collaborative plays, but this is no more than an assumption’ (2008, 358).<sup>9</sup> If Shakespeare did spend more of his writing career in Stratford, New Place would merit closer attention as an environment for literary production.<sup>10</sup> Recent archaeological work at New Place, connected to the ‘Dig for Shakespeare’, offers further indications of the need to rechart the geography of Shakespeare’s writing career, and for reinvigorating questions about the Stratford components of his life; with more than ten fireplaces, New Place would have housed a substantial community of family and friends.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to a large circle of family members and friends, New Place was also the site of cottage industries. The discovery of ‘an oval pit, possible oven/kiln, brick storage pit and possible quarry pit’ that date from Shakespeare’s lifetime substantiates the fact that the grounds of New Place were ‘used for more than just gardens over an extended period of time’ (Mitchell and Colls 2012, 11). Stratford was well known for its brewing industry and in 1598 Shakespeare was hoarding malt at New Place, perhaps for a malt brewing business there (Greer 2007, 217). Shakespeare also paid for a load of stone in 1598, likely for repairs or renovations to New Place. Evidence from the archaeological dig also shows that several cottage industries were likely taking

<sup>9</sup> See also van Es for discussion of Shakespeare’s ties to Stratford from 1608 on; he notes that Shakespeare’s 1613 purchase of Blackfriar’s Gatehouse located his residence in Stratford, and suggests that Shakespeare may have resembled Samuel Daniel, who ‘resided partly in the country while retaining contacts at court’ (2013, 260-261). The purchase of Blackfriar’s was likely an investment rather than a residence.

<sup>10</sup> Paul Edmondson has argued that ‘some, most, or all of his work could have been written’ in New Place (2013, 98).

<sup>11</sup> In 1602 Shakespeare added two orchards to the original property, and there is evidence that two buildings were present. The inner house had an indoor fireplace; see Mitchell and Colls 2011 and 2012; for a brief summary of the 2011 excavations see also: <<http://bloggingshakespeare.com/unearting-shakespeare-part-9>>, accessed 11 May 2015. Excavation on Shakespeare’s living quarters has just begun in early 2015. The ‘Dig for Shakespeare’ took place from 2010-2012 as a joint project between the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and the University of Birmingham. See <<http://bloggingshakespeare.com/unearting-shakespeare-part-1>>, accessed 11 May 2015.

place there, including bone working, textile working, and brewing.<sup>12</sup> These activities probably occupied various members of the Shakespeare family; items from the cloth industry could have involved his brother Gilbert (d. 1612), who was a haberdasher, for example (Mitchell and Colls 2012, 55; Greer 2007, 175-177).

Other archaeological discoveries at New Place corroborate the affluent lifestyle of the occupants during Shakespeare's lifetime: pig bones from animals slaughtered before maturity probably derive from suckling pig prepared for a special feast; and venison was associated with the well-off (Bowsher and Miller 2009, 151; Joan Fitzpatrick, personal communication). Pottery remains that date from Shakespeare's time also confirm an upper-class status, and ceramic findings, including sixteenth-century Tudor Green wares, indicate 'reasonably prosperous bourgeois occupation' during Shakespeare's lifetime (Mitchell and Colls 2011, 33). These findings lend support to Bart van Es' argument that Shakespeare was unique in his financial security, and that his wealth set him apart from his fellow playwrights and gave him 'greater freedom' to write at a slower pace and to be more selective in his projects (2013, 125, 142, 161, 195). Will Sharpe has even attributed a 'patient and methodical manner' to Shakespeare's non-collaborative writing, based on his financial security, and such a writing process would have been ideally suited to New Place (2014, 40).<sup>13</sup>

Further, archaeological evidence suggests that there may have been two buildings at New Place, and it is possible that these outbuildings were related in some way to Shakespeare's literary production; this reinforces Paul Edmondson's argument that 'Shakespeare spent more time in Stratford than is usually thought and that he wrote there' (2013, 96). Lead archaeologist for the 'Dig for Shakespeare', Will Mitchell, confirms the existence of a 'large, long frontage or gatehouse along Chapel Street and, perhaps more importantly, the smaller house sitting behind, private and secluded', possibly where 'Shakespeare resided and wrote numerous plays including *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, or indeed any of the works from 1597 onwards'.<sup>14</sup> Just as it was hard to imagine

<sup>12</sup> See Mitchell and Colls 2011 and 2012 (and <<http://bloggingshakespeare.com/unearthing-shakespeare-part-8>>, accessed 11 May 2015).

<sup>13</sup> In Edward Bond's play *Bingo*, Jonson visits Shakespeare in Stratford, where they go for a drink together. Jonson asks Shakespeare, 'Down here for the peace and quiet? Find inspiration—look for it, anyway. Work up something spiritual. Refined. Can't get by with scrabbling it off in noisy corners any more. New young men. Competition. Your recent stuff's been pretty peculiar. What was *The Winter's Tale* about? I ask to be polite'. Shakespeare tells Jonson that he's not writing: 'There's the house. People I'm responsible for. The garden's too big. Time goes. I'm surprised how old I've got' (1987, 44-45).

<sup>14</sup> <<http://bloggingshakespeare.com/unearthing-shakespeare-part-3>>, accessed 11 May 2015. Around 1602 Shakespeare purchased a barn and cottages to add to his estate here.

some of the writing scenarios for Shakespeare taking place outside of London, it is equally difficult to explain why Shakespeare would not have resided primarily in the extensive space of New Place with his family.

There are two examples of material remnants that potentially connect Shakespeare's Stratford home to the London theatre scene and to literary activity. Archaeological work at the 'Dig' has recovered 'several lead trade tokens (such as have been found at the site of Elizabethan theatres in London)', which date from Shakespeare's occupancy.<sup>15</sup> While it is impossible to know their provenance, the lead trade tokens found at New Place offer material evidence to link the London theatre world to Shakespeare's Stratford home during his lifetime.

Items recorded at New Place not long after Shakespeare's death also offer a possible glimpse of literary activity there. In 1637, Shakespeare's daughter Susannah filed a bill against Baldwin Brookes, Mayor of Stratford in 1640-1641, and other bailiffs, for taking 'divers books boxes desks monyes bondes bills and other goodes of greate value' from New Place (Fox 1951, 70-71). It is possible that the books, boxes, and desks were part of Shakespeare's personal writing space. Stanley Wells imagines just such a scenario at New Place, with 'a comfortable, book-lined study situated in the quietest part of the house to which Shakespeare retreated from London at every possible opportunity, and which members of the household approached at their peril when the master was at work' (2002, 38).<sup>16</sup>

Given the evidence of an affluent lifestyle, an active domestic scene, and likely literary activity at New Place, the predominant narrative of Shakespeare living in London full time and returning to Stratford only in 'retirement' from the London theatre scene at the end of his life seems less convincing.<sup>17</sup> Nicholas Rowe, in his seminal 1709 biography, was the first to describe Shakespeare's time in Stratford as a 'retirement':

The latter Part of his Life was spent, as all Men of good Sense will wish theirs may be, in Ease, Retirement, and the Conversation of his Friends. He had the good Fortune to gather an Estate equal to his Occasion, and, in that, to his Wish; and is said to have spent some Years before his Death at his native *Stratford*. His pleasurable Wit, and good Nature, engag'd him in the Acquaintance, and entitled him to the Friendship of the Gentlemen of the Neighbourhood. (xxxv-xxxvi)

<sup>15</sup> <<http://bloggingshakespeare.com/unearthing-shakespeare-part-9>>, accessed 11 May 2015.

<sup>16</sup> The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust underlined the idea of Shakespeare as a writer in New Place by exhibiting a mannequin of Shakespeare 'sitting at a desk writing with books around him' (Edmondson 2013, 92).

<sup>17</sup> Paul Edmondson points out that 'a glance through some of the major Shakespeare biographies in the twenty-first century confirms that this trope of retirement is alive and well' (2013, 94).

It is not clear that Rowe meant 'retirement' in the modern sense of giving up one's career, but rather in connection with the other terms he uses for leisure and sociability ('ease' and 'conversation'). Even so, the myth of Shakespeare leaving the London stage for the country life of Stratford has proven irresistible for many critics and biographers alike, and the appeal of seeing *The Tempest* as Shakespeare's farewell to the stage, his 'self-fashioned retirement party' in the words of one critic (Bevington 2007, 523), has further entrenched this story.<sup>18</sup> The tale of Shakespeare retiring from the London theatre scene to the bucolic setting of Stratford has been remarkably persistent, to the degree that it has overshadowed other possible narratives for the geography of Shakespeare's writing career.

#### 4. *Possibilities for Reconciliation*

So far this essay has pursued two different paths: Shakespeare as a collaborator in London, and Shakespeare as a writer in Stratford. In the remainder, I will explore the possibilities for reconciling these two narratives, analyze the implications for biography in particular, and examine what's at stake in charting the geography of Shakespeare's life. Evidence from the journals of John Ward (1629-1681), vicar of Stratford and medical aficionado, testifies to the possibility that Shakespeare wrote plays from Stratford, and that he met with fellow dramatists there. While Ward's entries related to Shakespeare were all written after Shakespeare's death (in the 1660s), there is no reason to doubt their accuracy. Ward collected 16 notebooks over the course of 33 years and was highly respected among his fellow Stratfordians, who noted that he 'performeth his ministeriall office with much care and diligence, & is a person of good sober life and sivell conversation' (Fogg 2014, 93).

Ward was ordained in 1660, and was a medical student at Oxford until 1661. In 1661 and 1662 he spent time in London hospitals but eventually set himself up as a vicar in Stratford until his death in 1681. Not only was Ward a clergymen, he also travelled to London and attended dissections, vivisections, autopsies, and operations, writing about them amid other annotations taken from historical, religious, and philosophical documents, and from unusual medical cases (Payne 2007, 61-63). Ward was based in Stratford from roughly 1662-1669, and he frequently travelled to Oxford and to London to 'maintain contacts with his medical and intellectual colleagues' (Frank 1974, 149). As one scholar puts it, Ward 'was a well educated man with scientific proclivities who had no other interest than to record details with

<sup>18</sup> Bate similarly maintains that the story that Shakespeare 'retired' to Stratford, 'settled down to property dealing, minor litigation, and the life of the complacent country gentleman' is a 'myth' (2008, 352-353).

disinterested accuracy'.<sup>19</sup> From about 1658 on, Ward was preoccupied with medicine in his diary, including 'notes from readings, observations made in the field or at the bedside, comments and dicta by contemporary physicians, and pre-eminently countless pages of "receipts" to cure any and every ailment' (Frank 1974, 152). His diaries from the period he was in Stratford, throughout the 1660s, reflect his intense interest in medicine, history, theology, and in treatment of local citizens. Ward had little investment in local gossip that did not involve medical conditions.<sup>20</sup>

Two entries in Ward's diaries locate Shakespeare as a writer in Stratford, and place fellow playwrights there for a 'meeting'. In the first, Ward offers a scenario where Shakespeare began in the London playhouses but then returned to Stratford for the rest of his playwriting career:

'I haue heard y<sup>t</sup>. M<sup>r</sup>. Shakespear was a natural wit without any art at all. hee frequented y<sup>e</sup> plays all his younger time, but in his elder days liud at Stratford: and supplied y<sup>e</sup> stage with 2 plays euery year and for y<sup>t</sup>. had an allowance so large y<sup>t</sup>. hee spent at y<sup>e</sup> Rate of a 1000<sup>l</sup> a yeer as I haue heard:... .'<sup>21</sup>

If we give credence to Ward's account, Shakespeare wrote from Stratford, not as a retirement from the stage, but as part of his writing process.<sup>22</sup> Ward's account of two plays per year matches Will Sharpe's estimation of 'roughly two well-laboured works a year over a twenty-year period' (2014, 41). Ward's diaries were written when many Stratford residents were still alive who would have known Shakespeare; perhaps more weight should be given to Ward's details rather than to Nicholas Rowe's story of Shakespeare's 'retirement', which relied on material gathered by actor Thomas Betterton on a trip to Warwickshire sometime around 1708, nearly fifty years later than Ward's account.

<sup>19</sup> '[Illustration]: The Diary of the Reverend John Ward' (1957), *Shakespeare Quarterly* 8, 4, 460.

<sup>20</sup> Ward's notebooks were first published in extracts by Charles Severn in 1839; rather than offering the Shakespeare references in the context of the rest of the diary, Severn clumps all of the entries that mention Shakespeare together. Later scholars have done the same; see, for example, Pogue (2008, 189, n. 24). As R.G. Frank Jr. describes the diaries, they are a mix of 'extracts from anatomical, physiological, medical, and chemical texts, with herbal lore, with descriptions of dissections and experiments, with endless transcriptions "of receipts" used by prominent practitioners, with comments and dicta from dozens of contemporary physicians, and with Ward's own observations on health and disease' (1974, 149).

<sup>21</sup> Folger MS V a 292, 140r.

<sup>22</sup> Jonathan Bate endorses the view that 'Shakespeare immersed himself in the life of the theater in the early part of his career, but later lived back home in Stratford' and 'actually lived and wrote in Stratford, supplying his later plays to the actors but, by implication, not being involved in actually putting them on' (2008, 357).

In his diary, Ward adds a comment to his entry on Shakespeare as a writer in Stratford: 'Rememb<sup>r</sup>. to peruse Shakespeares plays and bee versd in y<sup>e</sup>. y<sup>e</sup>. I may not bee ignorant in y<sup>e</sup>. matter.'<sup>23</sup> Ward's diaries frequently include notes about what to read or what to study, often beginning 'Remember to...'<sup>24</sup> Some have dismissed his reminder to read Shakespeare's plays as the efforts of a tourist-hungry local vicar, eager to capitalize on Shakespeare's reputation, but when read within the context of the sixteen notebooks that comprise the thirty-three year period, a different picture emerges.<sup>25</sup> It is more likely that Ward's desire to read Shakespeare's plays was part of his self-education, which encompassed other texts in science, history, and philosophy.

A second entry in Ward's diary locates fellow playwrights in a sociable gathering with Shakespeare. Ward writes: 'Shakespear Drayton and Ben Jhonson had a merry meeting and it seems drank too hard for Shakespear died of a feavour there contracted'.<sup>26</sup> While there is no way to verify Ward's version, it is significant that he chose to locate Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton, fellow playwrights, in Stratford. Although Shakespeare died in 1616, Drayton did not die until 1631, and Ben Jonson not until 1637, much closer to the time when Ward wrote this entry (1662-1663). Throughout Ward's diaries, his dominant interest is in medical conditions, so it is likely that he recorded the details of Shakespeare's death because of the unusual circumstances rather than the potential for gossip. According to Ben Jonson's biographer Ian Donaldson, the idea of a meeting between Jonson, Drayton, and Shakespeare in Stratford is tenable; he notes that Jonson and Drayton 'had a stormy but sometimes amicable relationship', and Drayton often travelled to the nearby village of Clifford Chambers, and was from Warwickshire (2011, 323).<sup>27</sup> Even in the unlikely event that Ward's account was fabricated or that it derived from local stories, it is still significant that Ward thought it would be believable to construct a story about fellow playwrights Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton 'meeting' Shakespeare just before he died in Stratford.

The life of fellow playwright and Warwickshire native Michael Drayton, described as the 'closest parallel' to Shakespeare (Andrews 2014, 273), offers further possibilities for the geography of Shakespeare's writing.<sup>28</sup> Like

<sup>23</sup> Folger MS V a 292, 140r.

<sup>24</sup> See the entries in Folger MS V.a.292, 172r and 177v, for example.

<sup>25</sup> Greenblatt remarks that 'Ward's brief note is probably not to be trusted' (2004, 387); see also Schoenbaum 1970, 77-78.

<sup>26</sup> Folger MS V a 292, 150r.

<sup>27</sup> Bart van Es agrees that 'it is quite possible that Drayton and other poet-playwrights came to visit New Place over the years' (2013, 263).

<sup>28</sup> Printer Richard Field was a native of Stratford but there is no evidence that he invested in Stratford or that he returned to Stratford throughout his publishing career in London. Adam G. Hooks has argued that while Field may have given Shakespeare his start by printing his early poetry, he never followed through on printing Shakespeare's later works, and

Shakespeare, Drayton was a collaborative writer and a shareholder in a theatre company (Children of the King's Revels). He was treated by Shakespeare's son-in-law John Hall, and had connections with Thomas Greene, who wrote a sonnet to him in 1603, and who lived in Shakespeare's Stratford home for a period of time (Newdigate 1941, 113, 116, 200).

Meghan C. Andrews has argued that Drayton may have had access to Shakespeare's works in manuscript, and that 'manuscript circulation might indicate that Shakespeare's writing practice was more collective than we have imagined, reflecting his partaking in intellectual engagement and conversational exchange' (2014, 293). Andrews maintains that Shakespeare and Drayton shared the same social network at Middle Temple, including Shakespeare's lodger Thomas Greene, and they may have also shared a network in Stratford.<sup>29</sup> It is also possible that they shared manuscripts in Stratford; Greene lived at New Place at least in 1609 but probably longer. Most importantly, Drayton made regular visits from London to Warwickshire. Near the end of his life, he recounts that he used to visit the area every year, 'I Yearly use to come, in the Summer Time, to recreate my self, and to spend some Two or Three Months in the Country' (Newdigate 1941, 187).<sup>30</sup> It is conceivable that Drayton may have connected with Shakespeare outside of London, though there is no evidence that the two collaborated on a playtext.

References to Stratford and to Warwickshire are prevalent in Shakespeare's work, and perhaps this stems from Shakespeare's proximity to Warwickshire while he was writing, rather than to his memory from childhood and from the odd trip back to Stratford for an annual visit or to escape the plague. Jonathan Bate remarks that 'Shakespeare was unique among the dramatists of his age in locating scenes in Warwickshire and Gloucestershire' (2008, 31). Likewise, David Kathman persuasively demonstrates that Shakespeare's plays provide extensive evidence that he was 'intimately familiar with Warwickshire' and that they 'suggest an author who was at home in the area around Stratford'

Shakespeare's fellow townsman's 'documented association with Shakespeare was strikingly brief', and he 'seems to have had little to do with his hometown after becoming a successful London businessman' (2011, 267, 263).

<sup>29</sup> Other Stratford connections exist between Drayton, Greene, and Shakespeare, including Sir Henry Rainsford, who also knew John Hall and was mentioned with Shakespeare in John Combe's will of 1614, and who lived just a few miles outside of Stratford (Andrews 2014, 297). Further, Greene was also connected with dramatist John Marston, who sponsored his admission to Middle Temple (Bearman 2012b, 291). Dramatist John Ford was also associated with Middle Temple in 1602, and John Manningham, who recorded his reaction to Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* that same year, was a friend of Greene (Bearman 2012b, 293). Shakespeare, Greene, Ford, Marston, and Drayton were thus part of the same network, and all but Ford and Marston had connections with Stratford.

<sup>30</sup> Newdigate dates the letter from 1631, and assumes that this is around the time that John Hall treated Drayton (1941, 50).

(2013, 129). Might it be possible that Shakespeare was literally at home at New Place while writing?

Further, it is not unheard of for a writer to write a play outside of London and then bring it to the London theatre. Arthur Wilson's play *Inconstant Lady* was written while he was at Oxford, and then brought to the King's Men at Blackfriars, where it was performed after slight additions of staging details; Bart van Es notes that the final performed work 'did not differ significantly from the play that Wilson wrote while alone in Oxford, where he could have had little thought as to the performing company' (2013, 129).

The dating of Shakespeare's plays is notoriously difficult, but a number of scholars have argued that the collaborative plays seem to date from earlier or later in his career rather than in the middle period, such as the 1604-1612 time frame when Bate maintains that Shakespeare may not have been in London (2008, 358).<sup>31</sup> It is possible that Shakespeare's single-authored plays dominated his Stratford residency, but it is also possible to imagine scenarios where he could have been a collaborator without being in residence in London full time.<sup>32</sup> Recent work on the history of Stratford has uncovered a literate climate that would have been conducive to literary production. Alan H. Nelson identified several individuals who had substantial libraries in Stratford; curate John Marshall, for example, owned 271 books. Nelson concludes that 'if Shakespeare spent periods of time in Stratford during his years as a playwright, he would have had no trouble finding books to support his creative labours' (2005, 52).<sup>33</sup>

Surviving evidence about the collaborative process suggests that it involved a combination of in-person meetings and isolated writing time.<sup>34</sup> When Nathan Field discussed the process of plotting with Robert Daborne

<sup>31</sup> Stanley Wells has argued that collaboration took place 'especially early and late in his career' (2006, 25-26). Likewise, van Es argues that from 1594 to 1605 'there is no respectable evidence that Shakespeare co-authored his playtexts', and that the middle period of his career 'is bookended by several years in which co-authorship was common' (2013, 287, 288). He contends that Shakespeare's pre-1594 work was 'the product of his close contact with fellow poet-playwrights' but that in 1594 he 'became less focused on other writing professionals' (311). See also Ioppolo 2006, 34.

<sup>32</sup> Shakespeare's collaborations near the end of his career, with Wilkins, Fletcher, and possibly Middleton, would need to be incorporated in such a narrative of playwriting, possibly in Stratford.

<sup>33</sup> Phil Withington points out that urban culture 'was not restricted, as certain critics have assumed, to London, but also characterised the expanding network of cities, boroughs and corporate towns across provincial England' (2009, 199).

<sup>34</sup> As Grace Ioppolo describes it, 'collaborators appear to have portioned off sections of the play by acts or scenes to complete alone and then found a way together or separately to join the scenes (with marginal additions of cue lines, for example) rather than sitting in the same room and composing the entire play together' (2006, 32).

in a letter to Philip Henslowe (probably in June 1613), he remarks that he and Daborne ‘haue spent a great deale of time in conference about this plott’ (Greg 1907, 84).<sup>35</sup> As Paola Pugliatti notes, this could mean jotting down, perusing, or revising, but Daborne’s description of ironing out the ‘plott’ clearly implies a person-to-person engagement, and not a scenario that could take place long distance (Stratford to London). The writing process, however, did not necessarily involve close proximity to other collaborators, since once a play had been accepted in advance, ‘the finished acts were handed in by instalments’ (2012, 122-123). This method would enable a playwright like Shakespeare to travel to Stratford and work on his instalments.<sup>36</sup>

Some of the inconsistencies in Shakespeare’s collaborative works may corroborate such alternative circumstances for composition.<sup>37</sup> The manuscript of *Sir Thomas More* offers suggestive material for charting the geography of Shakespeare’s collaborative writing. It is generally agreed that *More* was the work of four playwrights: Chettle, Dekker, Heywood, and Shakespeare, who was Hand D. The play is usually dated from spring 1603 to the end of 1604, though arguments have been made for an earlier date.<sup>38</sup> The process of writing *More* could offer alternative geographical options for composition.<sup>39</sup>

Several features of Shakespeare’s contributions to *More* imply a more detached relationship with the other contributors and with the intricacy of the theatre space and personnel. According to Ton Hoenselaars, Shakespeare was ‘apparently unfamiliar with the rest of the play’ and his part has to be

<sup>35</sup> Tiffany Stern maintains that ‘plays from the start were written patchily’ and ‘were parceled out to be written in segments’. She notes that ‘each patch, however, had a separate home, a separate circulation and, as often as not, a separate writer’ (2009, 2-3).

<sup>36</sup> Vickers argues that two or more dramatists working together ‘would surely need to spend even more “time in conference” to ensure a properly organized play’ than Field and Daborne record (2002, 433). Bart van Es comments that Daborne ‘sees the players only occasionally and is unwilling to read to the company until the entire play is done’ (2013, 44).

<sup>37</sup> Taylor notes that there are ‘many inconsistencies in *all* Shakespeare’s plays’ (2014, 15). Hoenselaars points out that Shakespeare’s ‘plays and poems only rarely comment on the contemporary theatre in such explicit terms as one finds in *Hamlet*’, and underlines ‘the dearth of explicit allusions to the contemporary theatre or Elizabethan society and politics at large in Shakespeare’s work’ (2012, 102-103). In *Pericles*, Shakespeare and George Wilkins each wrote ‘a self-contained section of the play’ (Vickers 2002, 445). In *Titus Andronicus*, Peele and Shakespeare ‘neatly divided their writing assignments, the older dramatist setting the play in motion’, but the inconsistencies in the play ‘indicate some problems that Shakespeare and Peele had in unifying their joint labour’ (Vickers 2002, 470, 473). *Henry VIII*, which Shakespeare wrote with Fletcher, was a less successful collaboration, and ‘unlike the neater separation of energies he had negotiated with Peele and Wilkins, may have cost him more than he had expected’ (Vickers 2002, 490).

<sup>38</sup> Peter W.M. Blayney (1972, 16) argues for an earlier date in the mid-1590s.

<sup>39</sup> On the attribution of Hand D, see Diana Price’s essay in this volume.

improved by Hand C, whose task appears to have been coordinating the manuscript and preparing it for the stage (2012, 108-109). John Jowett similarly agrees that ‘one aspect of Shakespeare’s contribution is his willingness to collaborate by way of deferring some matters to Hand C’ and proposes that Shakespeare deliberately left extra marginal space for Hand C to add stage directions. According to Jowett’s account, Shakespeare and the other playwrights ‘work[ed] in physical isolation one from another’, and the result is ‘an immediate consequence of the fragmented process of the revision’ (2012, 258-259).<sup>40</sup> On a purely speculative note, this ‘fragmented process’ opens up the possibility that Shakespeare could have been writing from afar (in Stratford), and his lack of engagement with the day-to-day details of the theatre scene could be a result of his absence from London.<sup>41</sup>

Gary Taylor also supports the conclusion that Shakespeare’s contributions to *Sir Thomas More* needed to be altered by Hand C ‘thirteen times’, and each of these instances is related to ‘the necessary business of performing a play: telling actors when to enter, identifying which lines are spoken by which actors’ (2014, 6). It could be that Shakespeare wrote this section of the play from Stratford, where he was not in contact with actors and with the practical business of the theatre, and thus his contribution had to be adjusted by Hand C, who John Jowett calls ‘the theatrical annotator demonstrably thinking about acting personnel’ (2012, 267). Taylor points out that Shakespeare’s work was ‘not well connected to the work of the three other adapters’ and at the time ‘he was not intensely interacting with Chettle, Dekker, or Heywood’ (2014, 7).<sup>42</sup> Could this be attributed to the fact that ‘Shakespeare had more economic and artistic freedom than any other professional playwright in

<sup>40</sup> Jowett points out that another passage likely entailed ‘initial drafting by Shakespeare and revision by Heywood’ (2012, 263). He concludes that Addition V was likely written by both Shakespeare and Heywood, with Shakespeare ‘knowingly and responsibly shaping the action’, but not ‘the key player in the overall inception of the revisions’, which was Hand C, who worked to ‘rein in the textual dispersal and co-ordinate the components’. Hand C also engaged in a final ‘late-stage adjustment’ of the script ‘for performance’ with an eye particularly for casting (265). John Jones describes Shakespeare’s process as ‘called in, as if out of the cold, to do a specific job, to fulfil a one-off assignment’ (1995, 13).

<sup>41</sup> A more tenuous piece of evidence in *More* is the preference for England over London, and the absence of London references altogether in Shakespeare’s contribution. Gary Taylor points out that in the second act of the play, ‘twenty specific London localities are mentioned by name. But not in Shakespeare’s three pages, which do not even contain the word “London” ... His three pages echo, instead, with the names “Surrey” and “Shrewsbury”, and evocations of “the majesty of England”’. Shakespeare also takes his imagery from ‘the natural world’ rather than from the ‘urban’ world (2014, 9). Jowett underscores this: ‘Shakespeare, unlike Heywood, did not engage in celebration of London’s civic dignity’ (2012, 264). Could this also be because he was based in Stratford, not London?

<sup>42</sup> Jowett similarly notes that Shakespeare wrote ‘as if without full awareness of the work of his fellow revisers’ (2012, 267).

London' (Taylor 2014, 7), and thus could have written in Stratford rather than in London when he chose to do so:<sup>43</sup>

### 5. *Implications for Shakespearian Biography*

The question of *what* Shakespeare wrote *where* is a fundamental crux for biographers, who have to reconcile these two spaces and chart a geography for Shakespeare between London and Stratford. Biographers who have an investment in locating Shakespeare primarily in London need to account for the substantial evidence related to the significance of New Place, while biographers committed to a more Stratford-centred geography need to explain how Shakespeare worked in a profession that was 'radically collaborative' (Hoenselaars 2012, 97).<sup>44</sup>

Even for the biographers most resistant to locating Shakespeare in Stratford during his writing career, one life event seems to necessitate bringing these two worlds together: the death of Hamnet Shakespeare. Stephen Greenblatt, perhaps the biographer most reluctant to place Shakespeare in Stratford any more than absolutely necessary, writes that in the summer of 1596 Shakespeare 'must have learned that Hamnet's condition had worsened and that it was necessary to drop everything and hurry home. By the time he reached Stratford the eleven-year-old boy—whom, apart from brief returns, Shakespeare had in effect abandoned in his infancy—may have already died' (2004, 289). The result of this tragic Stratford event in Greenblatt's version was a surge of London-based writing: 'Whether in the wake of Hamnet's death Shakespeare was suicidal or serene, he threw himself into his work' and entered an 'amazingly busy and productive period in his life' with only 'one or more visits home a year' (2004, 291, 330-331).

Because of his determination to confine the majority of Shakespeare's life to London, for Greenblatt the intersection of Stratford events with London events remains on the level of the mysterious and inexplicable: 'somehow, in the midst of this frenzy of activity—the relocation of the Globe; the adjustment to the new Scottish regime; the recruitment of new actors; the rush of court performances; the learning of new roles; the exhausting provincial

<sup>43</sup> Ioppolo points out that Shakespeare was unique among his contemporaries in investing in both theatres and in acting companies, giving him a financial incentive to 'help prepare the texts to the best advantage for production and later for publication, from which as a company-sharer he also derived income' (2006, 141).

<sup>44</sup> Edmondson (2013) discusses the various biographical narratives about the Shakespeares at New Place, from Katherine Duncan-Jones's depiction of Shakespeare 'begrudgingly' returning to Stratford at the end of his life (2001), to Stephen Greenblatt's story of a neglected wife (2004), to Germaine Greer's depiction of a hard-working Anne Hathaway who supervised renovations at New Place and ran a business (2007).

tours; the harried negotiations over the reopening of Blackfriars; and the hurried trips back to Stratford to see his wife and children, bury his mother, celebrate the marriage of his daughter, purchase real estate, and conduct petty lawsuits—Shakespeare also found time to write’ (2004, 368-369). Greenblatt’s inability to reconcile these two worlds forces him to abandon explanation and defer to the dubious circumstances of ‘somehow’.

Greenblatt’s reluctance to locate Shakespeare in Stratford is part of his larger agenda of denying importance to the Stratford components of Shakespeare’s life, most obviously his wife who was a ‘disastrous mistake’ and from whom he sought to ‘escape from Stratford’ (2004, 118, 209) by finding love and creativity in the metropolis of London. The end of Shakespeare’s career is thus a decline, where Shakespeare ‘retired from London and returned to Stratford, to his neglected wife in New Place’, resigned to face ‘a sense of constriction and loss’, and ‘[submit] himself to the crushing, glacial weight of the everyday’ and confront his ‘sour anger toward his wife’. Stratford held nothing positive for Shakespeare, who ‘had fashioned a place for himself in the wild world of the London stage’ and only reluctantly ‘embrace[d] ordinariness’ by returning to Stratford (144, 379, 387). This is hardly the picture of a playwright who invested in his large family home in Stratford and flourished as a writer in a domestic milieu, made possible by his financial independence. Instead, this Shakespeare is a man who felt ‘the strange, ineradicable distaste for her that he felt deep within him’ and who ‘found his trust, his happiness, his capacity for intimacy, his best bed elsewhere’ (145, 146). It would be difficult, if not impossible, to locate such a miserably married Shakespeare primarily in Stratford; this Shakespeare requires both a London-based life, and vilification of his wife Anne Hathaway.

Greenblatt’s grim and soul-crushing depiction of Stratford is vastly different from Jonathan Bate who, in his 2008 biography, maintains that Stratford, ‘in contrast to London, was associated with stability, community, garden field and health’ (54).<sup>45</sup> Bate is among the most amenable biographers to locating Shakespeare in Stratford for a majority of his time, even proposing that *Cymbeline* and *The Winter’s Tale* were ‘written back home in Stratford’ (2008, 48).<sup>46</sup> Conversely, in this account, Shakespeare’s commitment to Stratford was far stronger than to London: ‘the only occasion on which

<sup>45</sup> Graham Holderness discusses the role of various biographers’ lives in their shaping of Shakespeare’s life geography; he remarks that Bate displays a strong personal investment in this Midland ‘heart of England’ and in this rustic Shakespeare (2011, 10).

<sup>46</sup> David Bevington has argued just the opposite: ‘we might well be tempted to wonder if this dreamwork fantasy has something to do with Shakespeare’s own story of long separation from wife and family, his continuing interest in a precious relationship between the father and a favorite daughter, and the prospect of reunion with that family as the dramatist prepared to retire from his professional life’ (2007, 528). Bevington clearly equates ‘professional life’ with ‘London life’.

Shakespeare bought as opposed to rented a property in London was in March 1613, when he purchased a substantial gatehouse close to the Blackfriars Theatre' (334). Bate notes that in the first decade of the seventeenth century, Shakespeare 'had already made enough money from his shareholding in the company to purchase a large house, together with farmland and other properties back in Stratford. He no longer needed to endure the discomfort of touring. In all probability, he spent the greater proportion of these long plague years at home' (335). Bate also notes that there is evidence to suggest that Shakespeare gave up acting in the first decade of the seventeenth century, since he is listed as an actor in *Every Man in his Humour* (1598) and *Sejanus* (1603) but not in the later plays of Jonson. Likewise, Shakespeare is not listed in the 1607 'Players of Interludes', which includes the major members of the King's Company (335-336). Bate points out that there is no firm evidence of Shakespeare in London between autumn of 1604 and May of 1612, 'when he was sworn in at the Westminster Court of Requests under the denomination "William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon in the county of Warwick, gentleman of the age of 48 years or thereabouts"' (337). Bate's conclusion is that 'Shakespeare may never have fully retired, but he may well have semi-retired much earlier than we suppose' (359). This version of Shakespeare gives credence to the Stratford components of his life, as a stable and beneficial locale where he was able to write and invest his financial resources.

Other biographers align on a less extreme scale between London and Stratford. Katherine Duncan Jones sees Stratford as 'an excellent nursery for a player and a poet, but for a man of Shakespeare's abundant talents yet lowly fortunes it was also a deadend', and she reluctantly admits his return to Stratford at the end of his life 'of necessity rather than choice' (2001, 25). René Weis allows a more generous span of time in Stratford to the poet: 'In New Place Shakespeare would be comfortable, warm in front of his many large fires, with time enough despite the calls on it to play with his daughters, go for walks, and generally enjoy the life of a country gentleman'. He offers a sentimental image of Shakespeare's life in Stratford, moving into New Place shortly after the death of Hamnet and enjoying the lush variety of his garden: 'It is possible to imagine him here, writing more plays, including all the great tragedies, perhaps in a study of his own, with a window, looking out over his orchard of apples, quinces, pears, and cherries, and particularly vines' (2007, 261, 219). Lois Potter takes a middle stance between locating Shakespeare's writing in Stratford or in London, imagining Shakespeare going back and forth between London and Stratford: 'it is tempting to think that a revised *Twelfth Night* manuscript was fetched at the last moment from Stratford, since this play ... feels exceptionally "finished"' (2012, 417). Potter doubts that New Place was 'the quiet retreat that is sometimes imagined' (403), and she sees Shakespeare as a collaborative playwright working in the heart of London, where his fellows actors and authors 'were the most important people in his life' (79).

In the end, we have no way of knowing for certain how long Shakespeare lived in London, or Stratford, or which pieces of his writing were written where, but it is unrealistic to assume that Shakespeare wrote only in London, and did no creative work at his large house in Stratford.<sup>47</sup> Even so, we might ask why it matters. What is the difference between a Shakespeare who writes in the heart of the London theatre world, amidst the Bankside community of brothels and bearbaiting, or one who writes in his Stratford manor house amid his extended family, wife and children, and parents in his home town? What might it mean to relocate artistic production, and the practice of collaborative writing in particular, outside of London?

### 6. *Conclusion*

The more Shakespeare wrote in Stratford, the more his work would be intertwined with domestic and family life in the New Place setting; conversely, the more his writing took place in London, the clearer the separation between Shakespeare the writer and Shakespeare the family man. Narratives of Shakespeare's writing career that depend exclusively on the London theatre setting as a backdrop for writing would be nearly impossible to sustain. To cite only one example, Jeffrey Masten's argument that collaboration was 'a mode of homoerotic textual production' and that Shakespeare 'wrote within a paradigm that insistently figured writing as mutual imitation, collaboration, and homoerotic exchange' (1997, 60, 9) is less convincing if some of that writing took place in the domestic setting of a manor house in Stratford, with his wife, parents, children, and family friends in residence.<sup>48</sup>

Locating Shakespeare in Stratford for a majority of his life would give a larger role to the domestic scene at New Place as a context for his writing. New Place would have been a bustling, busy space of twenty to thirty rooms, likely with servants, extended family and friends, and cottage industries taking place. It is unclear exactly what motivated Shakespeare in 1597 to purchase New Place, almost midway through his playwriting career, but it would have been a significant manor house that Shakespeare 'must have known from boyhood, walked past every day on his way to and from' grammar school (Edmondson 2013, 97).

It is likely that the Shakespeare family home on Henley Street was damaged by fire in 1594-1595, and Shakespeare's purchase of New Place may have been 'an effort by a man conscious of family obligations to provide a suitable home

<sup>47</sup> Leeds Barroll cautions against 'privileging of supposed events as basic facts' which results in 'not the expansion but the freezing of a number of available viewpoints that might otherwise be brought to bear' (1991, 7). Similarly, John Jones describes deciphering the process by which Shakespeare wrote and revised his plays as 'a world not of proof but of probability maturing towards a certainty that is beyond reasonable doubt' (1995, 2).

<sup>48</sup> For an extended critique of Masten, see Vickers 2002, 528-541.

for his dependents in the wake of misfortune' (Bearman 2012a, 485).<sup>49</sup> New Place probably housed a number of Shakespeare family members, including John Shakespeare until his death in 1601; Mary Arden until her death in 1608; and Shakespeare's brothers Gilbert and Richard until their deaths in 1612 and 1613 respectively. It is likely that Shakespeare's elder daughter Susanna and her husband John Hall lived in New Place from their marriage in 1607 until after Shakespeare's death, and that his younger daughter Judith lived there until her marriage to Thomas Quiney in 1616. Stratford town clerk Thomas Greene and his wife Lettice lived at New Place at least in 1609 but probably longer.<sup>50</sup> Greene was a frequent traveller to London and was well-connected with the theatre community there; he would have kept the New Place community apprised of news from London.<sup>51</sup> Thus, a relatively large Shakespeare family (plus family friends) probably occupied New Place from the start of Shakespeare's ownership through the end of his life. This population would not necessarily have provided a quiet retreat from busy London life, but the greater concentration of Shakespeare family members in New Place makes a persuasive case that Shakespeare himself would have been part of this community as often as possible.

In the end, none of these highly speculative ways to reconcile the models of collaboration and Stratford residency offers a perfect solution to how Shakespeare could have carried out his career as an early modern dramatist and as a resident in a manor house in Stratford. Either option, locating more of Shakespeare's writing in Stratford or in London, gives a larger role to his wife Anne Hathaway because of the size and activities of New Place. If Shakespeare resided primarily in Stratford, she would likely have been part of his daily life, and would likely have had a greater influence on his creative output. If Shakespeare left New Place and its cottage industries to be run by someone else while he was in London, the most likely person would have been his wife Anne.<sup>52</sup> The latter scenario would give her more autonomy and responsibility than she is often granted in accounts of Shakespeare's life. Either alternative suggests that Anne was an active part of life at New Place, taking charge of the cottage industries and family logistics at his Stratford home if he was absent, or accompanying him in the running of the household

<sup>49</sup> van Es argues that around the time Shakespeare purchased New Place, an 'alteration in his daily patterns of work' also occurred (2013, 255).

<sup>50</sup> Bearman point out that Greene had moved to St. Mary's, a house next to the Stratford churchyard, in 1611 with his family (2012b, 297). Bearman notes that Greene and Shakespeare 'clearly knew each other well', and that 'more evidence exists to document Shakespeare's dealings with Greene than with any other of his contemporaries' (2012b, 304).

<sup>51</sup> Greene was involved with Shakespeare in various legal dealings, particularly related to the Welcombe enclosure acts in 1610 (Greer 2007, 234).

<sup>52</sup> Lena Orlin (2014) uses the life of Elizabeth Quiney, who was essentially a successful businesswoman in Stratford, to argue a parallel life for Anne Hathaway.

activities if it was his primary residence. The idea of Shakespeare's wife Anne 'remaining silent and invisible' (Greer 2007, 4) is impossible to sustain, and she deserves more attention and significance than she usually gets in accounts of Shakespeare's life and writing.

As two components of Shakespeare studies outlined in this essay progress, perhaps traces of how and where Shakespeare collaborated, or how and where his home of New Places figures in his writing career, will offer a solution to how these two divergent paths can be reconciled. Until then, any account of collaboration that does not provide an explanation for Shakespeare's life at New Place, or any account of New Place that does not offer an explanation for Shakespeare's collaborative writing, can only be part of an untold story.

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# Shakespeare and Warwickshire Dialect

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## *Abstract*

The article investigates whether Shakespeare used Warwickshire, Cotswold or Midlands dialect, focusing on the sources of recent claims by Bate, Kathman and Wood, most of which derive from early dialect dictionaries compiled by eighteenth and nineteenth century antiquarians. It determines that all of these claims – frequently used as a defence against the Shakespeare authorship question – fall into four categories: those based on errors of fact, well-known or widely-used words, poetic inventions, and those derived through circular reasoning. Two problems are identified. Firstly, the source texts on which these dialect claims rest were written two- to three-hundred years after the plays, by which time language use would not only have evolved, but would have been influenced by Shakespeare. Secondly, the continuing academic taboo surrounding the authorship question has meant that these claims, though easily refuted by searching the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the digitized texts of *EEBO*, have gone unchallenged in academia. It demonstrates that querying the validity of arguments derived from an assumed biography can – without in any way disproving that the man from Stratford wrote the body of works we call ‘Shakespeare’ – lead to a better understanding of the way Shakespeare actually used language, and the meanings he intended.

*Keywords:* Authorship, Biography, Dialect, Shakespeare, Warwickshire

## 1. *Introduction: Collaboration, Biography and Authorship*

When Shakespeare scholars address each other on the subject of authorship, they tend to do so entirely within the framework of the first of the words in the subheading of this special issue: collaboration. From the early work of F.G. Fleay and John Dover Wilson, through Brian Vickers’ *Shakespeare: Co-Author* (2002), to the most recent work of McDonald P. Jackson and Gary Taylor, the interest is focused upon detecting those parts of the Shakespeare canon which may have been contributed by Middleton, Peele, Fletcher or Wilkins, and whether (and with whom) Shakespeare wrote any part of the Shakespeare apocrypha. These are the internal debates, and they are undoubtedly interesting and valid.



When Shakespeare scholars address the wider world on the subject of authorship, however, it is usually in the context of the Shakespeare authorship question. Until recently these forays were both rare and brief. James Shapiro, whose *Contested Will* (2010) was the first book-length treatment by a professional scholar, explains why: the authorship question remains ‘virtually taboo’, being the ‘one subject walled off from serious study by Shakespeare scholars’ (4). In 2013, this taboo appeared to have been broken with the Cambridge University Press publication of *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt*, the first book published by an academic publisher intended to defend the traditional authorship (Edmondson and Wells 2013).<sup>1</sup> Yet the fact that serious study of the authorship question remains a taboo is illustrated by the volume’s failure to engage with contemporary research on the issue. At no point did *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt* address any twenty-first century arguments: those forwarded in Diana Price’s *Shakespeare’s Unorthodox Biography* (2001), William Leahy’s *Shakespeare and His Authors* (2010), nor the work of Roger Stritmatter and Lynne Kositsky, for example (Stritmatter and Kositsky 2007), or myself (Barber 2010). Instead, two chapters were devoted to Delia Bacon, whose book on the authorship question was published in 1857. Chapters such as Carol Chillington Rutter’s, which demonstrate that the author of the Shakespeare canon possessed a formal education, or Barbara Everett’s, which argues the self-evident proposition that drama is a form of fiction, demonstrate a palpable failure to understand the question that *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt* is supposed to address.

A key to both the origin and the continued rise of the authorship question is the first word of this issue’s subtitle: biography. Shakespeare doubt was forged in the apparent paucity of biographical material linking the assumed author to his works: according to Price’s comparative study of twenty-five Elizabethan and Jacobean writers, the traditional attribution is ‘unsupported by the sort of personal literary documentation found for any of his lesser contemporaries’ (2001, 150). Shakespeare scholars who engage with the authorship question not only argue that the gaps in Shakespeare’s historical record are unexceptional (Edmondson and Wells 2013, 63-72); they argue that biographical links between Shakespeare and his works do in fact exist.

Whereas the internal debate on authorship (centred on collaboration) is critiqued by fellow scholars, the external debate on authorship (centred on biography) is not subjected to the same scrutiny. These arguments are made in an area of research so taboo that they are essentially voiced in an academic vacuum, being peer-reviewed by scholars disinclined to argue

<sup>1</sup> Though it is not the first book by an academic publisher to address the authorship question. It is preceded in that regard both by *Shakespeare’s Unorthodox Biography* (Price 2001) and by *Shakespeare and His Authors* (Leahy 2010).

against them. However, it is dangerous for orthodox Shakespearean scholars to lean upon arguments that can be easily collapsed, and it is in the spirit of eliminating weaker arguments from the debate that this article is written. Such an argument is the linkage of Shakespeare's works to the traditional author's biography through the claim that Shakespeare's plays contain some two dozen words derived from Warwickshire, Cotswolds or Midlands dialect.

In a lexicon of some 31,500 different words, two dozen is a trifling fraction of a percentage. Nevertheless much has been made of these words by scholars who wish to tie William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon more closely to the works attributed to him. A differentiation must be made here between writing in dialect, and using dialect-derived words. G.L. Brook noted that 'When Shakespeare uses dialect in his plays, he does not use that of his native Warwickshire but is content with the conventional stage Southern dialect' (1976, 177) and N.F. Blake made similar observations on the absence of dialect in Shakespeare's works, but followed them up by saying that 'Shakespeare used many words from his own Warwickshire dialect in his plays without any implication that they suggested rusticity or lack of sophistication' (1981, 81). He includes many of these words, noting their possible Warwickshire links, in *Shakespeare's Non-Standard English: A Dictionary of His Informal Language* (Blake 2004). The consensus view that Shakespeare used dialect-derived words has not been seriously challenged.

Yet the general argument 'Shakespeare used words derived from Warwickshire dialect' is problematic from the outset. Firstly, we have no materials from the period when Shakespeare was writing which identify contemporary Warwickshire dialect. Secondly, the usual scholarly provisos relating to the unknown provenance of Shakespeare's printed texts cannot be suspended. This is especially important given that a number of the 'dialect' words appear only in a particular version of the play, and we do not know whether the word emanated from Shakespeare's pen, or from that of a co-author, editor or playhouse scribe; several appear to be errors. Thirdly, the range of Shakespeare's vocabulary in derivation (French, Italian, Spanish, Latin, Greek) would suggest a very widely read author with exceptional recall.

Close scrutiny of the most recently repeated two dozen words and phrases argued to be derived from the author's local dialect reveals that they fall roughly into four categories: false claims, well-known or widely-used words, poetic inventions, and circular reasoning.

## 2. *False Claims*

A fairly typical example of the way such words and phrases are used as ammunition against Shakespeare skeptics comes from two lines from a dirge in *Cymbeline*:

Golden lads and girls all must  
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust. (4.2.263-264)<sup>2</sup>

As Jonathan Bate explains:

In Warwickshire vernacular dialect, a dandelion is a ‘golden lad’ when in flower, a ‘chimney-sweeper’ when ready to be blown to the wind. This is no lord’s memory. It belongs to a local country boy in a Warwickshire field. (in Nolen and Bate 2003, 123)

However, there is no record of ‘golden lad’ or ‘chimney-sweeper’ in *Folklore of Shakespeare* (Thiselton Dyer 1884), or *Plant-lore & Garden-craft of Shakespeare* (Ellacombe 1884). The *English Dialect Dictionary* (J. Wright 1898) and *The Englishman’s Flora* (Grigson 1955) contains no entry for ‘golden lad’, and the latter reveals that ‘chimney-sweeper’ was the folk-name – in Warwickshire, Wiltshire, and Northamptonshire – for Ribwort: ‘the black heads of *Plantago lanceolata*’.

The source of the idea that these phrases are Warwickshire dialect for the two phases of the dandelion can be traced back to Hugh Kenner. In his 1971 study of Ezra Pound, he recounted the following tale: ‘In the mid-20th century a visitor to Shakespeare’s Warwickshire met a countryman blowing the grey head off a dandelion: “We call these golden boys chimney-sweepers when they go to seed”’ (122). Apparently the story came from Guy Davenport, a friend of Ezra Pound, who claimed to have heard it from the visitor himself, a William Arrowsmith. Kenner’s third-hand anecdote has since been widely adopted and now appears in the notes of the RSC edition of *Cymbeline* (Bate, Rasmussen and Sharpe, eds, 2011).

Kenner’s image relies upon the idea that a dandelion, gone to seed, looks like the brush used to clean chimneys, but the *OED* cites no examples of ‘chimney-sweeper’ meaning anything but a person who cleans chimneys. What’s more, the brush to which Kenner’s image alludes was not invented until 1805; chimney-sweeps of the Jacobean era used besoms with brushing ends constructed from holly stems.<sup>3</sup> Though this was pointed out as early as 1979, this appealing but fictitious idea has continued to gain traction (Brooks 1979, 597).

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise stated, all Shakespeare quotes and corresponding line numbers are from *The Oxford Shakespeare*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Wells, Taylor *et al.*, eds, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> This is shown in the engraving of famous sweep Mulled Sack opposite the title page of Harper 1908. It is also mentioned in a poem by L. Menton from *Money Masters All Things*, which says ‘The Chimney-Sweeper... round about does trudge with’s Poles and Holly’ (1698, 93).

The true roots of Kenner's story of Warwickshire dandelions were first revealed by Gillian Spraggs (2010). She noted that the idea appeared in Margaret Kennedy's prize-winning historical novel *Troy Chimneys* (1953), set in Regency England, where it was given to be Irish folklore from the character's mother:

She reminded me that our mother had her own names for many wild flowers – not the names common among the country people here. She must have learnt them from her Irish mother. We passed by Ribstone Pit which was full of the weeds which, round here, are called dandelions. Sukey remembered that our mother called them 'golden lads', and the seeds, which are here sometimes called dandelion clocks, she called 'chimney sweepers' on account of their likeness to the brushes which are used for that purpose. (124-125)

Three years later in the novel *For All We Know* (1956), G.B. Stern picked up Kennedy's idea and rewrote its provenance, attributing it to an editor of a fictitious edition of *Cymbeline*:

A note at the end of her school edition had informed her that in Shakespeare's Warwickshire golden lads and girls were dandelions, called chimney-sweepers when they faded and lost their gold; and knowing this lent the couplet an enchantment no longer marred by the uncouth image of men with sooty faces and long brushes. (65)

Having checked all the editions likely to have been used by a (fictional) schoolgirl of the period, Spraggs concluded that this footnote is an invention of Stern's. The novelist's source was Kennedy's earlier novel. Kenner's source, whether he knew it or not, was the fictional footnote in Stern's novel.<sup>4</sup> Kenner either invented the tale he told in *The Pound Era*, or it was invented by one of his sources, perhaps after reading Stern's novel. Botanist E.C. Nelson, who discovered that Shakespeare's 'golden lads' was first linked to dandelions in a letter to *The Nation and Athenaeum* in 1928, refers to the idea that these phrases were Warwickshire dialect for dandelion as 'a twentieth-century myth, perhaps even a hoax' (2015, 2).

Shakespeare's supposed use of Warwickshire dialect is one of the many defences for the traditional attribution of Shakespeare's works. The list of Warwickshire dialect words found in the preface of *A Shakespeare Glossary* (Onions 1911, iv) was perhaps the starting point, since several of these words appear in the dialect lists of Michael Wood (2003) and David Kathman (2013). It is perhaps telling that claims for some of the words first listed by Onions in 1911 have been silently dropped, and that the entire list

<sup>4</sup> That the route is reasonably direct is suggested by the shared phrase 'Shakespeare's Warwickshire'.

was dropped from the third edition of Onions' glossary revised by Robert Eagleson (Onions and Eagleson 1986). Perhaps also worth noting is that the linguist David Crystal makes no glossary of Warwickshire dialect alongside the glossaries of French, Italian and Spanish words included in Shakespeare's works (Crystal and Crystal 2002). But do other claims of Warwickshire dialect stand up to scrutiny?

Michael Wood's assertion that Shakespeare used the names of 'Cotswold Apples ("redcoats" and "caraways")' (2003, 17) appears to have no more basis than our first botanical example. There is no record for an apple called 'redcoat' in the National Fruit Collection catalogue<sup>5</sup> or Joseph Wright's *Dictionary* (1898). Wood cannot mean the Redcoat Grieve, as this variety first arose in 1917. But this hardly matters, since the word 'redcoat' doesn't appear in the works of Shakespeare at all. Justice Shallow does mention the second apple: 'we will eat a last year's pippin of mine own grafting, with a dish of caraways' (2 *Henry IV*, 5.3.2-3) and in the same scene, Davy offers Bardolph 'a dish of leather-coats' (5.3.42), which may be what Wood has in mind. The *English Dialect Dictionary* has no entry for 'leather-coat' and the *OED* defines 'leather-coat' as 'a name for russet apples, from the roughness of their skin', giving the Shakespeare quote as the earliest source. The source for the Cotswold dialect claim is *Shakspeare: His Birth-place and its Neighbourhood*, which says 'Davy serves Justice Shallow with "leathern-coats," or leatheran coats as they are now called, an apple peculiar to the neighbourhood of Stratford. A very old tree of this species was standing, till recently, at Weston Sands, from which other young trees have been raised' (Wise 1861, 98). He says it is 'sometimes to be met with in the more southern counties, under the forms of "leather-jacket," "buff-coat," and "russetine"' (99). It is not true that russet apples were only called 'leather-coats' in the Stratford area. Samuel Purchas, raised in Thaxted, Essex, and educated at Cambridge, had no known connection to Stratford. Yet, in the sixth book of *Purchas his Pilgrimes, the Fourth Part*, Purchas wrote of a fruit grown in Puerto Rico, 'the colour of a very darke russiting apple, or a leather-coat, of the bigness of a great Costard' (1625, 1172). That leather-coats were an apple peculiar to Stratford is one of a number of false statements made by Wise, as will become apparent.

J. Wright's *Dictionary* states that 'carraway' was used as an apple name around the Bath area of Somerset, not the Cotswolds; but J. Wright's *Dictionary* is not a source contemporaneous with Shakespeare's works in any case. According to the National Fruit Collection catalogue, 'carraway' is another name for the French apple Fenouillet Gris, first described (at least to the archivist's knowledge) in 1608. Perhaps the author of this scene in

<sup>5</sup> <<http://www.nationalfruitcollection.org.uk/search.php>>, accessed 10 April 2014.

*2 Henry IV* had encountered this apple a few years earlier, but it wouldn't link him to the Cotswolds. Again, it is Wise who is the source of the claim, having written of 'the carraway-russet, an apple still well known, both in the midland and southern counties, for its flavour and its good keeping qualities' (1861, 99). At least he recognises that this apple is known, by the time he is writing, across most of England.

According to Wood, Shakespeare mentions 'Red Lammas', which he describes as 'the wheat sown in Gloucestershire at the end of August' (2003, 17). This is incorrect: Justice Shallow uses the term 'red wheat', not 'Red Lammas' (*2 Henry IV*, 5.1.13). More importantly, there is nothing to reinforce Wood's claim that red wheat was particular to Gloucestershire. A search of *EEBO* reveals that 'red wheat' appeared in the following printed source prior to the publication of *2 Henry IV*:

- Sir Anthony (or John) Fitzherbert, *The Book of Husbandry* (London, 1523).
- Sir Thomas Eliot, *The Dictionary of Sir Thomas Eliot, Knight* (London, 1538).
- Edward VI, *Proclamations as have been set forth by the King's Majesty* (London, 1551).
- Roger Edgeworth, *Sermons very Fruitful, Godly, and Learned* (London, 1557).
- Conrad Heresbach, *Four Books of Husbandry* (London, 1577).
- Rembert Dodoens, *A New Herbal, or History of Plants* (London, 1578).
- Thomas Newton, *Approved Medicines and Cordial Receipts* (London, 1580).
- Anglicus Bartholomaeus, *Batman upon Bartholome his Book* (London, 1582).

In *The English Husbandman* (1613), Gervase Markham (born in Nottinghamshire, probably educated at Cambridge, and living in London from 1593) refers to 'Organe Wheat (in the south parts called red Wheat)' (B3v). These publications suggest that the phrase used by Shakespeare, 'red wheat', was well-known in London and throughout the south of England.

Another false claim is the claim that Shakespeare used the word 'twit' to mean 'blab' (Wood 2003, 18), which was Cotswolds dialect, according to J. Wright's *Dictionary*. In the *Henry VI* plays Shakespeare uses the verb 'twit' three times. In *1 Henry VI*, Lord Talbot says:

Becomes it thee to taunt his valiant age  
And twit with cowardice a man half dead? (3.5.14-15)

In *2 Henry VI*, the Earl of Suffolk says:

Hath he not twit our sovereign lady here  
 With ignominious words, though clerkly couch'd,  
 As if she had suborned some to swear  
 False allegations to o'erthrow his state? (3.1.178-181)

In *3 Henry VI*, the Duke of Clarence says 'And there's for twitting me with perjury' (5.5.40). Additionally, in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Proteus says:

When I protest true loyalty to her,  
 She twits me with my falsehood to my friend; (4.2.7-8)

From reading these passages, it is clear that *twit* cannot be substituted with 'blab'. Shakespeare is using *twit* in the sense of '1.a. trans. To blame, find fault with, censure, reproach, upbraid (a person), esp. in a light or annoying way; to cast an imputation upon; to taunt' (*OED*). Indeed, the quote from *2 Henry VI* is given as an example under this entry. This is not marked as dialect but as a word in general use from about 1530. According to the *OED*, it was used by Gabriel Harvey in a letter of 1573. Gabriel Harvey was not from the Cotswolds; he was a southerner, living in Saffron Walden, Cambridge, and London. J. Wright's *Dictionary* shows the use of this first sense of 'twit' ('to tease') to be common in Scotland, Cumbria, West Yorkshire, Lancashire and Sussex. Only the second sense ('to blab') was common in Warwickshire (and also Northamptonshire, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire; J. Wright 1898, VI, 288).<sup>6</sup> In other words, Shakespeare used the verb *twit* in its *non*-Warwickshire form.

More perplexing is Wood's statement that in the village of Compton Abdale in the 1930s 'one seventy-five year-old farmer still used "on a line" for in a rage' (2003, 18). The expression 'on a line' does not appear anywhere in the Shakespeare canon. It transpires Wood is referring to the seventh entry for 'line' in C.T. Onions *A Shakespeare Glossary*, where Onions concludes that 'your husband is in his old lines again' (*The Merry Wives of Windsor* 4.2.17-18) and 'His pettish lunes' (*Troilus and Cressida* 2.3.129)<sup>7</sup> – both printed as 'lines' in the 1623 Folio – are using 'lines' to mean 'fits of temper', postulating that this usage is 'perhaps to be connected with the mod[ern] Warwickshire 'on a line' = in a rage' (Onions 1975, 130). Onions' speculative suggestion is undoubtedly based on the fact that he believes the author of these lines to hail from Warwickshire, so for Wood to obliquely refer to it as

<sup>6</sup> 'TWIT Sc. Cum. Yks. Lan. Nhp. War. Glo. Oxf. Hnt. e.An. Sus. 1.v To tease; to sneer at. (Sc. Cum. w.Yks. Lan. Sus.) 2. To repeat confidences; to tell tales; to blab. (Nhp. War. Glo. Oxf)'.

<sup>7</sup> Both are sometimes given as 'lunes' by modern editors, though they were printed as 'lines' in the 1623 Folio.

evidence of the author's Warwickshire roots is circular reasoning. But how can we be certain that Shakespeare even wrote the word 'lines' into these speeches, which only appeared in this form in the posthumously edited First Folio? The 1609 quarto text of *Troilus and Cressida* reads not 'His pettish lines', but 'His course, and time', and 'lines' is also absent from the 1602 and 1619 quartos of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, which both used 'vaine': 'your husband is in his old vaine againe'.

Even where claims for Shakespeare's use of Warwickshire dialect are not entirely spurious, they are built on unreliable foundations. The chief difficulty is that the sources on which Wood and other scholars rest their claims are not contemporaneous with the texts under consideration. If words used in Shakespeare's plays were being spoken in Warwickshire in the 1930s, that does not mean that they were spoken there in the 1600s, or if they were, that they were specifically local dialect. G.L. Brook, giving the examples of the now exclusively Northern 'lass', observes that words and phrases we now think of as dialect have effectively been preserved in certain localities, but were nevertheless once widely used (1976, 179).

The earliest of the sources for Warwickshire dialect claims, Francis Grose's *A Provincial Glossary* (1790), was compiled two centuries after the first Shakespeare plays were written. Four other works to which scholars are presumably referring (but generally without citation) are 'A Glossary of Words still used in Warwickshire to be found in Shaksper' in John Richard de Capel Wise's *Shaksper: his birthplace and its neighbourhood* (1861), R.W. Huntley's *A Glossary of the Cotswold Dialect* (1868), G.F. Northall's *A Warwickshire Word Book* (1896) and Joseph Wright's 6-volume *English Dialect Dictionary* (1898). These works are even further removed from the author's lifetime. One problem with using them as evidence, as we shall see, is the pervasive nature of Shakespeare's influence. Barring Francis Grose, all of these authors and editors show a clear awareness of Shakespeare's works, and there is evidence that some words were included as Cotswolds or Warwickshire dialect *because* of their use by Shakespeare and the general belief that he was from the locale. Additionally, these works do not even claim to list words peculiar to the Midlands. If a word was used in Warwickshire, but was not peculiar to Warwickshire, it is of limited usefulness as evidence of the author's home county. With the advent of searchable digitised texts, words designated as Cotswold dialect by these amateur compilers and antiquarians can now be shown to be widely used.

### 3. *Well-Known or Widely-Used*

The majority of Warwickshire dialect claims fall into this category: the well-known word. 'Mazzard', for the head, is used in both *Hamlet* and *Othello*. In

the fight that will cost him his reputation, Cassio exclaims ‘Let me go, sir, or I’ll knock you o’er the maz[z]ard’ (2.3.147). In the graveyard scene, Hamlet says a skull is ‘now my lady Worm’s, chapless, and knock’d about the maz[z]ard with a sexton’s spade’ (5.1.87). Wood tells us that ‘As late as the 1930s in the Cotswolds, you could still hear Shakespeare’s “mazzard” for “head”’ (2003, 18).<sup>8</sup> Even if that were true (and the basis for this statement is not clear), ‘mazzard’ was never confined to the Cotswolds. A search of *EEBO* reveals that ‘mazzard’ (for ‘head’) was used by the following playwrights of Shakespeare’s era:

Anthony Munday, *The first book of Primaleon of Greece* (1595)

Thomas Middleton, *The Black Book* (1604)

Nathan Field, *A Woman Is a Weather-Cock* (1612)

Francis Beaumont, *Philaster* (1620)

The earliest of these publications, Anthony Munday’s, precedes the presumed composition dates of both *Hamlet* and *Othello*. There is no reason to believe his usage derives from a familiarity with Cotswolds dialect. Munday was born in London and, barring a sojourn in Rome, appears to have lived there for most of his life. ‘Mazzard’ is given as a variety of cherry in the *OED* and in Grose’s *Provincial Glossary* (1790). It would be fair to say that ‘mazzard’ to mean head could be characterised as general sixteenth-century slang. It cannot be used as evidence that an author hailed from the Cotswolds.

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, the Egyptian queen’s flight from the battle of Actium is described as follows:

Yon riband-red nag of Egypt—  
Whom leprosy o’ertake!—i’th’ midst o’th’ fight—  
When vantage like a pair of twins appeared,  
Both as the same, or rather ours the elder—  
The breese upon her, like a cow in June,  
Hoists sails and flies. (3.10.10-15)

Explicitly using this example as an authorship question defence, Wood states that

Breeze here has nothing to do with wind; it is an Anglo-Saxon word that was still used in Midlands dialect in Tudor times. It refers to the gadflies that, in summer, trouble cows, who all at once lift their tails high in the air and stampede away. That’s the kind of knowledge you don’t get at Oxbridge, or in a rich man’s house. (2003, 18)

<sup>8</sup> Although Wood’s immediate source is not clear, the earliest source text which claims ‘mazzard’ as Cotswold dialect is Huntley 1868, 50.

Wood has been misled by either Wise or Huntley, who both list 'breeze' as local dialect. Contrary to his statement, the *OED* reveals that this Old English word for the gadfly was used by Edmund Spenser (who did indeed have an Oxbridge education), in his *Faerie Queen* (1596, VI, cant. 1): 'As doth a Steare ... With his long taile the bryzes brush away'. The *OED* also reveals the word was used by Chaucer: 'I wol me venge on loue as dope a breese On wylde horsse'. If the author of *Antony and Cleopatra* were not familiar with Spenser and Chaucer (which seems unlikely) this does at least demonstrate that one did not have to be a native of the Midlands to know the word. A search of *EEBO* reveals that 'breeze' for 'gadfly' also occurs in London-born John Webster's *The White Divil* (1612) – 'I will put breeze in his tail, set him gadding presently' (Webster 1960, 21) – and Richard Perceval's *A Dictionary in Spanish and English* (1599) where he defines the Spanish word *Moscárda* as 'a breeze, a gadbee, a horse flie'. It is therefore safe to conclude that 'breeze' was not Midlands dialect, but was in fact well-known. It is also untrue that 'Breeze here has nothing to do with wind'; by the end of the sixteenth century the modern usage of the term 'breeze' had been introduced, according to the *OED*, in publications by Richard Haklyut (1589) and Sir Walter Raleigh (1596). The playwright, describing sea-faring vessels, is clearly punning on both uses.

Words not well-known in themselves, but used in a well-known text, similarly cannot be attributed to the author's use of local dialect, even if the word originally arose in the Midlands. The 'hade land' of the 1600 quarto of *2 Henry IV* (5.1.12) is said by Wood to be a phrase peculiar to Midlands dialect, describing 'the turn at the top of a furrow made by a plough team' (2003, 17).<sup>9</sup> The *OED* defines 'hade' as 'a strip of land left unploughed as a boundary line and means of access between two ploughed portions of a field' and gives its earliest printed occurrence as Sir Anthony Fitzherbert's *The Book of Husbandry* (1523; sometimes attributed to his brother John). Neither Onions, Grose, Wise, Huntley or Northall mention 'hade land' and Wood's claim is probably based on the fact that the Fitzherbert family seat was at Norbury, Derbyshire, in the Midlands. But the book had become a classic of English agriculture before the end of the sixteenth century, widely read for its wit and wisdom, as well as its prose style. Published in at least twenty editions before 1598, the book gained 'a substantial, steady, even an avid readership' (Hellinga 1999, 491). There's no reason why the author of *2 Henry IV* might not have read *The Book of Husbandry*, as he clearly read numerous other printed sources of all kinds. But in any case, the word intended may

<sup>9</sup> Wells and Taylor, like many other modern editors, have corrected 'hade land' to 'headland'; the word, Wood argues, a Midlands dialect word, is 'hade land' only in *The Second Part of Henrie the Fourth* (1600, 13r).

have been 'headland', the First Folio version popular with most editors. It makes little sense for Robert Shallow to instruct his servant Davy to 'sow the hadeland with wheat' (2 *Henry IV*, 5.2.12), when hade land is a strip of land deliberately left unploughed.

The word 'ballow', which featured in Onions' list, is another case where the word is in dispute. In *King Lear* (4.5.230-232), Edgar says: 'Nay, come not near th'old man. Keep out, 'che vor' ye, or I's' try whether your costard or my ballow be the harder'.<sup>10</sup> David Kathman states that 'ballow' (for cudgel) is a dialect word 'from Warwickshire and the West Midlands' (2013, 129). The *OED*, however, declares 'ballow' (only in the Folio text) is 'probably a misprint from baton', pointing out that the word in Quarto versions of the play reads 'battero' (which the *OED*'s editors also regard as spurious). This points to the difficulty of knowing how the texts have been transmitted to us, and whether 'ballow' was the word originally written by Shakespeare, or inserted by someone else (for example, the printer or editor of the First Folio). J. Wright's *Dictionary*, however, does include an entry for 'ballow' meaning 'cudgel, stick or pole' and gives an example of its use in Nottingham legal records that pre-dates *King Lear*: 'John Bult Sherriff's Seargeant at Mace sues Thomas Hewett cobbler for assulting him with a staff beaked with iron called "a ballowe staff" - Not. Rec (1504)' (J. Wright 1898, I, 145). It gives the word's usage as being in the North Country, Nottingham and Kent.

Another word that Wood tells us could be heard in the Cotswolds 'As late as the 1930s' was the word 'orts', which Shakespeare uses to mean the leftovers of food in *The Rape of Lucrece*, *Julius Caesar* and *Troilus and Cressida* (2003, 18). As with other words Wood lists under this sentence construction, the use of 'orts' in the Cotswolds does not argue for it being a Warwickshire word. The *OED* does not mark 'orts' as dialect, but as a word in general use from around 1300. A contemporaneous use listed in the *OED* is Thomas Bastard's *Chrestoleros* (1598). Bastard was not from the Cotswolds; he was born in Blandford, Dorset, and attended Winchester College and Oxford University. J. Wright's *Dictionary* confirms the universal usage of the word in describing 'ort' as 'leavings of any description... especially of food' is 'in gen[eral] dial[ect] use in Sc[otland], Irel[and], Eng[land] and Am[erica]' (J. Wright 1898, 4:360).

'Kecksies', which Wood claims in a similar manner as 'a word still known in Warwickshire' has similarly wide usage (2003, 17). It is one of the weeds listed by the Duke of Burgundy in the Folio version of *Henry V*: 'hateful docks, rough thistles, Kecksies, burs' (5.2.52). The *OED* defines 'kecksy' as a hollow plant stem, the word derived from *keck*: 'any of the large Umbelliferæ, or their

<sup>10</sup> Wells and Taylor have 'baton'; 'ballow' is found in other editions, including Halio 1992, from which this version of the text and line number references are taken.

hollow stems', giving examples of cow parsnip and wild angelica. *Henry V* is given as the first use of 'kecksy' in print. 'Kecksy' is certainly a dialect word, but not unique to Warwickshire or even to the Midlands. 'Keck' appears to have come into the language via the Vikings (whose incursions covered most of the country), from the Old Norse word 'kjot'. It is listed as an Isle of Wight word in *A Dictionary of the Isle of Wight Dialect* (Long 1886): 'A dry stalk of hemlock or cow-parsley, sometimes pronounced "kecksy;" also, wild plums or sloes. " 'Tis as dry as kex, you." '. It is listed as Wiltshire dialect in *The Beauties of Wiltshire* (Britton 1825, III, 375): 'Kecks, Kecksy, the dry stalks of hemlock ... "as dry as kecks" is a common phrase'. J. Wright's *Dictionary* confirms that 'kecks' is 'in general dialectal use in England' listing dozens of counties including Yorkshire, Shropshire and Essex. Of variants it notes 'kexy' in Somerset, 'kexes' in Warwickshire, Staffordshire, Surrey and Dorset and 'kiskey' in Cornwall. The *Warwickshire Word-Book* lists 'keck' and 'kex', quoting *Henry V* and an old ballad collected by Bishop Percy called 'The Tournament of Tottenham' (Northall 1896). Tottenham is in London. Given the variation in spelling in Shakespeare's texts (and in the era more generally), Warwickshire's claim to 'kecksies' looks weak.

*Troilus and Cressida's* 'pash' (meaning smash), which featured in Onions' list and which David Kathman claims is a dialect word 'from Warwickshire and the West Midlands' (2013, 129), is even more widely used.<sup>11</sup> The *OED* lists earlier uses of this word by John Fox (1570) and Thomas Heywood (1602), neither of whom hailed from the Midlands. A search of *EEBO* gives numerous examples of 'pash' to mean 'smash', including two translations of Seneca's tragedies (1566, 1581), a translation of Homer's *Iliad* by Arthur Hall (1581), Richard Mulcaster's *Elementarie* (1582), a translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* by Richard Stanyhurst (1582), two works by Robert Greene (1584, 1585), Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* (1590), Thomas Nashe's *Strange News* (1592) and *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594), and many others.

Kathman makes the same claim for 'potch' (meaning 'poke'), used in *Coriolanus*. His source, perhaps via the list compiled by Onions, is probably Francis Grose's *A Provincial Glossary* which lists 'POTCH. To poke or push suddenly. Glouc.' (Grose 1790, G3v) and a similar definition is found in Huntley 1868. Northall 1896 contains this definition too, illustrated by quotations not only from *Coriolanus* but from Joshua Sylvester's *Du Bartas* (1611). Sylvester was a poet raised in Kent and Southampton with no connection to the Midlands, suggesting that 'potch' was widely used. The *OED* confirms this, offering Shakespeare's specific example as a variant spelling of the verb 'poach' – 'To

<sup>11</sup> Kathman is probably following Wise (1861) and Northall (1896). It is given as Cotwolds/Warwickshire dialect in both Wise's *Shakspeare* and Northall's *Warwickshire Word Book*, though Wise (who has heard it in use) seems confused about the definition.

shove, poke, thrust' – and gives several earlier examples of this verb usage (1528, 1536, 1542, 1602, 1608), again, not confined to the Midlands. This demonstrates that Grose's *Glossary*, though the earliest source, is not necessarily reliable; it is neither thoroughly researched or comprehensive, rather being something of a gentleman's curiosity. Though J. Wright's *Dictionary* is too late a source to be relied upon for sixteenth- and early seventeenth- century dialect, it lists 'potch' only as North Yorkshire dialect for the verb 'throw' and catalogues Shakespeare's example, as in the *OED*, under *poach*, giving this word as 'in general dialect use in Scotland and England' (J. Wright 1898).

'Tarre' for 'provoke' – as used in *Hamlet*, *King John*, and *Troilus and Cressida* – is another of the Onions/Kathman words that is not specifically Warwickshire dialect. The *OED* lists the word as derived from Old English, arising around 900 AD. Earlier uses than Shakespeare's include *Wycliff's Bible* (1382) and *Three 15<sup>th</sup> Century Chronicles* by William Camden (1561). J. Wright's *Dictionary* lists the word as having wide dialect usage 300 years later, in places including Ireland, Worcestershire, Lincolnshire, Yorkshire and Surrey. The Shakespeare line from *King John* is quoted, but the word is not listed as being used in Warwickshire.

The dialect word 'geck' (meaning fool), used in both *Twelfth Night* and *Cymbeline*, is also sometimes claimed for the West Midlands (perhaps beginning with Onions), though its first recorded use according to the *OED* was by Alexander Barclay, who is believed to have been Scottish. According to J. Wright's *Dictionary*, 'geck' as a verb was widely used in Scotland, and elsewhere. Northall's *A Warwickshire Word-Book* (1896) makes no mention of the word. The *English Dialect Dictionary* (1898) records the use of the noun in Yorkshire, Cornwall, Staffordshire, Leicestershire; the latter two presumably being responsible for the 'West Midlands' tag. However, a search of *EEBO* reveals it appeared in *A Handful of Pleasant Delights* (1584) by Clement Robinson; a book that has 'long interested scholars...[b]ecause of Shakespeare's familiarity with it' (Robinson 1924, v). Ophelia alludes to the first poem of the collection when she says 'There's Rosemary, that's for remembrance' (4.5.175). The word 'geck' appears in a poem facing 'A New Sonet of Pyramus and Thisbie' and since the source is familiar to the author, there is little need to argue he heard it anywhere else.

*The Taming of the Shrew's* 'plash' (meaning 'pool'), claimed by Wood to be Cotswold dialect (seemingly following Huntley), is another widely used word. Arising in Middle English around 1425, the *OED* says it is a word from Middle English and classifies it as 'Eng[lish] regional (chiefly north. and north midl[ands]) in later use'. 'In later use' – which likely means the nineteenth and twentieth century rather than the sixteenth – indicates that it survived longer in the north of England and north Midlands, not that it originated there. This is confirmed by the *OED's* own citations: uses of 'plash' contemporaneous with Shakespeare's in Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queen* (1596) and Francis Bacon's *The Advancement of Learning* (1605). 'Plash' was therefore in general use by writers in the sixteenth century, and is not evidence that the writer hailed from the Cotswolds.

Nor is the use of the adjective ‘pleached’ for ‘entwined’, as used in *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Henry V*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *A Lover’s Complaint*. Though it certainly derived from the practice of ‘pleaching’ (laying hedges) and though ‘As late as the 1930s in the Cotswolds ... farming people still used “pleaching” or “plushing” [*sic*] for laying a hedge’ (Wood 2003, 28), this does not constitute evidence that the author hailed from the area. Though Shakespeare invented the adjective ‘pleached’, the verb from which it was derived, ‘pleaching’, is listed by the *OED* as a word originating c.1400 from Middle English via Anglo-Norman and old French. Fitzherbert’s *The Book of Husbandry* (1523) mentions both ‘pleaching’ and ‘plashing’ as interchangeable forms of the verb. Though Shakespeare clearly preferred ‘pleaching’ to ‘plashing’, the latter form of the verb was published in books including at least one identified by scholars as a major Shakespeare source, *The Second Volume of Chronicles* (1586) by Raphael Holinshed. It was also used in *The Eight Books of Caius Julius Caesar* (1565), translated from Latin by Arthur Golding. Once a word has been published in such widely read books as Holinshed’s *Chronicles* and Fitzherbert’s *Book of Husbandry*, an author’s use of it is not evidence that, as Wood argues, their ‘forebears were of farming stock’ (2003, 18), let alone that they were raised in a specific county. Similarly, though farming people in the Cotswolds might use reeds for thatch (in the early twentieth century or indeed in the sixteenth), so did people all across the country. So when Ariel in *The Tempest* uses ‘eaves of reeds’ in a simile, it tells us nothing about the author’s place of birth or even social status; an author would not need to be of farming stock, as Wood implies, to know that thatched roofs were made of reeds.

#### 4. Poetic Inventions

Some words claimed as Warwickshire dialect fall, on closer inspection, into the category of poetic inventions. Such, I would argue, is the word ‘gallow’ (Kathman 2013, 129). In *King Lear*, the Earl of Kent says:

Alas, sir, are you here? Things that love night  
 Love not such nights as these. The wrathful skies  
 Gallow the very wanderers of the dark  
 And make them keep their caves. (3.2.42-45)<sup>12</sup>

‘Gallow’ here means ‘terrify’, and Kathman claims that its use in this manner is a dialect usage ‘from Warwickshire and the West Midlands’ (2013, 129).

<sup>12</sup> This is based on the Folio text. The 1608 Quarto breaks the iambic pentameter and adds unhelpful punctuation, but the word is still there: ‘The wrathfull Skies gallow, the very wanderer of the / Darke, and makes them keepe their caues.’

Though he does not cite a source, the word appears both in Onions' list and in Huntley's *A Glossary of the Cotswold Dialect* (1868).

Huntley 1868 is a key source of many of the claims that Shakespeare used local dialect; it includes kecksies, lush, mazzard, plash, pleach, potch and many others. Richard Wilbur Huntley was, according to the title page, 'of Boxwell Court, Gloucestershire; formerly fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford; Rector of Boxwell and Leighterton, and Vicar of Alberbury'. The full title of his book was *A Glossary of the Cotswold (Gloucestershire) Dialect, Illustrated By Examples from Ancient Authors*; and herein lies the problem. The 'ancient authors' he quotes include Samuel Butler, John Donne, John Dryden, John Ford, Ben Jonson, John Milton, Sir Walter Scott, and Edmund Spenser; none having any significant connections with the Cotswolds. In essence he proves that many of these words are used not only in the Cotswolds, but by writers across England and beyond. Under 'kex', for example, he quotes not only from Shakespeare's *Henry V*, but also from Beaumont and Fletcher's *Coxcomb*. His list of 'Cotswold words' includes words that might barely be considered dialect at all: anneal, beholden, cleave, clout, heft, smack, snuggle, and sliver, all employing their primary *OED* definitions.

But one of the writers he quotes most frequently is Shakespeare. From the introduction onwards, Huntley is constantly referencing Shakespeare. Having been swayed by an argument that Shakespeare may have stayed in Dursley during his 'lost years', Huntley is clearly keen to illustrate Shakespeare's connection to Gloucestershire. He quotes Shakespeare whenever he can to illustrate usage of the words he includes, but this is no more proof that Shakespeare used Gloucestershire dialect than that Edmund Spenser or John Milton did.

Huntley defines 'gallow' as 'to alarm, to frighten', quoting its use in *King Lear* and suggesting a derivation from the Saxon word *agaelan*. But a search of the Bosworth-Toller Anglo-Saxon dictionary defines *agaelan* as 'To hinder, occupy, detain, delay, neglect'<sup>13</sup> making it unlikely that 'gallow' was derived from this word. Huntley has merely ascertained the meaning from its context in *Lear*. So is this a case of genuine Cotswolds dialect?

The word is at least rare. There is no entry for 'gallow' in J. Wright's *Dictionary*, and nor is there an entry for 'gallow' as 'terrify' in the *OED*. However, 'gallow' for 'terrify' appears in *A learned and very eloquent treatise* (1568) by John Fenn, a translation (out of Latin) of the public letter of Bishop Jerónimo Osório to Walter Haddon. The Osório-Haddon controversy (1563-1583) began with Osório's 1563 argument for Queen Elizabeth to return to Catholicism, and was therefore, unsurprisingly, a somewhat high profile affair (Ryan 1953). John Fenn was born in Somerset, attended Winchester

<sup>13</sup> Bosworth-Toller Anglo-Saxon Dictionary online, <<http://bosworth.ff.cuni.cz/001174>>, accessed 25 February 2015.

College and New College, Oxford, subsequently becoming master of the grammar school at Bury St Edmunds (Harris 2004). When Elizabeth ascended the throne, he was removed from his post for his beliefs, and fled to Flanders, where he became a Catholic priest. Osório, whom he translated, had a commanding reputation as a Latin stylist. The following extract from Fenn's translation of Osório's book-length letter to Haddon uses 'gallow' to mean 'terrify'.

And as we reade in Euripedes, that Venus tooke great displeasure, bicause she was despised of Hippolytus, and therfore deuised craftily, to sende certaine monstrous seacalues out of the sea, to gallowe his chariot horses by the whiche traine Hippolytus was for the onlie loue of chastitie, torne al in peeces and cruelly slaine. (Fenn 1568, 82)

Here is the Latin original:

Ut enim Venus apud Euripidem molestissime tulit, se ab Hippolyto contemni, & ideo fraudes concinnauit, quibus tandem Hippolytus phocis immissis, & equis perterritis dilaceratus, propter studium castitatis interiret. (Osório 1567, F. 46, G2v)

The word Fenn has translated to 'gallow' is *perterritis*. The verb *perterreo* translates as 'frighten or terrify thoroughly'. It seems that Osório's Latin skills obliged Fenn to be creative in order to reproduce the feeling of the original text, and a poetic use of 'gallow' was the result. Shakespeare may have read John Fenn's translation of Osório and adopted his use of 'gallow' for 'terrify'. Or he may have independently arrived at the poetic use of 'gallow' as a metonym for 'terrify'. Whatever the reason for Shakespeare's use, there is no basis for the statement that 'gallow' is Warwickshire dialect. It appears to be poetry.

A similar conclusion can be drawn in the case of 'honey-stalks', which was claimed to be Warwickshire dialect for clover in the nineteenth century by Wise (1861), in the twentieth by Onions (1911), and recently by Kathman (2013, 129). Closer analysis reveals that this word was coined by Shakespeare and that it does not have the meaning commonly assumed. In *Titus Andronicus*, Tamora says:

I will enchant the old Andronicus  
With words more sweet and yet more dangerous  
Than baits to fish or honey-stalks to sheep,  
Whenas the one is wounded with the bait,  
The other rotted with delicious feed. (4.4.89-93)

According to the *OED* – and confirmed by a search of digitized works on *EEBO* – Shakespeare is the only writer to use the term 'honey-stalks' to mean 'clover blossom'. So how was this meaning derived? Bruce Thomas Boehrer has traced its origin to Samuel Johnson's 1765 edition of Shakespeare's plays,

where Johnson provides the gloss ‘Honey-stalks are clover flowers, which contain a sweet juice. It is common for cattle to overcharge themselves with clover, and so die’ (Johnson 1765, VI, n. 9). This has been accepted by both the *OED* and Shakespeare’s subsequent editors, though Johnson’s contemporary, John Monck Mason, objected:

Clover has the effect that Johnson mentions, on black cattle but not on sheep. Besides, these honey-stalks, whatever they may be, are described as rotting the sheep, not as bursting them, whereas clover is the wholesomest food you can give them. (Mason 1785, 306)

Boehrer’s research into English husbandry manuals of the period reveals that the suspected cause of sheep-rot in Shakespeare’s era was the eating of grass laden with a type of dew known then as ‘honeydew’. As he puts it, ‘honey-stalks’ is ‘a convenient nonce formulation referring to any vegetation laden with honeydew and therefore noxious to sheep’ (Boehrer 2010, 177-178). He proves his case through sixteenth- and seventeenth-century animal husbandry manuals. Edward Topsell, in *The History of Four-Footed Beasts*, specifically states that if sheep eat vegetation that is damp with the type of dew known to the English as honeydew, ‘it is poison unto them and they die therefore’ (1607, 611). Gabriel Plattes, in *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure* (1639), states that ‘some are of the opinion that Honey-dews cause’ sheep to become ‘rotten’ (Plattes 1639, 70). But clover, according to Shakespeare contemporary Gervase Markham was considered ‘most wholesome for sheep’ (Markham 1613, 79).

Shakespeare’s use of ‘nonce compounds’ has been noted in other instances (Johnson 2013, 40). That Shakespeare is the only writer to use the phrase ‘honey-stalks’ is a strong argument for its being his own invention. Its appearance at the end of the nineteenth century in Wright’s *English Dialect Dictionary* as a name for ‘the blossoms of white clover’, and its designation as Warwickshire dialect, thus stems entirely from its use in *Titus Andronicus*, Samuel Johnson’s (mistaken) gloss, and the general presumption that the author hailed from Warwickshire. To refer to J. Wright’s *Dictionary* as proof that the word is Warwickshire dialect constitutes circular reasoning. ‘Honey-stalks’ was simply a poetic adaptation of existing vocabulary.

The same is true, I would argue, for the peculiar adjective ‘unwappered’. In *Two Noble Kinsmen*, by William Shakespeare and John Fletcher, Palamon says:

... we come toward the gods  
Young and unwappered, not halting under crimes  
Many and stale ... (5.6.9-11)<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The 1634 text says ‘Young, and unwapper’d not, halting under Crimes / many and stale’. Moving the comma (the standard emendation) makes more sense, as it removes the double negative.

'Unwappered' (for 'unfatigued', or fresh) is said to be a dialect word 'from Warwickshire and the West Midlands' (Kathman 2013, 129). The only use of 'unwappered' given in the *OED* is Shakespeare's. The first use of *wappered* (fatigued) is also from this same Shakespeare quote (the positive form of the adjective being implied). I am of the opinion (as many other scholars have suggested) that 'wappered' (not 'wappened') is also the word intended in *Timon of Athens*: 'This it is ... [gold] / That makes the wappered widow wed again' (4.3.38-39).<sup>15</sup> A search of *EEBO* confirms that Shakespeare was the only person in 250 years to use the word '[un]wappered'. The editors of Shakespeare, and of Beaumont and Fletcher (for *Two Noble Kinsmen* was originally published as theirs) struggled with possible meanings of 'wappened' / 'wappered' through the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, suggesting 'stale' (1785), 'sorrowful or frightened' (1799-1802) and 'weakened or worn' (1825). But it was given as 'fatigued' in Grose's *Provincial Glossary* (1790) and as 'fatigued, beaten' in Huntley's *Glossary* (1868).

It is possible Huntley derived his meaning for Shakespeare's 'wappered' just as the editors of scholarly editions did: by educated guess. Alternatively, he may have been aware of Grose's definition, and added 'beaten' to it from other words he lists: 'wap' (to beat) and 'wapper' (a whip), both of them derived, it seems, from Old Norse *wapen* (weapon). But on the basis of his inclusion of so many words that were widely used, and his leaning so heavily on quotes from Shakespeare among many other writers, Huntley's glossary is not a reliable source for identifying any word as Cotswolds dialect. *A Warwickshire Word-Book* (1896) by G.F. Northall, a somewhat more reliable work - Northall tells us he has personally heard in use all but a dozen - does not feature 'wappered' or 'unwappered'. Indeed, it features barely any of the 'Shakespeare dialect' words in the earlier Huntley, suggesting even more strongly that Huntley included those words because they were in Shakespeare's plays, not because they were generally spoken.

Huntley's work, however, was influential. A thirty-year-old cricketer, Joseph Gibbs, wrote a celebration of his adopted home of Bibury, *A Cotswold Village*, drawing upon Huntley's glossary, which he says 'gives no less than fifty-eight passages from the works of Shakespeare, in which the words and phrases peculiar to the district are made use of' (1899, 249).<sup>16</sup> London-born Gibbs, educated at Eton and Oxford, became the squire of Ablington Manor in Gloucestershire, 40 miles from Stratford-upon-Avon. In a chapter called 'The Cotswolds Three Hundred Years Ago' he imagines a fictional scenario whereby Shakespeare finds himself staying overnight in Bibury; a clunky

<sup>15</sup> The Folio text has 'wappen'd'.

<sup>16</sup> He wrongly attributes Huntley's book to another local writer, John Henry Blunt, author of *Dursley and its Neighbourhood* (1877).

twenty-seven pages of footnoted fiction leaning heavily on quotes from the plays<sup>17</sup> and ‘knowledge’ gleaned from Huntley, and full of cod-Elizabethan dialogue:

“I am a stranger here in Gloucestershire; these high wild hills and rough, uneven ways draw out our miles and make them wearisome. How far is it to Stratford?”  
 “Marry, ’tis nigh on forty mile, I warrant. Thou’ll not see Stratford to-night, sir; thy horse is wappered out, and that I plainly see.” (258)

In the footnotes for this passage, Gibbs acknowledges the *Richard II* quote, and states ‘Wappered = tired. A Cotswold word’. It is clear he has this information from Huntley, for two pages later he marks ‘shard’, another of Huntley’s words, as ‘A Cotswold word = breach’ (1899, 260). Gibbs is an incomer, and simply accepts Huntley as the authority. Note, however, that Gibbs has expanded the word’s compass. By adding ‘out’ he has dropped the sense of ‘beaten’ and cannot mean ‘fatigued’ (an adjective which cannot accommodate ‘out’), but rather ‘tired’, making ‘wappered’ the past participle of the verb ‘wapper’.

Though Shakespeare invented the adjective ‘[un]wappered’, the verb ‘wapper’ was already in existence.

The *OED* gives two definitions for the verb ‘wapper’:

1. To blink the eyes.
2. To be tired *out*.

The second of these definitions rests entirely on Gibbs’ use of the word (which is given as its only example); a word invented by Gibbs after reading Huntley. However, the first *OED* definition, related to blinking or shaking, was in common use in the period. The *OED* gives its first example from *Mirror for Magistrates* (1575): ‘and wappering turnid up his white of eye’. ‘Wapper’ is frequently but not always connected to eyes: ‘I...changed my shape into a litle wapper-eid Constable, to winke and blinke at small faults’ says Thomas Middleton’s *Blacke Booke* (1604). Robert Armin describes a ‘wapper eye’ in *A Nest of Ninnies* (1608). James Mabbe’s translation of *The Rogue* describes an old woman as ‘toothlesse, chap-falne, hollow-eyed, and wappering withall (1622). Very likely derived from the Dutch *wapperen* - to swing, oscillate or waver - it seems to be associated with tremulousness in the body, or in the eyes, with blinking.

This makes sense of Francis Grose’s 1790 definition of ‘wapper’d’ as ‘Restless, or fatigued. Spoken of a sick person. Glouc[estershire]’. At first sight, ‘restless’ and ‘fatigued’ seem contradictory, but both might be suggested by trembling. We have no source for this definition; Grose himself

<sup>17</sup> Example: ‘I know a hawk from a handsaw, or my name’s not William Shakespeare’ (Gibbs 1899, 264).

was not from the area, but was widely travelled and with many contacts. We cannot rule out the possibility that he is correct. On the other hand, he had listed 'potch' with the same designation, 'Glouc.', when it was widely used. We should also bear in mind that the plays had at this point been in the public domain for close to two hundred years, and it is likely that many readers, like the editors, had puzzled over the meaning of 'wappered' and come to their own conclusions, perhaps even adopting the word with their presumed meaning. Gross's definition works adequately for *Timon's* widow (who may well be tired) and can be stretched to work for Palamon and his friends (though why 'unfatigued' rather than 'fresh' or another positive alternative is puzzling).

But is this correct? Is it not more likely that Shakespeare coined the adjective 'wappered' from the verb 'wapper'? If 'wapping' was blinking when applied to the eyes, trembling or shaking when applied to the body, 'wappered' might be the equivalent of 'shaken'. This definition seems a better fit, both for the shaken widow, and the unshaken warriors. Since we have no record of anyone using 'wappered' before Shakespeare, or after him (except most like *because* of him, as with Huntley's glossary) its categorisation as Warwickshire dialect, as opposed to a Shakespeare neologism, is at best unproven.

### 5. *Circular Reasoning*

Circular reasoning creates a fourth category of dialect claims. When scholars rely on these late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sources to support their claim for Shakespeare's Warwickshire dialect, circularity is clearly a danger. As 'honey-stalks' demonstrates, some words are in J. Wright's *Dictionary* as Warwickshire dialect because they were used by Shakespeare. Another example of this is 'slobbery', which Michael Wood lists (mistakenly) as 'slobberly (for sloppy)'. The word is spoken by *Henry V's* Duke of Bourbon in the Folio version of the text:

... but I will sell my Dukedome,  
To buy a slobbry and a durtie Farme  
In that nooke-shotten Ile of Albion. (3.5.12-14)<sup>18</sup>

The Warwickshire use listed (among numerous other counties) in the *English Dialect Dictionary* has been derived, it seems, solely on the basis that the word is used by Shakespeare (and the assumption that the author hails from Warwickshire). The source of information listed under 'War.' is

<sup>18</sup> In the 1600 Quarto, the lines read: 'Ile sell my Dukedome for a foggy farme / In that short nooke Ile of England'.

Wise's *Shakspeare*. After quoting *Henry V*, Wise tells us 'that "slobberly" or "slobbery" is to this day applied to the wet, dirty, Warwickshire by-roads' (1861, 109). That may be so, but only because Warwickshire residents of the mid-Nineteenth century spoke English. *Slobberly* is not marked as dialect in the *OED*; it is a word in general use, derived from the word 'slobber', with the first recorded usage of 1398: 'An olde hounde is ofte slowe and slobery.' To lean on Wise (via J. Wright's *Dictionary*) as proof that Shakespeare used Warwickshire dialect constitutes circular reasoning.

The same seems to be true with 'mobbled'. The following exchange occurs in the Q2 (1603) edition of *Hamlet* when the player is reciting a speech on Priam's slaughter (2.2.505-7):

1st PLAYER: 'But who O who had seen the mobled queen-'  
CORAMBIS: Mobled Queene is good, faith very good.

In the First Folio (1623), which inserts a questioning line from *Hamlet*, the word is 'inobled':

1st PLAYER: 'But who, O who had seen the inobled queen-'  
HAMLET: 'The inobled queen?'  
POLONIUS: That's good; 'inobled queen' is good.

Kathman states that 'mobbled' (for muffled) is a dialect word 'from Warwickshire and the West Midlands' (2013, 129). In truth we can't even be sure what word was intended. The word in Q2 is 'mobled' not 'mobbled', though modern editors tend to choose the latter. 'Mobbled' is an understandable modernisation of spelling which aligns it clearly with its modern definition of 'muffled', but which in doing so obscures the probable root of the word, which may have been 'noble' (as the First Folio correction would suggest). The First Folio's 'inobled' has been defended by several editors as meaning either 'enobled' or 'ignobled'; the spelling preserving the ambiguity (Thompson and Taylor 2006).<sup>19</sup> But as Dover Wilson noted, the Folio *Hamlet* is rife with transcription errors, particularly minim errors, such as the kind that transforms 'm' into 'in' (1934, I, 44).<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Thompson and Taylor (2006, 251) write: '*inobled* This unique word, repeated three times in F, is defended by Capell and Paul (who notes its use in Edwin Booth's second and third acting editions) as meaning "made noble", but by MacDonald as meaning "ignobled" or degraded; we preserve F's spelling so as to retain this ambiguity. Q8, perhaps edited for Thomas Betterton for John Dryden, alters the Q6/7 reading "mobled" to "innobled" among its scattering of F readings (see Thompson, 'Ward', 141-2). Most editors, including Oxf and Hibbard, dismiss it as an error, preferring Q2's "mobled".'

<sup>20</sup> Dover Wilson calls 'inobled' a misprint (1934, 73).

The origin of the words ‘moble’ and ‘mobled’ is this exchange in the 1603 edition of *Hamlet*. The *OED* defines ‘mobled’ as ‘Of a person; muffled, wrapped’; the first recorded use is Shakespeare’s. Etymology: ‘unknown origin’. The related verb, ‘moble’ (unknown origin) is defined as ‘To muffle (a person, or the head, face etc.)’. Its first recorded use was in a play, *The Gentlemen of Venice* by James Shirley (1655). It is likely this playwright knew ‘mobled’ from a quarto edition of *Hamlet*, and had deduced the meaning ‘wrapped up’ from its context; the subsequent section of text reveals that the queen, roused from sleep by the attack, has grabbed a blanket to cover herself. A search of *EEBO* finds no other instances of the word ‘moble’, ‘mobled’, ‘mobbie’ or ‘mobbled’ (other than those that mean mobile or are misprints for noble) before 1670. In his 1765 edition of Shakespeare, Samuel Johnson said it meant ‘huddled, grossly covered’ (1765, VIII, 200, n. 7). He was clearly guessing from context, as he was with ‘honey-stalks’. The *OED* specifically states that the word is ‘Now English regional (Midlands)’; though now adopted as regional dialect it did not arise as such. It is not listed as local dialect in Northall 1896, Wise 1861, Grose 1790 or Huntley 1868. J. Wright’s *Dictionary* entry was published three hundred years after Q2 *Hamlet* and quotes the Shakespeare line in its definition (J. Wright 1898, IV, 139). There is no evidence the word existed in any form before 1603.

What follows is speculative, but would explain the changes seen in this passage between Q2 and the Folio text. Let’s imagine that ‘mobled’ was a misprint for the intended ‘inobled’ in the Q2 text. The printer’s error in Q2 then inspired a revision of the original text: Hamlet’s querying of the phrase, ‘The mobled queen?’ was inserted. ‘Mobled’ became Shakespeare’s joke at the ignorance of the First Player, Polonius, and anyone else who would take a printer’s error for a real word. The text would then read:

1st PLAYER: ‘But who O who had seen the mobled queen-’  
 HAMLET: ‘The mobled queen?’  
 POLONIUS: That’s good; ‘mobled queen’ is good.

This is a wittier exchange than when the word is ‘inobled’. The First Folio editors, recognising ‘mobled’ for what it originally was, a typographical error, and missing Shakespeare’s joke, changed the word back to ‘inobled’. But ‘mobled’, in the far cleaner Q2 text, was out there.<sup>21</sup> By this method, a word which began as a misprint might find its way into both the *OED* and J. Wright’s *Dictionary*, and by the latter route, via circular reasoning, might be claimed as Warwickshire dialect. With an unknown etymology, Shakespeare as the originator, and no reliable contemporaneous source for corroboration, no such claim can be upheld.

<sup>21</sup> ‘The textual imperfections of the F1 version are “gross as a mountain, open, palpable”’ (Dover Wilson 1934, 42).

Another possibly mistaken word is 'batlet'. In *As You Like It*, Touchstone says

I remember when I was in love I broke my sword upon a stone and bid him take that for coming a-night to Jane Smile, and I remember the kissing of her batlet and the cow's dugs that her pretty chapped hands had milked... (2.4.42-47)

The First Folio (the earliest known text for *As You Like It*) has 'batler' though modern editors tend to change this to the Second Folio's 'batlet', which Kathman states is a dialect word 'from Warwickshire and the West Midlands'. The wooden implement for beating laundry was more commonly known by other names. A 1683 text says 'the common people ... call [it] a Clapper or Bat-staff' (Pettus 1683). A search of *EEBO* gives 'batting staff' in two dictionaries dated 1668 and 1677. *A Dictionary of Obsolete and Provincial English* gives *batler*, *batlet*, *battling-staff*, *batstaff*, *batting-staff* as 'The instrument with which washers beat their coarse clothes' (T. Wright 1904, I, 75). 'Batler' and 'batlet' (for laundry paddle) appear to originate with Shakespeare; his is the earliest example of 'batler' in the *OED* and other usages in both the *OED* and J. Wright's *Dictionary* refer to this scene in *As You Like It*. J. Wright's *Dictionary* entry for 'batlet' gives its usage as 'Yorkshire, also Warwickshire' with the additional comment: '[Obs[olete]? Not known to our correspondents in War[wickshire]]' (J. Wright 1898, I, 186). Wise's 1861 *Shakspeare* is cited for the Warwickshire usage. Wise, having listed 'honey-stalks', 'kecks' and 'breeze', can hardly be considered a reliable source, and the word is most unlikely to have become obsolete in the thirty years between the two volumes. The idea that this might be Warwickshire dialect, therefore, is very likely derived only from its usage by Shakespeare (as with 'slobbery', 'honey-stalks' and 'mobbled').

A similar situation appears to have arisen with 'lush' (Wood 2003, 18). In *The Tempest*, Gonzalo exclaims 'How lush and lusty the grass looks! how green!' (2.1.57). The *OED* gives Shakespeare's usage of 'lush' (for verdant, succulent, luxuriant in growth) as the first. Previously it most often meant soft and tender in the sense of 'weak'. The next usage of 'lush' in this Shakespeare's sense, at least noted by the *OED*, is by John Keats two hundred years later (1817). It is possible that Shakespeare intended the word to mean 'soft and tender' without the additional implication of 'weak', rather than the meaning it has since attained; language, after all, is constantly evolving. Arthur Golding uses it both in his translations of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* (1567) and Julius Solinus' *Polyhistor* (1587) and the second of these would allow one to imagine 'lush' as having its modern (post-*Tempest*) meaning, although in fact it means soft and tender.<sup>22</sup> 'Lush' is not present in Northall 1896, Wise 1861 or Grose 1790. The

<sup>22</sup> 'The *Lygusticke* Sea bringeth fourth shrubbes, which so soone as they be in the déepes of the water, are lushe and almost like a grystle to touch. But as soone as they come about the water,

dialectal use of 'lush' as given in J. Wright's *Dictionary* is not the same usage, being concerned with beating.<sup>23</sup> Wood's claim appears to derive from Huntley's *Glossary* (1868), which uses this quote from *The Tempest* in its definition of the word. On the basis of its inclusion of so many words that were widely used, and of leaning so heavily on quotes from Shakespeare among many other writers who were not from the area, Huntley's glossary is not a sound source for identifying any word as Cotswold dialect.

A similarly circular path is probable for Wood's claim for the phrase 'speak within door'. This is an instruction that Iago gives Emilia in *Othello*. 'Speak within door' (4.2.148) is not listed as dialect in J. Wright's *Dictionary*, in Northall 1896, Wise 1861, Grose 1790 or Huntley 1868. Wood tells us 'At the village of Compton Abdale at this time [the 1930s] one seventy-five-year-old farmer still used ... 'speak within doore' for speaking softly' (2003, 18). The source of Wood's information is not supplied, but what is there to suggest that this elderly farmer was not, in fact, quoting Shakespeare? *Othello* is a widely-known play, as accessible to this farmer as to anyone else, and it is often the case that people adopt for their own speech particular lines of Shakespeare they enjoyed. Unless better evidence is forwarded, this would seem to be another case of circular reasoning.

## 6. Conclusion

In summary, not a single claim that Shakespeare used Warwickshire, Midlands or Cotswold dialect can be upheld. The claim for two related phrases, 'golden lads' and 'chimney-sweepers', arises from mid-twentieth-century fabrication. 'Redcoats', 'carraways', 'Red Lammas', 'twit', and 'on a line' are either not present in the Shakespeare canon or were not used in the sense claimed. Many of the words claimed as Cotswold dialect were widely used across the country: 'mazzard', 'breeze', 'hade land', 'ballow', 'orts', 'keckies', 'pash', 'potch', 'tarre', 'geck', 'plash', 'pleaching' and 'reeds'. Two of these, 'hade-land' and 'ballow', may not be the words the author intended. The same is true of 'batlet', which along with 'slobbery', 'mobled', 'lush' and 'speak within door' appear to have been categorised as Warwickshire dialect via circular reasoning. 'Honey-stalks' is the author's poetic conflation; 'gallow' an instance of metonymy used elsewhere, and 'unwappered' adapted from an existing verb.

Modern scholars should be wary of relying upon dialect lists compiled by early antiquarians, who did not have access to a wide range of texts, used

by and by degenerating from theyr naturall sappe, they become stones.' from Cap VII: 'Of Italy and the prayse therof: and of many peculiar thinges that are founde therein' (Golding 1587, Gr).

<sup>23</sup> 'LUSH - Wor. Hrf. Glo. Dev. - 1) A green bough for beating down wasps, or for bird-catching. 2) A twig for thatching. 3) To beat down with green boughs. Hence Lushing, a beating (Glo.)' (J. Wright 1898, III, 696).

Shakespeare as a key source, and did not in any case claim that such words were not used elsewhere; Wise, for example, explicitly states 'I by no means wish to say that the following words are to be found nowhere but in Shakspeare and in Warwickshire' (Wise 1861, 149). Searches of the *OED* and digitised texts on *EEBO* demonstrate that many words used in the Cotswolds could also be heard in other places - London, Bath, Yorkshire, the Isle of Wight - and read in the works of famous authors like Chaucer, Spenser and Bacon. The grammatical constructions used by Wood, in particular, suggests that he knows this. In other words, though much of this error originated with modern scholars relying upon the work of early antiquarians, it has been compounded by a strong need to defend against the Shakespeare authorship question.

What is important about Shakespeare's use (or not) of Warwickshire dialect is not so much the issue itself but its illustration of the effect of the authorship question remaining an academic taboo. These errors of etymology and reasoning in the argument for Shakespeare's use of Warwickshire dialect demonstrate the dangers of maintaining such a taboo. Since no professional Shakespeare scholar can safely query any defence of the orthodox position without risking their professional reputation, arguments supporting the traditional attribution go unchallenged. It also demonstrates that querying the validity of arguments derived from an assumed biography can - without in any way disproving that Shakespeare wrote Shakespeare - lead to a better understanding of the way Shakespeare actually used language, and the meanings he intended.

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# 'Fabricated Lives': Shakespearean Collaboration in Fictional Forms

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## *Abstract*

The essay examines fictionalized accounts of the collaboration between Shakespeare and his contemporaries, focusing on those that portray Christopher Marlowe as occasionally Shakespeare's co-author. Beginning with two novels by Anthony Burgess, *Nothing Like the Sun: A Story of Shakespeare's Love-life* (1964) and *A Dead Man in Deptford* (1994), I then look at Peter Whelan's play, *The School of Night* (1992), before concluding with the film *Shakespeare in Love* (1998). By looking at these popularized renditions of collaboration and biography, I conclude that the more collaborative that the fictionalized work is in origin, the more positively it portrays such relationships in Shakespeare's time.

*Keywords:* Collaboration, Fictional Biography, Shakespeare Authorship, *Shakespeare in Love*, *The School of Night*

## 1. *Introduction*

A guy walks into a bar. Depressed because he has work and women woes, he starts to buy a drink. At the end of the bar he suddenly notices a colleague and buys his friend a mug as well. As they are both downing their beakers of booze, the friend tries to help the first guy out of his jam, but in short order they are interrupted by the call of business. Of course, this is the central scene focusing on the connection between Kit Marlowe and Will Shakespeare in the Academy award-winning film *Shakespeare in Love* (1998), produced for popular consumption by the Miramax/Disney Corporation. But this was certainly not the first fictionalized account of the two writers and their relationship with one another. I will examine fictionalized accounts of the collaboration between Shakespeare and his contemporaries by focusing on twentieth-century works that portray Christopher Marlowe as Shakespeare's occasional cowriter. Beginning with two novels by Anthony Burgess, *Nothing Like the Sun: A Story of Shakespeare's Love-life* (1964) and *A Dead Man in*



*Deptford* (1994), I then consider Peter Whelan's play, *The School of Night* (published and first performed in Stratford in 1992), before concluding with an examination of the fictionalized collaboration between Marlowe and Shakespeare in the film just mentioned, *Shakespeare in Love*.<sup>1</sup>

In Burgess' 1994 novel, Shakespeare is described as a 'new player and playmaker (botcher, collaborator)' (195) who, with Marlowe's help, begins *I Henry VI*. In the Whelan play, Marlowe seems to fear Shakespeare, and in a crucial scene, Marlowe comes to believe that Shakespeare will eventually 'swallow him' like the whale in the story of Jonah (88). On the other hand, the Tom Stoppard/Marc Norman screenplay portrays Marlowe as the cool, calm, veteran writer who provides the initial conflict and characterization for the play Shakespeare cannot quite begin to compose. When Will runs into Marlowe in a local tavern, admitting that he has not 'written a word' of the new drama, Marlowe immediately helps out, proposing that 'Romeo is ... Italian. Always in and out of love', to which Will responds, 'Yes, that's good'. By looking at these more popularized renditions of collaboration and biography, instead of more academic examinations of these relationships, I hope to show that they too may participate in the 'building up of [a] personality structure' (Pugliatti and Leahy 2014) that portrays Shakespeare as an occasional collaborator with his contemporaries.

## 2. Nothing Like the Sun: A Story of Shakespeare's Love-life *and* A Dead Man in Deptford

In 1964, Anthony Burgess published his fictionalized biography of Shakespeare entitled *Nothing Like the Sun: A Story of Shakespeare's Love-life*. While collaboration is not the most central element of this novel, Burgess presents a Shakespeare who is driven by all the desires of the flesh, and also avoids all hints of a traditional rendering of Shakespeare's life and literary output. Burgess' protagonist, called 'WS' for most of the book, is an intelligent glove-maker's son who, early on and during a bout of drinking, is trapped into a marriage with Anne Hathaway. Shortly after, he deserts Anne and moves in with the family of a justice of the peace in a distant borough, serving as a private schoolmaster; he soon faces tough questions during his tutorials with the justice's twin sons about homoerotic love in classical societies. When WS responds that the 'ancients accounted that no sin', the boys are shocked and object that this practice is 'against our religion and the teachings of our Lord

<sup>1</sup> I want to thank Paola Pugliatti and William Leahy for inviting me to present this paper at the Shakespeare 450 Conference. I am also grateful for the funding provided by Clara Calvo and the grant, 'Cultures of Commemoration II: Remembering Shakespeare', which helped to defray some expenses while in Paris.

Jesus Christ'. WS replies, unfortunately for his future employment at the house, that 'some say' that Jesus Christ 'Himself did practise that sort of love with His beloved disciple John' (62). Many scholarly readers of the historical fiction would catch the allusion to Marlowe's alleged blasphemy printed in the Baines document,<sup>2</sup> and the scene also prepares us for WS' encounters with Marlowe in the near future.

When Shakespeare arrives in London, his collaborative work is first noted when he produces a 'patched play' for the Queen's Men in 1588, while also doing some '[p]rentice acting' (85). Burgess' fictionalized account of the relationship between Robert Greene and Shakespeare also comments on the collaborative mode of writing. In a scene where WS is reading the alleged attack by Greene in *A Groats-Worth of Wit*, WS recalls how he was 'surprised at the whiff of envy' in him each time he saw Greene in person, 'the wretched poet and scholar, bloated with drink and disease' (84). When WS reaches the lines in *Groats-Worth* directed at him, 'the Upstart Crow ... with the Tiger's heart wrapped in a player's hide' (87), the effect is two-fold. While pleased that 'Greene had remembered that line from *Harry the Sixth*' (87), he certainly feels stung by the insult, so much so that he declares he will prove the recently deceased Greene wrong by demonstrating that he is 'something other than an ape [or a] crow' (88) who can only mimic others. He determines to prove that he is '[s]omething other, too, than a play-botcher', a person who worked with a team of other writers to produce a work whose ultimate literary goal was to function as no more than a mere 'exciter of groundlings' (88).

The connection, if not imaginative collaboration, between Marlowe and Shakespeare is also suggested following the former's death. Southampton hires WS and when both get word of Marlowe's murder, the nobleman attempts to comfort Shakespeare by pointing out how he will benefit: 'You may exult now, friend or no friend ... that you are without peer', before he gleefully exclaims that, following Marlowe's death, 'my poet is the only poet' (106). He concludes his speech by trying to reason with WS on what has been lost as well as gained by Marlowe's demise. Southampton points out that most writers would 'gladly lose a friend to know that' they are now without a poetic peer. WS, however, replies: 'He was not so close a friend. But there was no poet like him' (106).

In *A Dead Man in Deptford* (1994), Burgess revisits the topic he chose for his college dissertation, one which centred on Christopher Marlowe.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Richard Baines, a secret agent and informer, compiled a list of accusations of blasphemy against Marlowe ('Christopher Marly'), and submitted a memorandum to the authorities.

<sup>3</sup> As I have argued elsewhere, this novel may be Burgess' most autobiographical work on the Elizabethan period, particularly in its focus on Catholicism, espionage, and even, perhaps, Burgess' obsession with tobacco, which would lead to the lung cancer from which he eventually died (Sawyer 2009).

This novel, as the title implies, downplays Shakespeare, highlighting instead Marlowe's life and his murder. Narrated from the perspective of a nameless bit player on the London stage, the actor does not even mention Shakespeare until page 178 of the 272-page novel; when we do finally hear of him, he is described as 'one newly up from the country trying his hand, Shogspaw or Shagspeer or some such name' (178), who, with Marlowe's help, begins *Henry VI*. Recalling his first meeting with the man from Stratford, the actor describes Shakespeare as a 'new player and playmaker (botcher, collaborator)' from Warwickshire, a mild man but ambitious, who 'sucked me dry, but ever with a smile, of all I knew of the craft' (195).

Not long after this scene, the notion of collaboration is raised again, for after noting that this man with 'whom he lodged withal' was his close 'associate for many years with the Lord Chamberlain's men', he specifically recalls how Shakespeare 'and Kit were at work on *The Contention Between the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster*, a most incommodious title', which later the narrator explains, 'would be changed to *Henry VI Part One*' (208).<sup>4</sup> About this same time, Burgess even has Kit refer to Shakespeare specifically as 'his collaborator' when he invites him to Scadbury 'with Tom Walsingham's approval' so they can sit in the 'summer saloon' and get to know one another better (208). As they talk, Will, as he is now known, explains his frustration that patrons do not believe that 'grammar-school boys can write plays', although they are called on often to '[b]otch and help when speed is needful' (209). As the novel progresses, the narrator adds that Marlowe's continual absences from London 'left a vacuum in playmaking which had to be filled, and there was our Warwickshire man to fill it' (213). The narrator goes on to highlight the fact that the 'final version of *The Contention Between the Two Famous Houses* was finished by one pen only and that with a speed of insolence' (213). So in Burgess' fictional version, Shakespeare combines two usually distinct talents into one very successful approach to writing. While university poets were often granted the luxury of time when composing a play, this grammar-school writer had been trained to work with the quicksilver speed needed for the team-authored plays, both new and revised, to meet the increasing audience demand for fresh works. Burgess' two novels, if we count sales as a factor, seem to have appealed to both a popular and a more academic audience.

<sup>4</sup> Most critics, including Brian Vickers (2002) and Gary Taylor (1995), agree on the multiple author notion, as does the *Oxford Companion to Shakespeare* which safely claims that '*Part I* is perhaps the least likely of the *Henry VI* plays to be wholly by Shakespeare' (Dobson and Wells 2001, 200). For a summary of the possible collaborators, see Potter 2012, 79. My point is that Burgess was fully aware of the controversy, even if almost no one today, with the exception of Hugh Craig (2009) and Warren Chernaik (2014), believes the collaborator to be Marlowe, as Burgess seems to suggest.

### 3. The School of Night

A similar tension between popular and academic interpretations of the connection or collaboration between Marlowe and Shakespeare also occurred in Peter Whelan's *The School of Night*.<sup>5</sup> First performed for the RSC in Stratford in 1992, it continued to be performed on stages in the U.K. and the U.S. through the first decades of the twenty-first century. The drama incorporates elements of a number of late twentieth-century versions of collaboration, specifically the attempt to bridge an academic and popular portrayal of the relationship, such as the brief moment in *Shakespeare in Love* referenced at the beginning of this essay. Whelan adds other elements to his production, however, that anticipate the essential readings of the connection between Marlowe and Shakespeare in the twenty-first century – that of mystery, anxiety, and even conspiracy.

Focusing on the last few days of Marlowe's life, the setting of the first act of the two-act play is also set in Scadbury, home to Thomas Walsingham, related to Sir Francis Walsingham, Queen Elizabeth's spymaster. As the play opens, Marlowe is center stage in a room filled 'with star charts, astrolabe, globe, maps, cabalistic signs and glass retorts', and for good measure, 'a stuffed alligator hangs from the ceiling' (1), in other words, a room resembling the title-page of Dr. Faustus' study attached to the 1616 B text of the play. Marlowe's very first words are, not surprisingly, a blasphemous invocation, but this time to the 'Eternal Dog' ('God' spelled backward), the 'Immortal, invisible, all-seeing, all-smelling, brown-eyed, wet nosed' being whom he begs to '[I]et fall on [him] thy canine salivation' (1). This opening scene, then, immediately collapses Marlowe's allegedly biographical traits of atheist and blasphemer with those of his own protagonists who are overreachers and studious scholars.

Thomas Kyd enters the home, bringing in an actor Marlowe requested from the provinces named Tom Stone, to act in a masque featuring Dido and Aeneas that he has written to be performed at the estate. We also meet one other houseguest, a beautiful Venetian actress named Rosalinda Benotti, 'a Moor, early twenties' (iii) who is in love with Marlowe. Marlowe and Rosalinda are immediately suspicious of Tom, however, believing they have seen him before. After this and many other winks and nods to Marlowe's actual dramas, we soon discover that the actor named Stone is Shakespeare himself. This, of course, leads to other nods and winks to the rival playwright's life and work.<sup>6</sup> Sir Walter Raleigh soon arrives to see the

<sup>5</sup> This coterie allegedly consisted of free thinkers such as Marlowe, Thomas Harriot, and Sir Walter Raleigh. Shakespeare may have been alluding to it in *Love's Labour's Lost* in 4.3.251, but textual alternatives in this play render this reference inconclusive.

<sup>6</sup> For instance, when Marlowe tells Shakespeare he looks older than he 'expected' (4), Kyd reminds Marlowe that they are both the same age, which prompts Shakespeare

evening's entertainment, a collaborative performance of the story of Dido and Aeneas that features Kyd controlling the lighting effects, while Marlowe and Stone/Shakespeare act out various roles (22-23).

But there is an air of anxiety over the whole house, for Raleigh is concerned that he is losing favour with the Queen, particularly due to his association with 'The School of Night', the alleged circle of heretics, scientists, and freethinkers that seemed so dangerous to the Elizabethan authorities. The following day, after Kyd has returned to his apartment in London, Nicholas Skeres and Francis Poley break down the door into his chambers and arrest Kyd, but not before demanding he give up any writings Marlowe may have left behind when they shared this same room at an earlier date.

The notion of Marlowe and Shakespeare as collaborators in spirit, if not in actuality, is intimated often, beginning at the end of Act I. When Marlowe asks if Stone is really 'Shag-Spur', Shakespeare corrects his pronunciation of his name. When Kyd hears this, he asks with astonishment, 'You mean you did write *Harry the Sixth*?', to which Shakespeare drolly replies, 'The better parts' (33). Before the night is over, Marlowe and Shakespeare realize they are both composing poems, *Hero and Leander* for the former and *Venus and Adonis* for the latter, and Marlowe comments that it must be fate that they were 'brought together to write two love poems in one house' (35).

In the second act, Marlowe is arrested partly on false evidence, and soon Raleigh visits him in prison to help secure his release, but not before he demands that Marlowe assure him that he has kept no records of the members or meetings of the School of Night. After reassuring Raleigh there is no paper trail which may cause him concern, the playwright is released but under Privy Council orders to remain close to the city centre. With only a three-mile radius in which to move, Marlowe makes his way to a familiar haunt on the other side of the Thames, the deserted Rose Theatre. As he enters, he overhears, with 'an inner sense of defeat', Shakespeare reading one of his Dark Lady sonnets to the dusky Rosalinda (69). Suddenly Skeres and Poley arrive, and Shakespeare unsuccessfully tries to fend them off with a stage sword. They explain to Marlowe, however, that they mean him no harm, for they have come to fetch him in order to fake his death at Deptford by employing a '[d]ead man's switch'; that is, taking a corpse and substituting it for Marlowe's body (78), allowing him to escape to Venice undetected.

Shakespeare and Marlowe then discuss putting Shakespeare's name on Marlowe's plays once he is safely on the continent. Shakespeare confesses that it has 'been suggested' by others that he should 'have your plays produced alongside mine', to which Marlowe responds, realizing immediately what this

to explain that he usually dons 'a hairpiece', but not when riding horseback, a glance at Shakespeare's famously receding hairline (5).

means: 'D'you mean under your name?', to which Shakespeare nods (80). But Marlowe then asks, 'Who is going to accept that your "vision" and mine could proceed from the same mind?' When Walsingham points out that '[s]urely, there are similarities' between the two writers, Kit diabolically distinguishes his writing: 'He holds his mirror to humanity. I look behind the mirror' (80).

On the evening before Marlowe is to depart, he ponders the plays he might write in the future, once safely out of England. 'That's what I should write in Venice', he says aloud, a story about a 'Moorish general and his jealousy. A good theme, jealousy'. Turning to Shakespeare he says, 'you could be the damned machiavel [*sic*] ensign that dupes him into murdering' Desdemona; in Marlowe's version the two would then 'creep up on her in her sleep' and 'hit her with a sandbag' to kill her (83). Almost immediately, however, Marlowe turns and says, 'No ... too much like *The Jew of Malta*' (83). Yet before he finishes his sentence, Shakespeare interrupts and says, 'I think the Moor should do the murder himself ... alone ... without Iago' (83). When Marlowe responds, 'without the mach-ivel? How?', Shakespeare suggests, 'He kills her for love by kissing her to death ... and smothering her with a pillow' (83). The stage direction indicates that 'Marlowe is taken aback by the way that [Shakespeare] has been thinking it out and has the answer so complete' (84). Of course, this idea of Marlowe and Shakespeare working collaboratively to sketch out plot lines will be seen again in *Shakespeare in Love*.

While I would suspect most academics would enjoy the play, particularly since it only fills in details from the factual events of Marlowe's last days without resorting to sensationalized accounts of the playwright's death, it probably comes as no surprise that the reviews were decidedly mixed on the play's popular appeal. While its first audiences in Stratford seemed to enjoy it, that may have been because, as the reviewer for *City Limits* complained, it 'felt written for the specific press-night of Stratford habitués' (Shuttleworth 1992). When it played later in the U.S., it was even more chastised for its book knowledge, and *The Los Angeles Times* titled its review '*School of Night* at Mark Taper [theatre] doesn't do its homework' because, the subtitle suggested, 'Peter Whelan can't decide if he's writing a murder mystery or a master's thesis' (McNulty 2008). Even Laurence Vittes, in his much more sympathetic review of the production in *The Hollywood Reporter*, led the review with the following: 'Bottom Line: So Christopher Marlowe was a spy who didn't write Shakespeare after all. So who cares?' He had to admit, however, that the play may have bridged the town/gown divide, although his tone suggests slight condescension: 'For many theatergoers intrigued by the chance to see Shakespeare and his buddies without all of that Elizabethan poetry stuff', Vittes opined, the play would be worth 'venturing downtown to see how it was when the English language came to flower amidst the riotous behaviour of great rulers and poets, lesser heroes and villains' (2008).

Trying to stage a drama by Marlowe and Shakespeare is hard enough. Trying to produce one about their lives may be even more difficult, for now a twentieth-century writer must try to put words into the mouths of two of the most famous playwrights of the Elizabethan era, whether they worked together or not. But this challenge was not lost on Whelan, for he gestured toward the distinction between popular and academic culture in a 2004 interview: 'Drama and University have an uneasy relationship. Drama is about emotion, not about analysis. You should need departments of love and hate and rage' (Ellis 2004). Attempting to serve two masters, one on campus or at home reading and analysing the play, the other attempting to enjoy a night at the theatre, remains one of the most difficult tasks for writers attempting to please both.

But the whole subject of the play, I would suggest, anticipated a key ingredient for the hint of collaboration between Elizabethan playwrights for the next few decades, one with a dash of mystery, a hint of conspiracy, and a large helping of relevancy. It is worth noting that as soon as Whelan graduated from high school, he entered the National Service and was sent to post-war Berlin. 'I sometimes think the ruins of that [city] had a bad effect on me', he once claimed, as did the 'pervasive sense of suspicion' he felt while in East Germany. Full of spies, double agents, turncoats, and paid informers, the cast of people Whelan worked with would not be out of place in a John le Carré novel, and he transferred that stifling, paranoid anxiety into *The School of Night*.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Vittes had wondered in his review of the play if Marlowe was supposed to be Whelan's version of 'a James Bond of the late sixteenth century', adding that, if so, the 'idea failed miserably' (2008). Even the less-than-scholarly *Variety* magazine noted that Whelan was writing about his own era as much as the Elizabethan one. 'In attempting to sum up the intellectual commerce of an era' and how it relates 'to the struggles between liberal thinkers and conservative power brokers in our own', Bob Verini concluded that Whelan had 'probably bitten off more than one dramatic work can chew' (2008).

It should be noted that Whelan was also collaborating with others, including his scene designers, his actors, even his audience, as does any playwright. So it makes sense that Shakespeare, both as a character and a role model for writing, remains central to Whelan's work. He has noted that the works of Shakespeare and Shaw influenced him most, and he even references Shakespeare when talking about his decision to first write plays in his late 30s, seeming particularly concerned that playwrights have short shelf

<sup>7</sup> His former play, *A Russian in the Woods*, was based on these experiences. Written for the RSC in 2001, its protagonist is a National Service volunteer who is assigned to an educational unit in a suburb of West Berlin.

lives. 'You've about 20 years' to write, he explained to Samantha Ellis in an interview in 2004, 'Shakespeare started when he was 29 and he was dead by the time he was 53' (Ellis 2004).

#### 4. Shakespeare in Love

Directed by John Madden in 1998, *Shakespeare in Love* also fabricated a Shakespeare-Marlowe collaboration while blurring the boundaries between elite and popular culture. In fact, one of the complaints about the film focused on this tension. Some critics wanted a more 'accurate' story and they particularly disliked the anachronisms scattered throughout Tom Stoppard and Marc Norman's screenplay, including Will's 'psychiatrist', whom he visits at the beginning of the film to find a cure for his writer's block, to the 'daily special' type lunches offered at the local inn. The shtick of the cabbie-like boatmen crossing the Thames is another instance. For example, when Will desperately needs to catch up to the boat of Viola just ahead of him, he shouts to the 'Taxi-driver BOATMAN' (as the stage directions read) to 'Follow that boat!' (Norman and Stoppard 1998, 36). For the offended critics, these references to popular culture amidst a film on a highbrow subject suggest the superficial chattering heard at any 'cocktail party', shrinking the 'emotional range' of the film to that 'of a good TV sitcom'; more generally, they seemed offended principally by the 'middlebrow pleasures dressed up in the trappings of high learning' (Scott 1999). Other critics, however, defended the anachronisms, claiming they 'establish[ed] a textual bridge' between the film's contemporary audience and its 'mock-Elizabethan past' (Davis and Womack 2004, 156).

Since the mixing of pop culture and highbrow entertainment is one central tenet of postmodernism, however, I would suggest this method fits the film perfectly, since its insistence on the collaborative notions of authorship is an equally postmodern notion. As almost everyone knows, the play Shakespeare is working on during the film, and also one of the movie's main conceits, is really written as much by Marlowe (and Burbage and the Queen and others) as it is by Shakespeare, although Marlowe provides the initial conflict and characterization. When Will runs into Marlowe in a local tavern, admitting that he has not 'written a word' of the new play, Marlowe chimes in, proposing that 'Romeo is ... Italian. Always in and out of love', to which Will responds, 'Yes, that's good'. Marlowe then suggests that Romeo's love interest be 'the daughter of his enemy', and further, that Romeo's best friend should be killed in a duel by the brother of his beloved. 'His name', proclaims Marlowe, 'is Mercutio'; Will graciously replies, 'Mercutio ... good name', and he agrees to Marlowe's ideas as he hurries out (Norman and Stoppard 1998, 30). In this film, then, Shakespeare and Marlowe are transformed into congenial and even collaborative writers, buying each other beakers of booze while they hash out the play's details.

As Diana Henderson argues, Will Shakespeare is at his worst in this filmed fabrication, 'not because he collaborates but because he betrays that process: with Henslowe, with Burbage, and most notably with' Marlowe, though in 'this last case, he heartily repents' (4). Of course, Marlowe's powerful presence is felt throughout the film, and not solely as the helpful collaborator for Will's yet-to-be-written play, 'Romeo and Ethel the Pirate's Daughter'. The scene immediately following the tavern exchange focuses on actors auditioning for Will's new play, almost all (except Viola) using the speech from *Doctor Faustus*, 'Was this the face that launched a thousand ships?'. Even the tradesmen know of Marlowe's talent; when Will is ferried across the river, the boatman claims: 'I had Christopher Marlowe in my boat once'. Perhaps most importantly, the moneyman, Phillip Henslowe, sighs, 'There's no one like Marlowe'. It is not hard to imagine that the Miramax producer Harvey Weinstein, the modern day moneyman, may have thought something similar when he financed the movie. Perhaps he thought 'there's no one like Shakespeare' to fill the movie coffers, at least when packaged in a palatable version of his work and life.

The idea of collaboration seems even more relevant in this fabricated story when we consider the group effort that produced the film. Tom Stoppard and Marc Norman worked together on the screen play, while John Madden directed the movie, so it makes sense that the plot suggests a resemblance between the shared duties of the Elizabethan theatre and those of modern filmmaking; the film may also challenge the idea of solitary authorship as an ideal working condition for an artist. But there is even more of a collaborative backstory for this film, as Marc Norman apparently consulted Shakespeare scholars such as Stephen Greenblatt about the possibilities of producing a popular culture version of Shakespeare's life.<sup>8</sup>

But the fact that there were numerous credited contributors to the film did not keep some viewers from trying to locate the main authorial voice in the movie. Henderson may also be correct to say that most critics, and certainly academics, have 'attributed the film's wit – including not only good lines but its larger shape and logic – to Stoppard' (2-3). She cautions, however, that if we choose to make 'claims based on name and our sense of style', we are reverting back to the very same kind of 'evidence historically used to attribute early modern plays to single, singular names' such as Shakespeare, Marlowe, and others (3). Instead Henderson suggests that if we can view

<sup>8</sup> In an op-ed piece in *The New York Times* (6 Feb. 1999), Greenblatt reveals that Marc Norman had taken him to lunch years before the film and asked Greenblatt about writing a 'screenplay about Shakespeare, in the manner of the very successful movie about Mozart, *Amadeus*'. Greenblatt claims he suggested the 'best' period to focus on would be 'the late 1580s or early 1590s', a time in Shakespeare's life, in Greenblatt's words, 'about which we know next to nothing'.

Stoppard as only 'one key player amidst the swirling production' of the film, perhaps we can also 'begin to see Shakespearean texts themselves not as Bardic monuments of genius or anxiety but as analogous works of popular if thoroughly commercialized collaboration' (7).

Other extratextual similarities vis-à-vis the authorship of *Shakespeare in Love* may also be worth noting. Not unlike Shakespeare himself, the trio of writers are 'diachronic collaborators' borrowing from source material and converting it into something innovative and, in many cases, more relative: 'Distancing themselves from exploitative film spectacle as descendants of honey-tongued, gentle Will Shakespeare, Norman, Stoppard, and Madden instead stress the capaciousness of collaboration as a concept, with themselves amongst the happier and more creative beneficiaries' (Henderson, 6).

Such fictionalized versions of collaboration between Marlowe and Shakespeare can also be found in numerous biographies in the early twenty-first century – some scholarly, some not. For instance, in 2005, Rodney Bolt published *History Play: The Lives and After-life of Christopher Marlowe*. Printed on its dust jacket was a quote from one critic who called it 'bold and wickedly fun new fictional biography', in essence making sure it was not mistaken for 'another standard anti-Stratfordian tract attempting to settle the authorship debate'. Indeed, even the author 'freely admit[ted] he's making this up' (dust jacket). The book generated decent reviews in many publications, including *The Times Literary Supplement* and *The Kirkus Review*.<sup>9</sup> I see this book, however, as a conduit from semi-speculative books, such as Greenblatt's *Will in the World* (2004), to a rash of books that do *not* admit to the fiction of Marlowe's authorship of Shakespeare's plays.<sup>10</sup> These include but are not limited to *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography: New Evidence of the Authorship Problem* (Price 2001); *The Shakespeare Enigma: Unravelling the Story of the Two Poets* (Dawkins 2004); *The Truth Will Out: Unmasking the Real Shakespeare* (James and Rubenstein 2007); *Marlowe's Ghost: The Blacklisting of the Man who was Shakespeare* (Pinksen 2008); *The Marlowe-Shakespeare Connection: A New Study of the Authorship Question* (Blumenfeld 2008); and *The Shakespeare Controversy: An Analysis of the Authorship Theories* (Hope and Holston 2009). While admitting that these presses are not the most scholarly, and one work was even self-published, the flood of monographs was enough to prompt James Shapiro, one of our more judicious Shakespearean critics, to attempt to staunch the flow of widely speculative notions of authorship and collaboration in his book, *Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?*, published in 2010 by Simon and Schuster.

<sup>9</sup> See Amazon.com: <<http://goo.gl/YwR69O>>, accessed 20 March 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Of course almost all biography, by its very nature, is somewhat speculative.

### 5. *Conclusion*

If ‘collaboration is like a marriage’, as Moss Hart allegedly claimed while working together with George Kaufmann on numerous plays (quoted in Potter 2012, 84), this notion may have been even more valid for Shakespeare’s situation for, when he was composing most of his dramatic works, at least in the early period, he would have had more contact with his acting company and other authors than he did with poor Anne back in Stratford. So in that sense, his work and working conditions may have seemed more like a marriage than the officially sanctioned one from the consistory court in Worcester.

What I also found in the works I have examined is that the more collaborative in origin the fabricated work is itself, the more it positively portrays such relationships in Shakespeare’s own time. In other words, Burgess, the solitary novelist working without others in a romanticized notion of singular authorship, raises the idea of collaboration in his book when discussing such plays as *1 Henry VI*, but reverts back to the idea that this work, not unlike his own novel, ‘was finished by one pen only’ (Burgess 1994, 213). As a playwright, Whelan’s take on collaboration suggests some middle ground between sole author and collaborators not unlike, perhaps, the relationship between a playwright/director and his or her actors. Since films by their very nature must have multiple collaborators, it follows that *Shakespeare in Love* almost revels in highlighting the death of the Burgess-like solitary authorial presence.

In any event, there remains a palpable strain in many of these attempts to crossbreed Shakespearean biography with a glossy take on his life packaged for wider consumption. Perhaps the anonymous actor/narrator in *A Dead Man in Deptford* came close to describing this tension when he claimed, ‘there be two poles in the *mappamundi* of the writer’s craft, ever opposed, and the scholarly and the mere crowd-pleasing cannot meet’ (Burgess 1994, 213). Of course, neither the narrator, nor perhaps Burgess himself, could have anticipated the crossover appeal of *Shakespeare in Love*. This particular biopic on Elizabethan dramatists and their fellow collaborators won seven Oscars, including Best Supporting Actress, Best Actress, and Best Original Screenplay, the last award highlighting the extremely collaborative effort of the film. Moreover, the movie was praised by a chorus of Shakespearean scholars as well as the ticket-buying patrons who attended in record numbers, so that the academic circles and the public spheres formed yet another collaboration, this time a nonfictional one, as they combined their interests to make it the most talked-about film of the year.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> A review in *Entertainment Weekly* by Owen Gleiberman (1998) expressed this notion, labeling the film ‘that rare thing, a literate crowd pleaser’.

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*Authorship, Co-Authorship  
and Collaboration*



# Text, Style, and Author in *Hamlet* Q1

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## *Abstract*

The first quarto of *Hamlet* has traditionally been an embarrassment to attribution studies. Textual and bibliographical studies from the 1980s and beyond have permitted suspect texts to be recovered and performed, but critical appreciation tends to focus on such matters as characterization and performance possibilities rather than the text's rhetorical integrity and aesthetic qualities. More recently, we have seen greater critical attention to Shakespeare's suspect texts, which has increased our appreciation for and expanded our notion of Q1 *Hamlet* as a 'text'. Opinion remains divided, however, on the question of who 'wrote' this play. This essay addresses the authorship debate somewhat indirectly by providing a different view of *Hamlet* Q1 based on a stylistic analysis that is grounded in Renaissance rhetoric. It characterizes the play's style as the rhetoric of speed, with *brachylogia* as its representative rhetorical figure. Through review of theories about the composition of *Hamlet* Q1 and a rhetorical analysis of its style, the essay seeks to examine how *Hamlet*'s first quarto might have a recognizable style and how that style might be related to current concepts of authorship.

*Keywords:* Authorship, 'Bad' Quarto, *Hamlet*, Note-Taking, Rhetoric, Style

## 1. Introduction

When the 'bad quartos' of Shakespeare's plays became available as texts in their own right, critics began to tread, however gingerly, on turf that was once the private domain of textual scholars. But *Hamlet* Q1, the most notorious of these texts for generations of students and scholars who snickered at its rendition of the 'To be or not to be' speech, still awaits complete rehabilitation. Despite reports of successful performances, enthusiastic recommendations from dramaturgs, and the publication of Kathleen O. Trice's edition of *The First Quarto of Hamlet* (1998) for the New Cambridge Shakespeare, an aura of disrepute still hangs over the play.<sup>1</sup> *Hamlet* Q1 has begun to find champions,

<sup>1</sup> For some reports on performances of *Hamlet* Q1 from the 1960s through the early 1990s, see Sjogren 1979; McMillin 1984; Urkowitz 1988 and 1992. A description of past

who defend its interest to actors and directors and the striking quality of certain character portrayals. But while both projects rest on a catalogue of significant variants among texts, there is, to date, no attempt to define a general stylistic ethos for *Hamlet* Q1. Some of this caution comes from the long-standing, although now contested, assumption that *Hamlet*'s first quarto is a 'memorial reconstruction' corrupted by the faulty memories of theatrical 'pirates'. Scholars now challenge the status of *Hamlet* Q1 as either a memorial reconstruction or a 'corrupt' text. Some scholars, furthermore, have argued that *Hamlet* Q1 is not a translation, however marred and incomplete, of theatrical performance, but a 'literary' text destined for a market of readers. Finally, there has been a renewed effort on documentary, literary, and theatrical grounds, to assign Q1 to a young Shakespeare. For all of these reasons, investigating *Hamlet* Q1 as possessing a characteristic style that would condition its reception by auditors and readers and help to define its place in the study of Shakespearean authorship makes sense.

## 2. *How Hamlet Q1 Became a Text*

Once, as Lucas Erne narrates the story, the short quartos were roundly dismissed as 'bad', derivative products not worthy of the term 'text' (Erne 2003).<sup>2</sup> That evolving story carries with it changing notions of who (or what) is the author of Q1, which will prove significant in turn for the understanding of the relation between style and authorship. The linking of suspect quartos with memorial reconstruction, arising jointly from the editorial labours of W.W. Greg and Alfred Pollard, was shaped into a complete narrative for *Hamlet* Q1 by G.I. Duthie (1941). As is well-known, Duthie posited that *Hamlet* Q1 was a pirated text, reconstructed by the minor actor who played Marcellus for performance in the provinces. These further associations with theft and ignorant audiences reinforced, as Randall McLeod notes, the quartos' moral and intellectual inferiority (1982). Under the regime of old-school narratives of memorial reconstruction, the supposedly crude style of *Hamlet* Q1 disqualified it as a text for scholarly study or critical debate without disturbing the notion that the 'real' *Hamlet* had a single author: Shakespeare. In the first quarto of *Hamlet*, we had no text to speak of, but still one glorious, indivisible, and

productions can also be found in Irace 1998, 20-27. The most recent account of Q1 in performance can be found in Bourus 2014.

<sup>2</sup> I am using the term 'text', in opposition to 'work', in Roland Barthes' sense of the term – as being plural, mutable, and always in motion: 'The text is plural. Which is not simply to say that it has several meanings, but that it accomplishes the very *plural* of meaning: an *irreducible* (and not merely an acceptable) plural. The Text is not a co-existence of meanings but a passage, an over-crossing; thus, it answers not to an interpretation, even a liberal one, but to an explosion, a dissemination' (1977, 159, emphasis in the original).

inviolable author – one who paradoxically was perceptible only by his absence. If style is the man, *Hamlet Q1*'s bad textuality can be traced to the mangling thief Marcellus. The good author Shakespeare is simply replaced by a single, bad, illegitimate author.

In response to and reaction against the premises established by Greg, Pollard, *et al.*, *Hamlet Q1* becomes a 'text' by several routes. One of the strongest efforts to release it from the stigma of being a 'bad' quarto was by Leah S. Marcus (1996), as part of her proposal for Shakespearean 'unediting'. Marcus suggests that *Hamlet Q1* deserves serious attention as a stand-alone text, regardless of its potential familial relations to other versions of the play. Her recuperation depends on a theoretical rejection of chronological priority and authenticity, criteria underlying the New Bibliography's concept of copytext, and the embrace of a 'provisional equality' between alternative texts. Marcus' concept of 'unediting' begins with Roland Barthes' useful distinction between text and work, but insists more on the materialist dimension of text. Marcus returns *Q1* to us as a text, but only offers tantalizing glimpses of a new idea of authorship by linking *Q1* to theatrical practice by way of its markers of orality. Both oral style and theatrical practice envision texts as part of an embodied exchange between speakers, which takes us some distance away from the *Shakespeare in Love* bard experiencing writer's block in his lonely garret.

More sustained study of the short quartos has added further important information, although the results have ambivalent implications for the status of *Hamlet Q1* as a text. Laurie Maguire's extensive study of Shakespearean 'suspect texts' (1996) struck a significant blow to the theory of memorial reconstruction by concluding that many so-called 'bad' texts were not the product of memorial reconstruction at all; most significant for my purposes is her observation that many suspect texts are often longer rather than shorter than usual, which calls into question the assumption that short quartos must necessarily be corrupt products of memory. The partial reclamation of Shakespeare's early quartos resulting from these forays into textual analysis was reinforced by growing interest in authorial revision of plays: if an author can be identified, then we have a text. Grace Ioppolo's *Revising Shakespeare* places Shakespearean texts within the tradition of authorial revision and offers specific hypotheses regarding authorial revision in particular plays. She accepts, however, the premise that 'Quarto 1 was a reported text of an acting version' that 'may have been abridged for the performances advertised on its title page' (1991, 134).<sup>3</sup> *Q1*'s reliance on 'paraphrase', according to Ioppolo, suggests that it is a reported text, although the absence in both *F1* and *Q1* of

<sup>3</sup> For a sustained scrutiny of what *Hamlet Q1*'s title page suggests about the play and its origins, see Menzer 2008, 111-114.

duplicated phrases that are characteristic of Q2 may suggest that Q1 is the later text. Ioppolo concludes that Q1 may be the reported product of an abridged version of the text deriving from Q2. This exploration of Q1 as involving some type of authorial revision elevates its place within an authorial chain of command, but leaves unresolved the distinction between single authors and others who may be involved in the creation of a text. It neither helps nor hinders the case that *Hamlet* is a text. Steven Urkowitz (1992) makes a stronger claim for *Hamlet*'s first quarto as the descendant of an authorial draft and further rehabilitates Q1 by highlighting its performance potential. Through these arguments, our bad *Hamlet* quarto gains respectability by association with the author Shakespeare, who is characterized as a reviser, and with the theatre. Q1 is starting to have an author and be a text without having to disavow its playhouse origins, although Paul Werstine correctly registers the minority view that performability is not a sufficient condition for declaring a bad text 'good' (Werstine 1999).

Kathleen O. Irace's *Reforming the 'Bad' Quartos* (1994) rounds out this phase of scholarship by considering the 'bad' quartos potentially as performance texts, weighing evenly the merits of memorial reconstruction and the even earlier theory that longer texts are revisions of shorter, more 'drafty'. Although Irace is quite interested in revision, she identifies *Hamlet* Q1, because of its plot arrangement, attribution of lines, and other features, as an adaptation, probably coming into being, in her opinion, as a theatrical abridgement for touring purposes. By establishing a taxonomy of methods and motives behind the 'bad' quartos, Irace loosens further the ties between any one figure and a short quarto; we are coming closer to having a text (and possibly a style) without reference to any particular individual behind that text.

Two recent studies of Shakespearean authorship in *Hamlet* Q1 strengthen even further the case for the play's status as a text. Both do so by arguing that Q1 is the product of a single author, Shakespeare, writing in the 1580s at a quite early stage of his career. In a careful re-examination of the circumstances under which Nicholas Ling published the first quarto, Terri Bourus argues that *Hamlet* Q1 cannot be a 'pirated text' that made its way into print by illicit means:

From the perspective of the English book trade in the years just before the death of Elizabeth I, there is nothing irregular, suspicious, or piratical about Ling's 1603 edition of *Hamlet*. It was a perfectly legitimate book, the product of legal, logical, ethical, well-understood social, business, and political relationships. (Bourus 2014, loc. 844)

She also presents an extended challenge to the theories of an actor-pirate and of actors' interpolations into the text and presents a substantial critique of the idea that the text was produced by note-takers in the audience (discussed

below). What errors exist in Q1, Bourus argues, are local (usually occurring within one line) and can be explained by lapses in Compositor A's short-term memory and mistakes by typesetters in James Roberts' printing shop. Bourus concludes that the 1603 printed *Hamlet*, which was written in the late 1580s, represents the 'original' or anterior text, while the 1604 version is a major authorial revision, a 'revising author' being the simplest, most obvious, and logically elegant solution to the differences between the two texts (2014, loc. 2071). While she rests her claim for Shakespearean authorship on external evidence, Bourus also offers useful insights into Q1's theatrical virtues, based in part on a production of the play that she herself directed.

Margrethe Jolly, whose scholarship takes aim primarily at the theory of memorial reconstruction, concurs with Bourus that the first quarto of *Hamlet* is an early text written by Shakespeare and Q2 a major authorial revision. Drawing primarily on source study, she argues that Q1's more frequent borrowings from and closer relationship to the French source, Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*, along with the evolution of some borrowings between Q1 to Q2, demonstrates that Q1 is the 'anterior' text (Jolly 2012, 83). In Jolly's view, the scenes that demonstrate a line of development from the source through the two quartos are, specifically, the location of the 'nunnery' scene, some features of the closet scene, and 'the scenes in which Hamlet's return is announced' (95). As part of her longer argument that Q2 is a revision of Q1, throughout *The First Two Quartos of Hamlet*, Jolly defends Q1 wording and literary/dramatic merit, particularly its characterization of the Queen. She constructs a scenario in which the single author, Shakespeare, is intensely engaged with Belleforest, virtually writing with *Histoires Tragiques* at his elbow in the same way that he seems to have Plutarch ready to hand when penning *Antony and Cleopatra's* barge speech; when conducting wholesale revision for Q2, Jolly posits, Shakespeare selectively consulted his source, but more frequently, deviated from it to heighten drama and suspense and refine characterization, especially the role of the Prince. While Bourus imagined Q1 as the work of practicing dramatist, this Shakespeare reads French and is a rather bookish young man.

The discussion of *Hamlet's* first quarto has produced a complex, tangled history, in which the concepts of text and author engage in an ever-changing dance. Whether or not Q1 is considered to have a proper 'author' depends partly on judgments about the status of a text; however, judgments about whether Q1 is a 'mangled' text, a performable script, or an intentional response to a source tend not to disturb the concept of a unitary author. Before returning to that concept for further consideration, we can review the accumulated judgments about Q1 as a text as a 'way in' to defining textuality without (the necessity of) a (single) author – or, more simply, to describe Q1 as a text apart from offering a specific hypothesis about 'who', if anyone, actually wrote it.

Within the scholarly literature, discussion of the first quarto's textual features runs the gamut from a focus on microscopic to macroscopic features. The belief that *Hamlet* Q1 is a memorial reconstruction rested heavily on revealing small-scale blemishes – word choice, uneven meter, mistakes in lineation and speech prefixes, transposition of scenes and lines, and so forth. Critics of Q1's printed text, whether in facsimile or modern transcription, are expected to demonstrate the precision of a Hinman collator in comparing the text to later versions. The 1980s wave of enthusiasm for the first quarto's virtues as a performance text, combined with actual performances, understandably focused on larger dramatic features, such as pacing, characterization, and overall dramatic ethos. The material text, as it appears in printed form, became less important than the oral, embodied delivery of that text. The most recent attributions of *Hamlet* Q1 to a young Shakespeare offer a further range of foci, from word choice in translation from Belleforest's French (Jolly) to playhouse effects (Bourus). What is missing still from the discussion is what I would call a 'middle zoom' on the text, an examination of stylistic features grounded in Renaissance rhetoric. The next section of this essay seeks to describe *Hamlet* Q1's characteristic style, which is based on *brevitas* and the rhetoric of speed, as a basis for defining the play-as-text.

### 3. *Style in Hamlet Q1*

*Hamlet* Q1 (2,150 lines) is shorter than Q2 (3,600 lines) and much shorter than the composite texts of critical editions. To some extent, speediness in Q1 is simply a by-product of length and what Lene Petersen (2010) calls a 'telescoping' of events. The best-known structural difference is Q1's placement of Hamlet's 'To be or not to be' speech and the 'nunnery scene' with Ophelia in act 2 rather than 3. Irace, who thinks of Q1 as the later text, thinks that bridge passages used to ease the transposition from Q2 suggest a deliberate abridgement in the first quarto plot. Moving the episode forward, moreover, not only saves Corambis (or Polonius) the trouble of announcing the plot to spy on Hamlet twice, but also makes Hamlet's break with Ophelia take place earlier and mutes the sense that the prince's philosophical explorations are a product of procrastination or excessive soul-searching.<sup>4</sup> The second major plot difference between Q1 and Q2 involves transmission of the news concerning Hamlet's return to Elsinore. Information conveyed in Q2 through the letter that Hamlet sends to Horatio via the pirates, the letter received by Claudius in the

<sup>4</sup> Jolly (2012 and 2014) explains the move in terms of Q1's strong connection to the source, Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*. Tiffany Stern's recent essay on note-taking and the transmission of *Hamlet* Q1's text, however, offers a different explanation for the transposition of these two speeches as part of imperfect memorialization by note-takers (Stern 2013). See below.

company of Laertes, and Hamlet's graveside conversation with Horatio about the stratagem of his escape is, in Q1, condensed into a single speech delivered by Horatio to Gertred. Whatever theory of authorship we embrace, the first quarto gets more information across in a shorter space, simplifies Gertred's (and our) understanding of events, and strengthens the Queen's allegiance with Hamlet.

These macroscopic features of *Hamlet* Q1's plot are reinforced by a predominance of what the ancient rhetorician Hermogenes called the rhetoric of speed. In her study of Hermogenes' influence in Italy and England during the early modern period, Annabel Patterson provides ample evidence that Renaissance rhetoricians were familiar with Hermogenes, whose ideas and texts had been transmitted through Byzantine rhetoric. According to Patterson, Hermogenes was known not only as the author of the *Progymnasmata*, schoolboy exercises that Shakespeare might have practiced at the Stratford Grammar School, but also for his more philosophical labours in defining the seven ideas of style (Clarity, Grandeur, Beauty, Speed, Ethos, Verity and Gravity). The rhetoric of speed is characterized by its thematic connection with time and transience or with heroic action; by its reliance on rhythm to communicate urgency; and by its use of sound patterns to evoke breathlessness and time's quick passage (Patterson 1970, 56-57 and 153-175). Speedy effects have a prominent place in epic; they can be used, for instance, to catalogue the details of large-scale battles in works such as Samuel Daniel's *Civil Wars* or Lord Fairfax's translation of Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*. But Shakespeare, as Brian Vickers, Marion Trousdale, Richard Lanham, Daniel Javitch, Lloyd Davis, and others have shown, is generally more at home with the rhetoric of copiousness.<sup>5</sup> Not until the late romances, such as *Cymbeline*, will Shakespeare return to the rhetoric of speed, and in his later efforts he relies more on ellipsis than on the syntactic and rhythmic devices that characterize the first quarto's style.<sup>6</sup> *Hamlet* Q1's rhetoric of speed therefore stands out within the broader scope of the traditional Shakespearean canon.

*Hamlet*'s first quarto achieves its speedy effects through a stylistic concision featuring *brachylogia* as a governing figure or scheme.<sup>7</sup> In 1981,

<sup>5</sup> Vickers 1971; Lanham 1976; Javitch 1978; Trousdale 1982; and Davis 1993. I have also discussed tropes associated with Erasmus' *De Copia* in Shakespeare's plays (Desmet 1992).

<sup>6</sup> On 'speedy style' in the late plays, see Sutherland 1959. Although they do not comment on the specific grounds for this judgment, Wells and Taylor also suggest the ambiguous place of *Hamlet* Q1 within the study of Shakespeare's style: 'In places, it bears every hallmark of Shakespeare's mature manner; other passages could be attributed to Shakespeare at all if they were written earlier than any of his acknowledged work' (1987, 398). I would suggest that *Hamlet*'s Q1's rhetoric of speed contributes to this sense of its chronological ambiguity.

<sup>7</sup> For the purposes of this essay, I will use the term rhetorical 'figure' in a general sense, defined by Richard A. Lanham in *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* as 'any device or pattern of language in which meaning is changed or enhanced' (1991, 178). I also observe

George Wright analysed brilliantly the rhetorical ethos of what we now regard as *Hamlet's* 'conflated text', essentially a compilation of Q2 and F1. He saw the play text as being governed by *hendiadys*, a rhetorical figure that joins together two substantives by a connective such as 'and' or 'or'. The two nouns on either side of the copulative can have a relatively simple grammatical relation. According to Wright, Virgil's best known example from the *Georgics*, 'we drank from cups and gold', translates logically as 'we drank from gold cups' or 'from cups of gold'. One term in the *hendiadys* modifies the other. In many instances, however, such a simple translation is not possible, so that the transformation of a dependent relation into an independent relation between the two nouns changes the logic of the phrase, establishing a disturbing equity between items in a world that should be more orderly and hierarchical. Furthermore, *hendiadys* is susceptible to irony; in Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*, for instance, Belinda suffers from stains to either her honour or her silk brocade, and tragedy strikes 'When husbands, or when lapdogs breathe their last' (Canto III, 158). Based on the unusual density of this figure within the play and reinforced by exhaustive analysis, Wright's essay offers *hendiadys* as a master figure for *Hamlet*, one that governs what Maynard Mack (1952) has characterized as the play's 'questionable' ethos. *Hendiadys*, 'far from explaining mysteries, establishes them'. In effect, *Hamlet* 'calls into question – and *hendiadys* helps it to do so – all relationships, familial, political, cosmic, and even artistic' (Wright 1981, 179).<sup>8</sup>

*Hendiadys* promotes copiousness. Paratactic, or additive, and reliant on loose connectives such as 'and', the rhetorical figure encourages doublings at all syntactic levels. *Brachylogia*, by contrast, is a syntactic scheme that works by the 'omission of conjunctions between single words' (Lanham 1991, 30). An expanded sense of the term would include strings of phrases and clauses, without intervening conjunctions. George Puttenham, always the most colourful among English Renaissance rhetoricians, Englishes the Latin term *brachylogia* as the 'cutted comma', a sequence of 'single words, without any closing or coupling, saving that a little pause or comma is given [sic] to every word'. He offers the following example: '*Envy, malice, flattery, disdain, / Avarice, deceit, falshed, filthy gaine*' (Puttenham 1936, 213). In Puttenham, the cutted comma tends to produce lists, intoned with vehemence. Henry Peacham defines *brachylogia* (or its Latin equivalent *articulus*) in terms of a

the distinction between a *trope* as 'use of a word to mean something other than its ordinary meaning' (see Lanham's succinct but complete discussion of this term and its complexities, 154-157) and *scheme* as 'a figure in which words preserve their literal meaning, but are placed in a significant arrangement of some kind' (136). Lanham defines the term 'figure' in greater detail on 78-80.

<sup>8</sup> Frank Kermode echoes Wright's conclusion that *hendiadys* is *Hamlet's* dominant rhetorical figure, governing its pervasive doublings, in *Shakespeare's Language* (2000, 100-102).

sequence of words, but his examples also include sequences of clauses, as in this case: 'I will make them desolate, waste, despysed, hissed at, accursed, pryde slayeth love, provoketh disdain, kindleth malice, contemneth humility, woundeth wysedom, confoundeth justice, and defaceth fortitude' (from Jeremiah 5; Peacham 1971, I, 4v). When words and clauses are strung together in this manner, language rolls not trippingly, but tumblingly from the tongue.

Under the right circumstances, *brachylogia* can contribute to copiousness, as the self-generating strings of words or phrases pile up. A luxuriant *brachylogia* becomes an epic catalogue. Within the context of shorter speeches and faster action, however, *brachylogia* gives, through its lack of either connection or subordination, an impression of haste and chaos. Peter Guinness, who played the first quarto Hamlet in a production at the Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond, recognizes the rhetoric of speed in *Hamlet* Q1. Describing the first quarto production as '*Hamlet* with the brakes off', he notes as well the effect of staccato speech that is associated with *brachylogia*, describing a script full of 'non sequiturs', 'curious jumps in thinking', and 'rather stumbling language' (Loughrey 1992, 128, 124).

The Appendix to this essay collects examples of *brachylogia* culled from *Hamlet*'s first and second quartos. The most striking examples occur at moments of high tension: for instance, the spirit of Hamlet's father, recounting his murder, lists the things he lost through an untimely death: 'Thus was I sleeping by a brothers hand / *Of Crowne, of Queene, of life, of dignitie* / At once deprived' (Q1 534-536, emphasis added).<sup>9</sup> Hamlet, in the nunnery scene, catalogues for Ophelia his own character flaws: 'I am very *prowde, ambitious, disdainefull*, / With more sinnes at my becke, then I have thoughts / To put them in' (Q1 888-890, emphasis added). Ophelia's eulogy to Hamlet's 'madness' immediately after the nunnery scene laments how the Prince's identity disintegrates before her eyes: 'The *Courtier, Scholler, Souldier*, all in him, / All dasht and splinterd thence' (Q1 921-922, emphasis added). In his fit of feigned passion describing the horrors of Troy's fall, the Player depicts Pyrrhus, 'horridely tricked / *With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sonnes* / Back'd and imparched in calagulate gore' (Q1 1077-1079, emphasis added). And Hamlet, confronting another murderer closer to home, curses Claudius as a '*damned villaine, / Treacherous, bawdy, murderous villaine*' (Q1 1150-1151, emphasis added). Finally, we can hear the rhythms of *brachylogia*, through reiterated clauses rather than single words, in a very unlikely place – Hamlet's extended deliberation on the necessity of enduring the pains inflicted by outrageous fortune:

<sup>9</sup> Because I make comparisons between the Q1 and Q2 texts of *Hamlet*, all references are to *The Three-Text 'Hamlet'* (Shakespeare 1991).

To be, or not to be, I there's the point,  
*To Die, to sleepe*, is that all? I all:  
 No, *to sleepe, to dreame*, I mary there it goes,

....

But for this, the ioyfull hope of this,  
 Whol'd beare the scornes and flattery of the world,  
*Scornd by the rich, the rich curssed of the poore?*  
*The widow being oppressed, the orphan wrong'd,*  
*The taste of hunger, or a tirants raigne,*  
 And thousand more calamities besides,  
 To grunt and sweate under this weary life,  
 When that he may his full *Quietus* make,  
 With a bare bodkin, who would this indure,  
 But for a hope of something after death? (Q1, 836-853, emphasis added)

The rhetoric of speed in *Hamlet* Q1 dovetails nicely with the play's thematic focus on time's rapid passage. The elder Hamlet has been dead two hours, a month, two months, or twice two months. Hamlet himself appears to be a young scholar, yet the gravedigger says that he is thirty years old (only in Q2, however).<sup>10</sup> Gertred, Hamlet implies in the closet scene, is not acting her age. The rhetoric of speed, on the other hand, creates an ethos that is at odds with Hamlet's infamous hesitation and *Hamlet's* equally well-known dilation of its action. What James Calderwood says of the play – that it 'tends toward the discontinuous, digressive, and parenthetical' (1983, 176) – might be true of the second quarto but certainly not of the first, which is ruthlessly teleological. In Q1, brevity (which creates stark alternatives) and *brachylogia*, (which suggests restless action) fabricate rhetorically a world in which events happen quickly, but without obvious reason. The style of *Hamlet's* first quarto reinforces the kind of a-logical existence that the play, as Robert Weimann argues, characterizes as bestial (1985, 284).

Stylistic analysis can reveal a predominant rhetorical ethos – in the case of *Hamlet* Q1, a sense of speed that the Renaissance associated with action, war, chaos, confusion, and a relentless forward movement.

Dealing with style across *Hamlet's* multiple texts, however, militates against a confident assignment of meaning, whether in terms of philosophy or character, to any particular style.<sup>11</sup> Close analysis of *brachylogia*, for instance,

<sup>10</sup> Jolly suggests that the differences between Hamlet's age in Q1 and Q2 may be attributed to Q1's closer relation to Belleforest's *Les Histoires Tragiques* (see Jolly 2012, 83-95 and *The First Two Quartos of 'Hamlet'* [2014]). Bourus 2014 links the age difference between the young Hamlet of Q1 and the thirty-year-old Hamlet of Q2 to the difference in actor Richard Burbage's age when he played the two versions of the Prince, first in the 1580s and then in the early 1600s.

<sup>11</sup> For a more schematic analysis of character and style in the conflated *Hamlet*, see Maurice Charney's *Style in 'Hamlet'* (1969). Charney notes some of the same 'speedy effects'

reveals instances of the scheme in the second quarto that do not appear in the first, including Horatio's powerful summation of the play's action:

And let me speake, to yet unknowing world  
 How these things came about; so shall you heare  
*Of carnall, bloody and unnaturall acts,*  
*Of accidentall iudgements, casuall slaughters,*  
*Of deaths put on by cunning,* and for no cause  
 And in this *upshot*, purposes mistooke,  
 Falne on th'inventers heads: all this can I  
 Truly deliver. (Q2 3874-3881, emphasis added)

Other examples, such as Polonius' over-the-top list of dramatic genres or Hamlet's satiric catalogue of old men's body parts, might have a wholly different tone. (These are 1h and 1i in the Appendix.) Stylistic analysis across a single text, rather than microscopic differentiations between variant texts, highlights the fact that in *Hamlet* 'style' is an approximation, not an essence, and that the factors contributing to a perception of style are various. In the case of *Hamlet*'s first quarto, the rhetoric of speed emerges from not just accumulated instances of *brachylogia*, but also the play's compressed action, some simplification of character,<sup>12</sup> and the absence of those more philosophical sentiments in Q2 that a greater degree of copia encourages.

#### 4. *Who Wrote Hamlet Q1?*

The next section revisits the question of who wrote *Hamlet* Q1 through a further question: to what extent can style depend on textual effects rather than authorship? In other words, can there be a style without an author? This is a particularly important question for *Hamlet* Q1 as a play, whose right to serious critical consideration and connection to Shakespeare are always under review.

Writing in 1990, Paul Werstine noted that:

that I do, but goes further to assign different styles to particular characters. While such attributions are possible and might be experienced in terms of characterization within a performance of the play, the concern here is with an overall rhythm and ethos and its implications for the concepts of text and author.

<sup>12</sup> The character who is most streamlined is the Queen, which does not necessarily mean that she is less powerful or interesting as a character. Critics such as Jolly 2012, Shand 1998, and Kehler 1995 have argued that the Queen in Q1 is an intriguing, complex, figure. G.B. Shand admits that Gertrud is at risk of dwindling into a cipher, but thinks that her firm allegiance with Hamlet shows that she is faithful to the first person who shows any solicitude at all toward her; in the first quarto, this person is Hamlet, who seems as much concerned to tell his mother the truth as to save her soul by condemning her sexuality.

just as twentieth-century study of the “good” quartos has concentrated on reducing their putative origin to the activity of a single person (Shakespeare), so study of the “bad” quartos has often proceeded toward (if never quite to) the goal of identifying the single agents who can be blamed for their existence. (1990, 82)

Whether Shakespeare or the actor who played Marcellus is responsible for *Hamlet*'s first quarto, in critical history the text has been traceable to a single person or, at least, to one or more individuals. Studies of Shakespearean authorship that take individual writers as their point of reference continue to flourish. Brian Vickers's *Shakespeare, Co-Author* (2002), through linguistic and stylometric methods, pursues the author as a discernible reality whose identity can be decisively affirmed. While Vickers dismantles the text into its authorial components, he reifies anew the equation between style and man by arguing that authors had individually recognizable styles.<sup>13</sup> But because he does not consider *Hamlet* to be a coauthored play, the book has limited application to this essay. Emerging ‘big data’ studies of early modern drama are challenging Vickers's authorial identifications, but often belong to the larger project of attributing texts to singular persons: Shakespeare wrote this, Chettle or Wilkins that part. This is a worthy project, and several contributions to this issue take it on with admirable results. But for understanding *Hamlet* Q1, we need a different paradigm. Relevant to the particular case of *Hamlet* Q1 are developments in textual studies, considerations of dramatic collaboration, and publication history.

Jeffrey Masten's *Textual Intercourse* proves to be foundational, offering as it does a model for collaboration – ‘textual intercourse’ – that goes beyond simply doubling or tripling individual authors. Defining this expansive notion of collaboration ‘as an erasure of individual difference’ (1997, 17) opens up the possibility of a relatively cohesive style for a text whose author is fragmented. In a less direct way, studies of Shakespeare as a ‘literary’ dramatist and *Hamlet*'s first quarto as a literary text also prove useful. Lukas Erne's influential study of *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (2003) posited a difference between plays as traces of theatrical production and plays as literary documents destined for a reading audience. Erne identified *Hamlet*'s second quarto as a reading text and the first as abridged for performance and therefore more

<sup>13</sup> John Jowett outlines some of the difficulties of assigning authorship of a play's parts by stylometric analysis in *Shakespeare and Text* (2007), although the book obviously does not address the most recent developments in that field. Jowett, however, makes the important point that collaboratively written plays were not always distributed to authors by scene; sometimes they could be assigned according to plot, act, or character, and sometimes ‘individual scenes’ could be ‘split between more than one writer, and one writer might revise the work or another, or eventually copy out the entire play, superimposing his preferences as he did so’ (21). Writers might also accommodate their style to that of another contributor, as Shakespeare may have done for the late collaboration with his successor as playwright for the King's Men, John Fletcher.

saturated with markers of orality than the highly literate Q2 text. Thus, in Erne's view we wind up not with a copytext and a bastard but simply two different kinds of text: 'The communal, theatrical versions prepared by the company and performed on stage and the authorial, dramatic versions written (and occasionally revised) by William Shakespeare in the expectation of a readership must have been significantly different texts' (2003, 191).<sup>14</sup> Erne also helps to broaden the notion of textual agency beyond a unitary author by gesturing toward the role played by scribes, transcribers, compositors, printers, booksellers, and even modern editors. This expanded view of textual production and dissemination is fleshed out more fully in Erne's most recent book, *Shakespeare and the Book Trade* (2013), where he explores more minutely the transition from Shakespearean theatrical text to printed book, foregrounding the agency of not only printers but also publishers and booksellers in the trajectory of Shakespeare's printed quartos.

While Erne expands the network of agents in text and book production, he does not, however, relinquish altogether the idea of Shakespeare as an author with motives, ambitions, and actions.<sup>15</sup> Tiffany Stern's 2013 study of *Hamlet* Q1, by contrast, abandons the author altogether in favour of a theory of textual reconstruction through note-takers. Following up on the argument of her earlier book, *Documents of Performance* (2009), Stern regards *Hamlet*'s first quarto as an extreme example of the drama's status as discontinuous 'patch-work'.<sup>16</sup> She speculates that the brevity and 'speediness' of the Q1 text might be attributed to the rhetorical tendencies of note-taking, which aims for sense over sound and resorts frequently to synonyms and elisions. A note-taker, for instance, may leave the second line of a rhyming couplet unarticulated, depending on phonic memory to supply the missing words, however imperfectly, and in moments of desperation, may substitute summary for transcription. In the case of sermons, which is Stern's point of reference, notes were written out in full and perfected at home, after the event. But for plays, as for sermons, the final product can vary in quality, completeness, and accuracy. Stern suggests that, in the case of *Hamlet* Q1, there must be at least two note-takers:

If *Hamlet* Q1 is a text combined from the notes of two or more people, then the reason for its 'good' earlier section, and poor later sections is explained: they bespeak two or

<sup>14</sup> For a strong critique of Erne's identification of *Hamlet* Q1 as a 'theatrical' text and Q2 as a 'literary' text, see Bourus 2014, Chapter 3, *passim*.

<sup>15</sup> For a study of publication practices that does question the persistence of the author in textual and bibliographical criticism, see Lesser 2004, Chapter 1, 1-25, *passim*.

<sup>16</sup> Ioppolo offers a similar view of revision as patchwork in her later essay on 'Revision' (2012), noting that Henslowe's *Diary* makes technical distinctions between 'additions', 'amendments', and 'alterations'.

more separate noters, the early ‘good’ one being more given to verbatim methods of copying, and perhaps using good longhand or phonetic shorthand, the later, less good one (or more) tending towards contraction and epitome, and perhaps reliant on less good longhand or pictorial shorthand. The sudden good speeches later would then be traceable either to actors who spoke more clearly, or to a noter supplying freestanding verbatim ‘passages’ to be combined with someone else’s ‘whole’ text later. (2013, 17)

At another point, she postulates the existence of multiple note-takers, perhaps a master with a cadre of students. This, according to Stern, resembles the practice of transcribing parliamentary speeches by several reporters, who compensate for one another’s deficiencies in an effort to reconstruct the speech.<sup>17</sup> The printed text is now a collective patchwork and the scribes many in number, although Stern’s model eventually does replace the author with a single scribal surrogate: ‘Combined texts naturally required an “amender” to massage the various scripts together. The printers of one 1623 sermon, for instance, are amenders: having received a text “miserably written”, they did what they could to make sense of it’ (Stern 2013, 19). But the presence of a single amender is not necessary to a theory of collective authorship, as Graham Holderness’ comments on the translation of the *King James Bible* point out. In this case, the *Epistle of Isaiah*, as manuscript evidence shows, had a single translator, but that then was read aloud and amended on the fly by the collective body of translators (Holderness 2014, 61-74). In a slightly different way, the manuscript of *Sir Thomas More* shows Shakespeare as a single amender coming in to alter a text that was already the product of different hands. The view that *Hamlet* Q1 is the work of collective note-taking is complemented, from a different perspective, by Paul Menzer’s (2008) view that the printed play has no direct connection to performance or performers because its cues (the main subject of his analysis) make it incapable of being acted. The printed text records, instead, a collection of memories – ‘the memory of a performer with access – as audience, as actor, as reader in part – to a *Hamlet* at various times, at various places, and at and on various stages’ (39). Menzer offers the hypothesis that ‘Anonymous’, as Q1’s author, is a collective of different persons, both actors and audience members, who together produce this printed ‘record of a greedy, appropriative, palimpsestic memory, the record of a *Hamlet* fabricated from both textual material (an actor’s tangible, physical parts in Shakespeare’s play) as well as someone’s memory and experience as both player in and audience of early English drama’ (115).

Stern’s specific hypothesis about *Hamlet* Q1’s origins is still under debate and exists, at this point, in counterpoint with other theories, such as that of authorial revision. Her model for textual production, however, does push us imaginatively

<sup>17</sup> Bourus 2014 notes, however, that parliamentary note-taking was a later phenomenon in England, dating from the 1620s (loc. 1787).

closer to a view of textuality that can operate without the 'authority' of a single designated author. Collectively, work by such scholars as Erne, Bourus, and Stern suggests a world of performance, writing, and publication in which many agents could assume multiple roles. Erne, for instance, shows us how printers and booksellers such as Richard Field and Nicholas Ling played an active role in shaping Shakespeare's plays in quarto. Although most of its argument is outside the main concerns of this essay, Zachary Lesser's *'Hamlet' After Q1* (2015) reminds us that arguments for Shakespearean authorship of Q1, like memorial reconstruction itself, have a history. The view that Q1 is either an early draft or an early Shakespearean revision of other dramatists' material emerges in the debate between John Payne Collier and Charles Knight in the nineteenth century. As Lesser points out, these opposed views are simply two variants on the Romantic master-narrative of Shakespeare's poetic genius (41-49, *passim*). Bourus links Collier, as well, to the concept that the text originated from scribal shorthand.<sup>18</sup> Thus, *Hamlet's* early history is necessarily conditioned by its reception history in succeeding centuries, expanding further the temporal extent of the network that produced *Hamlet* Q1.

With this kind of flexible, fluid, historically extended network in play, the model of 'distributed cognition', which Evelyn Tribble (2005) has offered to explain how performance at the Globe might have operated, may also prove useful for mapping out the textual trajectory of *Hamlet's* first quarto. Tribble evokes Edwin Hutchins' (1995) study of large-ship navigation as a model for the way in which all parts of a theatrical company, human and material/technological, cohered to deliver a play. In a system of distributed cognition, the cognitive and mnemonic burden is spread over a complex network of people and machines, accomplishing a task (steering a large ship, putting on a play) that no one agent could achieve alone.<sup>19</sup> Tribble's notion of distributed cognition in early modern theatre complements Stern's

<sup>18</sup> Bourus 2014, loc. 1566 ff.

<sup>19</sup> The analogy between steering a large ship and putting on a play is not perfect. As Stern notes (particularly in *Rehearsal*, 2000), despite the fact that we over-emphasize rivalry between playwrights and downplay early modern theatre's collaborative and collective aspects, actors could be unresponsive to the characters with whom they interacted, following their own kind of role, which had been honed over a series of plays and performances. There is as well an improvisatory aspect to the interactions, exacerbated by the paucity of rehearsal time and structuring of performance through separate parts and cues. Clowns had a particular license for extempore performance. And there is in drama always the potential for a complete meltdown (as in 'Pyramus and Thisbe'). If Petersen's analogy between early modern drama and ballad-construction and performance has validity, change is a natural feature of the genre. Although the 'performance' of steering a ship alters individual 'parts' as crew members with different levels of experience and varying strengths and weakness rotate throughout the group by an apprenticeship system, this was a more precise self-correcting system than on-stage performance in early modern London.

analysis of the conditions governing early modern theatrical text production in *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (2000): chronological disruption (e.g., distribution and even revision of parts before the drama is finished and while the actors are rehearsing) and spatial fragmentation of texts (into plot, parts, promptbook, etc.). It also helps with some of the contradictions in existing concepts of the dramatic text's transmission: for instance, the tension between a verbatim method of part 'study' in play preparation and evidence that delivery often relied on a memory for things rather than words; or the tension between note-taking as a word-perfect transcription and approximation of an oral text's 'gist'.

The current state of scholarship on *Hamlet Q1* has troubled and complicated the notion of Shakespearean authorship in productive ways, making memorial reconstruction no longer the default position and therefore opening up the text to further consideration as text. A palimpsest it may be, but not necessarily a mangled mess. Rhetorical analysis of *Hamlet Q1*'s style, and particularly its rhetoric of speed, suggests as well a characteristic ethos to this text, one suggestive – both graphically and aurally – of haste, chaos, and thoughtless action. Rhetorical analysis, while certainly not able to decide the authorship question, not only 'rescues' *Hamlet Q1* from the author vs. pirate/scribe binary, but also highlights an important feature of this particular text that remains in the background of the ongoing discussion of the play's genesis. This feature is its paradoxical combination of oral markers and traces of print culture.

As a rhetorical scheme, *brachylogia* is a syntactic rather than semantically based figure of speech. Like most figures of syntactic repetition, it is conducive to debate, conversation, and rapid narrative or dialogic exchange. The game of 'questions' that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern play in Tom Stoppard's parody of *Hamlet*, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1967), mimics this rhythm of rapid, patterned question-and-response. Some time ago, Walter Ong (1965) posited that Renaissance prose style, which was generally structured by repetitive patterns, bore traces of oral exchange.<sup>20</sup> Lene B. Petersen, exploring relationships generally between Shakespeare's short quartos and oral performance, notes as well that repetition, omission, and transposition are fundamental structuring devices for oral genres (2010, 55), all of which features have been remarked on by critics of *Hamlet*.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Since Ong was speaking specifically of Tudor prose style, his remarks would be particularly applicable if *Hamlet Q1* were indeed written by Shakespeare in the 1580s, as Jolly and Bourus suggest.

<sup>21</sup> Petersen's work is also promising for understanding the nature of *Hamlet Q1*, but in her study, as in others, a central figure behind the text is finally identified: in this case, it is 'tradition' that stands in for the absent author. On the other hand, Petersen also sees the actor's oral compositional methods as standing closely behind the *Hamlet Q1* text as we have it and so would fit with Tribble's idea of the Globe as a scene of 'distributed cognition'.

Other critics, focusing on *Hamlet* Q1 as a print artefact, have begun to see the play as a product of literate habits of mind that is destined for readers. Erne has made the strongest case for Shakespeare as a 'literary' dramatist who cared about the dissemination of his texts to readers (2003 and 2013). Zachary Lesser and Peter Stallybrass (2008) have specifically identified *Hamlet* Q1 as Shakespeare's first literary play based on the presence of commonplacings (using inverted commas to mark out specific passages), a feature of literate culture and evidence of readerly activity in the formation of Q1. Finally, although he does not think highly of Q1 as a text, Menzer's study of cues in *Hamlet*'s first quarto, which he suggests makes the text un-actable, show that the book was put together for a reading audience. While Stern's view of *Hamlet* as the product of note-takers tends to disintegrate the text by focusing on 'errors' and moments of local incoherence, the techniques that might have been employed by these hypothetical note-takers themselves marry oral and scribal habits. Adele Davidson's work on early modern shorthand as a writing technology and method for disseminating both sermons and play texts, which Stern draws upon in her essay, suggests a range of ways in which a text taken down by shorthand might come into existence: recorded in real time by auditors; stolen outright and recopied; rehearsed after performance by the actors, with or without the author's blessing; recounted for a presentation copy; and copied down by individuals for private use. As Davidson puts it, 'the individual writer in effect has limitless opportunities to customize stenographic scripts' (2009, 61), and if Stern is correct, there may be multiple individuals involved.<sup>22</sup> With such a flexible method and such a plenitude of ways and means by which an oral performance or written text might make its way into handwritten copies and print, we can move away from the idea that a single person – whether author, scribe, or amender – is the origin of a text.<sup>23</sup>

##### 5. Conclusion: Style without Authors

Within a model of distributed cognition, the answer to the question 'Who wrote *Hamlet* Q1?' may be at once 'Shakespeare' and 'many people'. What

<sup>22</sup> Further information about shorthand and rhetorical method as a form of knowledge-making rather than simply transcription can be found in an excellent article by Lori Anne Ferrell (2007).

<sup>23</sup> Finally, although Jolly and Bourus conclude that *Hamlet* Q1 has a singular author, the young Shakespeare, Bourus emphasizes the centrality of networks, albeit networks of individuals, to understanding the story behind *Hamlet* Q1. In the end, there is no barrier to seeing a revising author as a major part of that network and as a participant in the constellation of forces that produced the general stylistic coherence I perceive within the *Hamlet*'s first quarto. Jolly is more of an outlier here, but in pushing against the notion that the play is a memorial reconstruction, she does see Shakespeare as engaging in a textual network with his source.

remains unanswered is how, without a singular author, such a text could present a discernible style. One answer might be, of course, that there is no coherent style. Stern (2013) certainly thinks of *Hamlet* Q1 as a very uneven piece of patchwork. Masten offers Rafe from *Knight of the Burning Pestle* – ‘collaborator, improviser, collator of allusions’ (1997, 25) – as a model for the author dispersed into social discourse during textual intercourse. This agent is nothing more than a snapper-up of unconsidered textual trifles. The hybrid oral/literate style that Lynne Magnusson identifies as the general condition of early modern discourse (2012), however, suggests a more embodied and interpersonal relationship between authors and appropriators, so that the transfer from one person’s mouth to another’s pen can be fraught. Such transactions can ‘perfect’ texts, but can also ‘mangle’ them (see Davidson 2009, 103-129, *passim*). Such relationships can be cooperative, as when William Crashawe, as William Perkins’s literary executor publishing the preacher’s private notes of sermons, describes himself as producing the ‘first fruits of my labours, in another mans vineyard’ (cited by Davidson 2009, 108). But printed texts can also be surreptitiously ‘stolen’, as the First Folio may imply about previously published Shakespeare quartos. The early moderns were unsure about who possesses the word.

Between the opposed models of *Hamlet* Q1 as a collation of fragments and as a unified, if contested, property of ‘Shakespeare’, we can locate style in a middle realm of approximation, probability, and general effects. Bibliographical and textual studies of *Hamlet* Q1, particularly when authorial attribution is at stake, have tended to operate at a microscopic level, comparing texts in terms of word choice, syntax, and small poetic units (such as the couplet). Recent computer analyses of drama as ‘big data’, although operating on a vast textual canvas, also tend to draw conclusions based on small lexical details, such as function words (see, for instance, Craig and Kinney 2009). The study of style in *Hamlet*’s bad quarto, of the kind I offer here, employs neither ‘distant reading’ (to use Franco Moretti’s [2013] term for large-scale computer analysis of texts) nor close scrutiny of minute textual differentiations. It employs, instead, what might be called a ‘middle zoom’ on the text, focusing on how rhetorical structures organize thought – ranging, perhaps from tropes to what Madeleine Doran (1954) identified as larger, embedded rhetorical structures (e.g., *ekphrasis*, encomium).<sup>24</sup> Rhetorical style creates ‘structures of attention’ (in Richard Lanham’s phrase, Lanham 2007), organizing knowledge when there is too much to know (as the title of Ann Blair’s 2010 book goes) and functioning as a flexible memory machine.

<sup>24</sup> To this list, we might add William Davis’ 2006 analysis of ‘complex chiasmus’, a figure that can be found in biblical texts, as a structuring device in *Hamlet* Q1.

Over the past fifteen years, we have seen a sustained interest in *Hamlet*'s writing technologies, from handwriting (Goldberg 1988) to the erasable 'tables' that the prince employs to wipe clean his living memory and inscribe there the ghost's command (Stallybrass *et al.* 2004). Stenography and note-taking are now also seen as technologies memorializing *Hamlet* Q1 for both theatre audiences and readers of printed text. Behind the technologies, as Magnusson's analysis of Shakespearean language (2012) and Lina Perkins Wilder's survey of the multiple, sometimes conflicting memory systems at work in *Hamlet* (2010) both indicate, is a messy, hybrid network of social verbal activity engaging varied agents with varying success. To analyse style in *Hamlet* Q1 is thus to study the ways in which the resources of Renaissance rhetoric – both oral and literate, professional and everyday – engage writers, actors, and audiences in a dialectic between remembering and forgetting that allows text to be produced in the process of being reproduced.

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# Authors of the Mind

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## *Abstract*

The article is a brief examination of certain issues affecting the allocation of authorship in early modern plays. Such things as spelling variation, transmission and editorial intervention by hands other than the named 'author' could potentially alter the text in ways which are undetectable, thus leaving authorship studies with a number of unresolvable issues as regards its relationship to objective verification.

*Keywords:* Authorship, Early Modern, Editing, Text, Theory

There are known knowns; there are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns; that is to say there are things that we now know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns – there are things we do not know, we don't know – (United States Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld, February 12, 2002)

In early modern authorship studies, there is an interest in trying to establish the identity of various authors, particularly of certain key early modern collaborative texts. In our electronic age, we tend to read or analyse these texts in an 'electronic' form. New technology has allowed the textual scholar to analyse quantitatively the linguistic structure and forms of the early modern text and thereby attempt to distinguish between their 'authors'. Or so it would seem. The question might be put: 'but which hand is here being analysed?' For it is nevertheless generally admitted that the process by which early modern play-texts attain print is complex – there are various kinds of hands which have contributed to the existence of each text: the poet/playwright, the scribe, the compositor, the editor, the prompter, perhaps various actors, etc. (not to mention modern editors). Which authorial hands then, are detected by our modern electronic counts and how/by what means might we distinguish between them and, most importantly, by what means of verification shall we know we are right? In order to try framing these questions more accurately, let



us turn to an influential early twentieth century editor of Thomas Middleton. Discussing the Ralph Crane (scribal) manuscripts of the Middleton play, *A Game at Chess*, R.C. Bald notes a significant list of spelling and other changes between the Crane ‘transcripts’ and the Middleton ‘autograph’ manuscripts, including ‘crucial stage directions’ and act and scene divisions. Perhaps most strikingly, Bald goes on to state that:

If only the MSS. had survived it would be an even more baffling task than it is at present to explain why one MS. lacks certain passages found in another, and *vice versa*. The known facts of the production and suppression of the play preclude any theories of alteration and revision for later performances such as critics tend to fall back upon to explain the differences between Shakespearean texts, such as the Second Quarto and Folio versions of *Hamlet*. (1929, 34)

Thus, in this particular Middleton play, a large number of key ‘authorial’ markers and textual details are significantly changed *in manuscript* by a person *other than the named author* – such that were we not to have the evidence here rarely provided by the existence of more than one manuscript and multiple printed texts, our explanations for the existence of these variants/textual details might be very different. We must then consider not only the ramifications for our textual analysis of multiple texts such as *Hamlet* and *King Lear* but our general attitude to these kinds of markers where other evidence is not available.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the case of *A Game at Chess* in having a plethora of evidence which in the majority of other cases of textual cruces is not available, demonstrates the apparent failure of inductive reasoning to provide a sure answer from limited evidence. This is what we might call the ‘black hole’ at the centre of many authorship studies. Given the necessity of editors and critics to determine the origins of texts, they naturally induce theories from the available evidence – frequently in the process using similar evidence to come to quite different conclusions.

A particular problem is the kind of evidence which can be used to mark the presence or absence of an author in a text. Sometimes a *lack* of authorial markers is taken as evidence *for the presence* of an author (or authorial equivalent, such as a  *censor*). Yet how is one to count absences? Howard-Hill says in his textual introduction to his 1993 edition of *A Game at Chess* (discussing Q1 [STC 17882] of the text): ‘The *presence* in Q1 of *such distinctive Middletonian forms* as “ha’s” for “has” suggests that the playwright wrote printer’s copy up to *about* IV.ii.63, after which textual links with Crane’s Q3 and the *absence of authorial peculiarities* indicate that he turned the task

<sup>1</sup> For example Trevor Howard-Hill’s 1993 edition of *A Game at Chess* notes the cuts made by Crane to the original manuscript (8).

over to Crane' [my italics] (Howard-Hill 1993, 8; my italics). Note that the Middleton markers here are said to be distinctive when they are present, but that when they disappear, their *absence* becomes itself a marker of the work of the scribe Crane 'about' scene 4.2.63. A brief look at my database of 457 early modern plays reveals that, though 'Middleton' texts often use 'ha's' for 'has', so do multiple texts 'by' Jonson, Shakespeare, Fletcher, Massinger, Ford and Rowley. Moreover, the usage per scene can vary quite considerably. As such, the 'presence' or 'absence' of the particular spelling – which Howard-Hill himself sees as being possibly adapted by the scribe, Ralph Crane, seems *a priori* a weak marker of 'the hand' of 'the author' Middleton (certainly in the case where we do not have other evidence available) since not only is it employed by others, but the use of the variant forms varies greatly between scene, act and play. The fact is that, though we may know that Middleton indeed spells the word 'has' with the apostrophe, we also know that, in many texts of the period, the authorial manuscript attains print via the hands of scribes such as Crane, who may have different spelling habits. Moreover, in the case of most other authors of the period, we simply do not have multiple manuscripts to consult in order to check the differences between 'authorial' text and printed text.

Another example from *A Game at Chess* is that of further emendations made to 'Middletonian' spellings by Crane. In his 1993 edition, Howard-Hill notes the 'clear evidence' of the text's sophistication (in):

Crane's heavy punctuation and the expansion of Middletonian elisions into the 'Jonsonian' form (e.g. 'they'had' (Ind.6) for Tr.20, theyde). There are other occasional textual alterations, apparently made on Crane's own initiative ... Further omissions do not seem to be accidental. (1980, 9)

Note that in this very special case of *A Game at Chess*, in which six distinct manuscript/transcripts of the play exist, including at least two substantive quarto texts, Howard-Hill still uses the word 'apparently' to describe other textual alterations and omissions made to the text he is describing (BL MS Lansdowne 690), whilst at the same time referring to the style of the changes made to the 'Middleton' text by (the scribe) Ralph Crane as 'Jonsonian'. Note particularly the last sentence: 'further *omissions* do not *seem* to be *accidental*' (my italics). Howard-Hill's key terms here are at best imprecise, while his Middletonian text becomes a conceptual minefield.

Let us take another famous example. In the world of John Ford studies, one of the markers of Ford's authorship is the use of the abbreviation 'd'ee' or 'dee' (an abbreviation for 'do ye'). Certainly, some Ford texts have a preference for the abbreviation. However, Ford's texts are not unique in employing it and the counts in each text vary quite considerably. The abbreviation is also

found in the works of several of Ford's contemporaries.<sup>2</sup> We note particularly the tremendous variance of the abbreviation in both Brome and Ford texts – where some works contain only one or two occurrences, others contain up to 23 (in Brome), and 18 (in Ford). One might expect that were the abbreviation just habitual, the variance between texts might be less. Differences may derive from characterisation or may have been introduced by hands other than Ford's (scribes, compositors etc.). Indeed, even where we have a manuscript, we see how having only the printed text would give us a false impression of its 'authority'. The Ford editor Gilles Monsarrat notes significant differences between two printed texts of the Ford prose work *A Line of Life* in which consistent textual alterations emerge from the *same* manuscript, which are clearly due to the printing house, rather than to Ford himself. We must imagine here how our explanations for the textual changes might differ, were the manuscript missing.<sup>3</sup>

These examples are intended to show that whereas in the case of *A Game at Chess* we have the evidence of hand-written texts, and at least two 'good' printed texts to compare them with, in most cases in which the question of authorship becomes a concern, none, or very few of the supposed markers can be compared with the actual original papers of their supposed 'author'.<sup>4</sup> Spelling, punctuation, lineation (verse and prose setting), stage directions, scene and act divisions, title page attribution, all are used in order to attribute printed texts to their 'authors'. These types of evidence are also central in disputes concerning authorial 'revision' and 'bad quartos' such as in the case of the different texts of *King Lear*, *Hamlet* or *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>5</sup> However, in these three cases, none other than printed texts exist. Now of course all of this evidence must have a place in our accounts of authorship, but the kinds of certainty which many critical accounts seem to have in their outcomes seems misplaced. Moreover, the kinds of 'author' to which texts are thereby

<sup>2</sup> Brome's (presumably) single authored works in fact contain the abbreviation more often overall than do Ford's single authored works. E.g. Ford uses it most if you assume that the sections which use it in his collaborative works are 'Ford'.

Brome	SUM = 63
Ford	SUM (incl. Collaborative texts) = 69
Ford	SUM (not incl. Collaborative texts) = 54

<sup>3</sup> 'Comparison of the two texts' [of *Line of Life*]: 'There are many spelling differences, each text with its own consistency and usage' (Monsarrat, Vickers, Watt 2012, 553).

<sup>4</sup> Even in the case of *A Game at Chess*, in which we have authorial papers, we do not know the full extent that Middleton himself 'authorised' changes/cuts etc., in the printed text. As both Bald and Howard-Hill point out, there are sections of the documents which seem to bear the influence of *both* Middleton and his scribe.

<sup>5</sup> See Taylor and Warren 11983; Petersen 2010.

attributed are perhaps more authors of the critical mind, than authors of the actual printed text.

Let us turn to a more recent example. In their piece for the *TLS*, in which they detected the hand of Middleton in the Shakespeare Folio text *All's Well that Ends Well*, Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith cite some of 'Middleton's favoured contractions, colloquialisms, exclamations, collocations and orthographical preferences' as they had been collected by 'Lake, Holdsworth, Jackson, Taylor, and Jowett' (2012a). One of the contractions cited by Maguire and Smith is the 'Middletonian' abbreviation mentioned earlier, 'ha's', for 'has'. We note that in the 'Shakespeare' canon this abbreviation occurs 205 times, with equivalent or higher counts to those in *All's Well That Ends Well* in purely Shakespearean works such as *Coriolanus*, *Anthony & Cleopatra*, *Hamlet* (F1), and *The Winter's Tale*. Significantly, there are 4 instances of 'Ha's' in F1 *Hamlet's* scene 5.2, but no instances of 'Has', whereas in the Q2 text there are 5 instances of 'Has'. This indicates that instances of the form in Shakespearean texts, are variable depending on the text. Once again, though 'Shakespeare' is said to prefer 'hath' in his texts, similar or higher counts of the alternative 'has' to those in *All's Well* occur in four non-contested Shakespeare texts – *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Twelfth Night*. And so with Shakespeare's perceived preference for 'doth' over 'does': equivalent or higher counts to those found in *All's Well* occur in *Anthony & Cleopatra*, F1 *Hamlet*, *Othello* (Q1), and *Twelfth Night* (leaving out others in contested texts such as *Henry VIII*, and *Timon of Athens*). In actual fact, of the abbreviations listed by Maguire and Smith, there are 'Shakespearean' equivalents, equal or greater counts, by scene, act, or full play to all of the perceived 'irregular' counts in *All's Well That Ends Well*.

The number of irregular spellings of the exclamation 'O' for 'Oh' is also commented on by Maguire and Smith in their *All's Well* article (1012b), where they see higher instances of 'oh' as un-Shakespearean, yet we find the number of 'o' exclamations in *All's Well* fits the 'Shakespearean' norm (2012b). There are in fact a number of purely 'Shakespearean' texts which instead favour 'oh': *The Comedy of Errors* (all scenes featuring the exclamation except 3.1, which shares an equal number of 'O' and 'Oh'), *The Taming of the Shrew* (all scenes featuring the exclamation except 3.3, which has one count of 'O' and zero of 'oh'), *Richard II* (all scenes featuring the exclamation, except 5.3, which has 3 'o' and 1 'oh', and 5.1 which has equal numbers) and Folio *Othello* (all scenes featuring the exclamation favour 'oh'). The issue of authorship here relates to both what counts as a 'Shakespearean' norm, and which texts represent acceptable evidence of such.

To some extent, of course, it depends on what one expects from the evidence and the purpose of counting certain textual features. For example, Jonathan Hope's account of the declining use of the marked 'do' auxiliary (as in 'I do wish thee well') during the late Elizabethan period, is an extremely

valuable contribution to our understanding of the perceptible changes in language usage across time. However, tests of this linguistic trait using statistical measures of varying counts between authors, can be interpreted differently. In their article on Middleton's possible contribution to *All's Well*, Maguire and Smith (2012a) quote approvingly the separation of percentages between Middleton and Shakespeare they find in Hope's account, noting that '13 of the play's 22 scenes fall outside Shakespeare's normal range' [of the unregulated 'do'] yet our own statistical evaluation of Hope's data (with extended counts of the data provided) show that there is not enough separation between the 'Shakespeare' and 'Middleton' groups to provide a firm attributive basis. Moreover, our own function word and vocabulary tests of controversial texts such as *1 Henry VI* provide very different results and interpretations to other scholars who have used similar methods of analysis. Subtle differences of analysis between such studies make for incompatible means of comparison, meaning that the linguistic-statistical analysis of textual authorship has yet to achieve anything like scientific verification. Different scholars use different texts and different (though similar) methodologies and sharing of resources is rare.<sup>6</sup>

The point is that while literary scholars may be absolutely right to point out and enumerate the linguistic features of a text, noting the differences and variations which seem to exist between the different 'authors' of those texts, we must be aware of the limitations and uncertainties of our interpretation of the data. Sometimes the data is simply misunderstood, and the error is easily rectified. For example, following our checks of their article, Maguire and Smith now recognise as simply false their statement (regarding stage directions) that 'Shakespeare's preference is for "omnes" (used as a speech prefix 6 times in *F Anthony and Cleopatra*, once in *Coriolanus*)'.<sup>7</sup> Our evidence showed that this stage direction/prefix is found in 19 of Shakespeare's texts and with the exception of the high counts in the quarto texts of *Merry Wives of Windsor*; *Contention*; *True Tragedy* and slightly higher counts (8) in *Anthony & Cleopatra*; *Coriolanus* (4) and *3 Henry VI* (3), it does not occur more than 2 times in any other play. The two occurrences in *All's Well* thus seem entirely normal in the Shakespeare canon and it is in fact the high counts which appear more unusual. We note too that the number of 'Omnes' increases

<sup>6</sup> Our analysis of the perceived collaborative authorship *Macbeth* has been impeded by lack of access to the same electronic texts as the Oxford editors. For our analysis of the 'Do' auxiliary, see Dahl 2004, 200-226. The results of our 87 function words, Principal Component and Discriminant Analysis tests on *1 Henry VI* and other early Shakespeare Folio plays directly or indirectly contradict the results of later studies with similar methodologies, including Craig and Kinney (2009).

<sup>7</sup> Maguire and Smith (2012b) state: 'we were wrong about the use of "All" and "Omnes" as speech prefixes in the Folio, for instance'.

between *2 Henry VI* (Folio) and *Contention* (Quarto of *2 Henry VI*) and *The Merry Wivevs of Windsor* (F-Q) by a considerable amount (with the Quartos seemingly *adding* ‘Omnes’ directions). This really does not appear to be something we can know that ‘Shakespeare’ did.<sup>8</sup>

Let us take another (not uncontroversial) example of a supposedly ‘authorial’ stage direction. Gary Taylor in his introduction to his *Middleton Works* text of ‘Macbeth’ sees the presence of a ‘Middletonian’ stage direction in the Folio text of the play as evidence of Middleton’s hand:

Holdsworth’s comprehensive survey of English plays written before 1642 demonstrates that the form of the entrance direction for Hecate at 3.5.01-2 – ‘Enter the three Witches, meeting Hecat; Enter A, meeting B – is rare in Early Modern drama, outside Middleton. Middleton uses it 10 times in his undisputed works (including two examples in the autograph *Game at Chess*); in the other 623 plays, masques and shows from the period 1580-1642, it only occurs 27 times. Of those, many come from Thomas Heywood’s plays, and ten assume that ‘B’ is already on stage (which is not true in any of the Middleton examples). No one suspects Heywood here. Elsewhere in the Shakespeare canon, it only appears in a Middleton scene in *Timon of Athens* (1.2.0.20). Shakespeare instead prefers ‘Enter *seuerally*’ or ‘Enter A at one door, B at another’. (Taylor and Lavagnino 2007a, 384)

Taylor’s statement brings up some interesting putative facts. Firstly, he is technically incorrect that the formula ‘Enter ... meeting’ does not occur elsewhere in ‘Shakespeare’ since it also occurs in the Quarto text of *King Lear* thus:

‘Enter Bast. and Curan meeting’

Though not *exactly* the same as the directions in *Macbeth*, we can see that the construction is essentially the same. Next we note that a similar formulaic direction actually appears *twice* in *Timon of Athens* (both in ‘Middleton’ scenes 3.4, 3.5). Significantly, a similar construction also occurs in the Shakespeare Folio text of *Henry VIII* (in 4.1, a scene commonly attributed to Fletcher). Thus in ‘Shakespeare’, the formula occurs four times (though three times in scenes attributed to other authors). It also occurs once in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Folio text *Sir John Oldcastle* (attributed on the title page to Shakespeare, but commonly attributed, thanks to records in *Henslowe’s Diary*, to Munday, Drayton, Hathaway and Wilson). Outside of Shakespeare, as Taylor suggests, the stage direction is rare though is most common in *Heywood*, but also appears in texts attributed to Dekker, Rowley, Massinger and ‘Anonymous’. Thus while the presence of the

<sup>8</sup> The single instances in *Love’s Labour’s Lost* and *The Merry Wivevs of Windsor* (Q) of ‘All’ are in fact ‘Enter All’.

stage direction ‘Enter ... meeting’ in the Middleton autograph manuscript of *A Game at Chess* and its frequency in other texts attributed to Middleton certainly seems to link it with his authorship, it is not linked with his hand in any exclusive sense. Significantly, the scribal redaction of *A Game at Chess* by Ralph Crane actually *removes* at least one ‘Enter ... meeting’ from the text:

In Ar. [Archidall-Folger Ns. V.a. 231] the initial entrance for V.i starts ‘... (*Lowd Musick*) [*Litter.*] Enter Bl. King ... & Bl Knight: meeting ...’ where Middleton’s own Tr. Manuscript reads ‘Musique Enter the Black Knight/in his Litter! ...’ (Tr. 2002-3). (Howard-Hill 1993, 3)

This shows something a little different in the process of transmission of the ‘Enter...meeting’ formula. Namely that we may be missing instances which may have originally occurred in other texts of the period, but were removed (for whatever reason) by the text’s scribes. Moreover, since *Macbeth* was (according to Taylor) a text created from a prompt book by an unidentified scribe, with a text which ‘most closely resembles *All is True* [*Henry VIII*, a collaboration with Fletcher], how many of the text’s features might we assume are derived from autograph? Indeed does this not present a link with Fletcher as well as Middleton?’ (cf. *Henry VIII*). Clearly the ‘Enter...Meeting’ formula is rarer in ‘Shakespeare’ texts than Middleton – but can we rightly assume that the presence of the stage direction in *Macbeth* is evidence *for* Middleton (since ‘Shakespeare’ does use it) and deduce from the absence of the direction from the majority of ‘Shakespeare’s’ texts that he did not use it more in manuscript? Since it is also extremely rare in Dekker, Massinger, Fletcher etc., must we assume that their texts also only used the form once or twice from a mere twinge of instinct – or like the apparent removal of the formula from the Middleton transcript of *A Game at Chess* by Ralph Crane, may we not suspect that scribal redactions contain more or less numbers of the formula depending on the will of the scribe? As such, given that, as Taylor states, the text of Folio *Macbeth* was created by an unknown scribe, perhaps the presence there of two instances of the ‘Enter...meeting’ formula, was merely a fortuitous preservation or textual addition. The question is, how could we know for sure?<sup>9</sup>

The issue of the absence of ‘authorial’ evidence is even more acute in the Middleton-Rowley-Ford-Dekker collaboration, *The Spanish Gypsy*. In his text of the play, Taylor inserts ‘Middletonian’ oaths, which he believes to have been removed from the published texts by the censor (Taylor and Lavagnino 2007a,

<sup>9</sup> See Sandra Clark’s helpful analysis of the debate surrounding the ‘Enter ... meeting’ stage direction in the new Arden edition of *Macbeth* (Clark and Mason 2015). It should be noted that a limitation on the verification of data concerning the Middleton canon is the restricted access allowed to the Oxford Middleton Works electronic text database. Until this database can be freely examined by other scholars, assertions concerning its relationship to the Shakespeare canon cannot be objectively verified.

1105). Sensing the presence of Middleton in several key passages, but detecting few of his traditional textual markers in the text, Taylor attempts to aid his readers by ‘restoring’ those Middleton features which he supposes have been removed. This attempt to remake the text is of course particularly striking, since it demonstrates a key area of contention in the philosophy of editorial practice. What constitutes the ‘best’ text of a work? Which is the most ‘authentic’ version of a work? How is this ‘authenticity’ to be determined? And so on. Yet we should notice how these questions can lead to conflicting concerns for editors and readers. If one is looking for the presence of ‘Middleton’ in *Macbeth* or *The Spanish Gypsy*, as Taylor’s quote states above, where another author (such as Heywood for instance) is not suspected, then one seeks out positive evidence *for* that author, but also perhaps (as in the case of the Middleton oaths) evidence of his absence, where his presence had been assumed. Amazingly, given how much emphasis Taylor appears to put on the presence of the ‘Enter ... meeting’ formula in the Middleton autograph text (and his ignoring of the removal of one of them in the Crane transcription) he elsewhere states that ‘speech directions (“aside”, “to X”, “aloud”) ... almost never occur in contemporary manuscripts’ (Taylor and Lavagnino 2007a, 691). Thus it would seem that Taylor at once disclaims and upholds the power of seldom occurring variables to provide evidence of an author’s hand. Yet detecting the *presence* of features itself falls into question, since the argument *for* becomes circular. Again, if there is no external qualifier of the evidence *for lack* (as in the case where no other texts of the work exist) then unlike in the case of *A Game at Chess* (where the absence of an ‘Enter ... meeting’ formula can be seen in the transcribed version of the text when compared to the autograph copy), the absence can also only be verified by the presence somewhere else of positive evidence for its having been there, which in the case of *The Spanish Gypsy* cannot be done.

Interestingly, though Taylor uses traditional measures of Middleton’s language (such as those provided by Lake, Hoy etc.) to detect Middleton’s hand in both *Macbeth* and *The Spanish Gypsy*, in his edition of the Middleton Works, he appears to dismiss much of this evidence in the case of Shakespeare:

Spelling produces a more intractable editorial problem. Punctuation and certain kinds of stage direction can be entirely eliminated; but words *have* to be spelled, one way or another. The spelling of [the 1623 Folio] like its punctuation, is primarily compositorial, and to a less extent scribal. (Taylor and Lavagnino 2007a, 691)<sup>10</sup>

In his account of *Macbeth*, however, Taylor attempts to contrast the linguistic features found in the text, according to divisions of authorship, which are founded entirely in the one existing First Folio version of the text, which he also believes to

<sup>10</sup> Nb. It is thought the spelling ‘scilens’ which only appears in the manuscript of *Sir Thomas More*, and the Quarto text of *2 Henry IV* is Shakespeare’s own. See Jackson 2007.

have been ‘almost certainly not in the handwriting of Shakespeare or Middleton’ (Taylor and Lavagnino 2007a, 691). In other words, though there are only inductive ways of verifying the textual features contained in the text as authorial; even though he himself thinks the text of the work which went to print was *not* in the author’s hand; and even though there is no way of checking the absences and presences of certain textual features by comparison with a manuscript (or even printed quarto) since none exists, Taylor’s authorship attribution goes ahead nonetheless. In another good example of this double sided thinking, Stanley Wells, running out of ideas as to how to explain ‘inexact’ character identifications and stage directions in the (Folio only) Shakespeare text *Measure for Measure* (and following Taylor and Jowett’s case for the play’s collaborative origins), speculates rather wildly that Middleton and Shakespeare may ‘not have been entirely happy; indeed it is quite likely that they gave it up as a bad job before the play was complete’ (Wells 2008, 187). It is interesting to think how one might scientifically ascertain the exact nature of Shakespeare’s feelings on this matter.

The wider problem seems to lie in the *structure* of many authorship and editorial methodologies, in that there is no way of qualifying the sufficiency/significance of each argumentative strand. For example, let us say there are 10 main argumentative strands *for* the presence of Thomas Nashe’s hand in the Shakespeare First Folio play, *The First Part of Henry the Sixth*. How many of these strands are necessary or sufficient to prove or refute the case? In all the pieces written on the co-authorship of this play (with many different candidates suggested, including Shakespeare, Nashe, Marlowe, Greene, Kyd and Peele – in fact, all the main playwrights of the period) it is still unclear which evidence might be most significant to proving the case for each collaborator or perhaps most importantly, disproving it.<sup>11</sup> For instance, the varying use of ‘o’ and ‘oh’ in

<sup>11</sup> In our own marked up text of the play, using a plagiarism analysis of all related authorship contenders, linguistic links with Marlowe appear to be the strongest. This does not necessarily mean that Marlowe was the author of the text. For a copy of the marked up text of *1 Henry VI* showing all matches, please contact Marcus Dahl.

#### ***1 Henry VI* Rare Phrase Matches with 7 author groups**

%	Author Group	Phrase Count	WC
<b>0.026172</b>	<b>Marlowe</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>141373</b>
0.02403	Shakes (including <i>Ed.III</i> )	<b>207</b>	861429
0.022111	Greene	69	312063
0.019599	Lodge	21	107150
0.016073	Kyd	20	113566
0.010648	Nashe	22	202612
0.009668	Peele	7	72401

exclamations in the different parts of the play is taken by some commentators to be indicative of different hands in the text. Yet, if there may be some doubt as to the meaning of this particular bit of evidence (as we have seen above in the case of *All's Well*), how significant would the removal of it be from the case for variant hands in *1 Henry VI*? Again, it seems that the evidence itself can be interpreted differently depending on the context. For example, Taylor and Jowett, explaining the 'striking disparity between the use of "o" and "oh" in the two halves of the book' of the Quarto *Richard III*, think it 'clear' that 'either ... the two printers were working from different kinds of copy, or that one shop altered the preference of its copy'. Explaining the 'alternating' pattern of 'O' and 'Oh' in the same text, Taylor and Jowett, avoid following Jackson's suggestion of variant copy and suggest that the text is more likely from 'memorial reconstruction' *and hence provides dubious evidence of Shakespeare's own spelling preferences*' (Taylor and Jowett 1993, 248, 259; my italics). So, whereas in one text (*1 Henry VI*) the change of spelling forms is seen as evidence for the change of authors, in another text (Q *Richard III*) it is regarded as dubious evidence of authorship. This seems merely inconsistent use of evidence.

In *1 Henry VI*, the use of variant names for the character of 'Joan la Pucelle' and the inconsistent naming of the Bishop of Winchester/Cardinal (the so-called 'Cardinal's Hat Dilemma'), is seen as indicative by most commentators, of various authorial hands. Yet one bit of the evidence for Middleton's (unassisted) hand in *The Revenger's Tragedy* is the use of *variant* numbering of character prefixes, which matches his practice in plays such as *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, *Five Gallants* and *The Phoenix*. As George Price points out, 'Middleton uses 1 and 2 for different pairs of persons in the same scene' (1960, 266). Another example of inconsistent character prefixes in an apparently solo authored play is the various naming of Edmond as 'bastard' or 'Edm' in Folio *King Lear*. Perhaps the most famous example of a character name change in a text nevertheless thought to be by a single author is in

#### ***1 Henry VI* All Footnoted Phrase Matches 7 author groups**

%	Author	Phrase Count	WC
<b>0.046685</b>	<b>Marlowe</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>141373</b>
0.03738	Shake (with <i>Ed.III</i> )	<b>326</b>	861429
0.031404	Greene	98	312063
0.028932	Kyd	36	113566
0.020532	Lodge	22	107150
0.016574	Peele	12	72401
0.016456	Nashe	34	202612

Munday's *Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington*, in which the heroine of the play is referred to as Maid Marian for the first 781 lines, and Matilda for the remainder.<sup>12</sup> Thus we see how similar kinds of evidence can be seen in different types of text, to mean different things for different arguments. Variant and changeable character names in the 'Munday' texts of *Death* and *Downfall* are acceptable to some scholars as entirely consistent with single authorship and the loose use of numbered speech headings in *The Revenger's Tragedy* is seen to link the text with Middleton's solo practice. Elsewhere, however, the similarly variable use of speech headings/character names (as in *1 Henry VI*) is interpreted as a distinct sign of multiple authors. Where multiple hands are suspected, the existence of variant copy from a single hand is rejected:<sup>13</sup>

In the Brome manuscript play *The English Moor* several speakers are mis-identified and speaker's names are omitted, but since clearly the errors are in the manuscript, their origin cannot be ascribed to the compositors, though whether they derive from Brome himself, or a scribe, is unknown. (Steen 1983, ix, 18-23)

Critical discussion concerning the text of *King John* is another good example of where a particular kind of evidence is re-interpreted depending on argumentative necessity. Taylor and Jowett note that 'a single compositor spelt the same word differently in the two parts of the text'. Yet this is precisely the kind of evidence which in *1 Henry VI* is seen as unthinkable – that one compositor or scribe could spell the same word differently.<sup>14</sup> The brilliant flexibility of the textual scholar's interpretative technique here is surely unique in science. Taylor and Jowett go on to state that: '... *it seems reasonably clear [sic] ... that King John was either set from a scribal transcript, in which a second scribe took over towards the end of 4.2, or from a composite manuscript, with foul papers at the beginning of the play and a transcript at the end*' (Taylor and Jowett 1993, 252-253; my italics). So, according to the evidence from 'o' and 'oh', the text of *King John* was set from *either* a mixed scribal text *or*

<sup>12</sup> The play's Malone society editor John C. Meagher believes the play to be all the work of Munday (vetoing the evidence for 'Chettle'). Similar inconsistent character naming also occurs in the parallel quarto text *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*. See Meagher and Brown 1965.

<sup>13</sup> Paul Vincent (2005) has suggested that *1 Henry VI* was in fact revised, with Shakespeare revising the work of another hand in certain scenes.

<sup>14</sup> Howard-Hill (1980) states that even the assumption of consistency of compositorial spelling habits throughout 'long periods' rests on 'infirm' grounds. What then of the practise of authors? (Howard-Hill 1980, 171). It is further interesting to note that in a modern edition of *The English Moor*, the editor normalises spacing in contractions 'as it is often impossible to tell from the handwriting whether for instance, "to't" or "to t'" was meant'. This shows us that the inconsistencies of compositors may in certain instances (in which 'normalisation' is not an option) correspond to the copy's intelligibility (Steen 1983, ix, 9).

from authorial foul papers mixed up with a scribal text. Presumably Taylor and Jowett got the idea of this from *A Game at Chess*, but unlike *A Game at Chess* (for which annotated manuscript documents exist) no equivalent documents for *King John* exist.

I am interested here to point out the level of inconsistency which appears to be orthodox in these matters. Another example occurs in Bald's account of the *Malone 25* manuscript of *A Game at Chess*. Describing 770 lines which appear to have been 'cut' from 'the full text' (note the assumptions which lie behind these statements too), Bald notes that 'if there were no other texts one would never suspect that so many lines had been omitted' (1929, 29). Notice the black hole appearing in the counter-factual (were we not to have alternative manuscript texts, we could not suspect that it had been 'cut'). Consider then how this kind of 'cut' might affect arguments about 'revision' or 'adaptation' in (respectively) *King Lear* and *Macbeth*. MS *Malone 25*, in which 'there seems to be no reason to doubt ... is [in] ... Middleton's own hand', has massed stage directions at the beginning of scenes and very few other stage directions. This fact Bald compares to texts such as Folio *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (in contrast with the Quarto text, which has many stage directions, including numerous instances of 'omnes') and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (which was first printed in the First Folio). Now let us recall the idea that stage directions (the use of 'omnes' etc.) are often used as signs of an author's hand (e.g. the repeated use of the 'here' stage direction in Act 1 of *1 Henry VI*, is often seen as a sign of Nashe's authorship),<sup>15</sup> then let us remember that this presumably *revised*, presumably autograph text, in fact seems to *cut* stage directions (or just not bother to put them in at all) as well as a considerable number of lines, in such a way that were we not to have *other* texts of the same work, we would not know these 'cuts' had been made. Might we therefore assume from this fact that other texts with extended (so called 'literary') scene directions are therefore *less* authorial?<sup>16</sup> Moreover, is it not normally the case that *shorter* texts (as with the so-called 'Bad Quartos' or 'adapted' texts such as *Macbeth*) are considered to have been *tampered with* by hands other than *the author*?<sup>17</sup> And yet in this one document are not both common assumptions negated?<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> The evidence is thin. See Dahl 2004, 109-111.

<sup>16</sup> John Jowett believes that the stage directions in *The Tempest* are attributable to Ralph Crane, rather than 'Shakespeare' (cf. Wells, Taylor *et al.*, eds, 1987).

<sup>17</sup> The mislineation in *Macbeth* is again blamed on 'compositorial error' by Taylor, who also cites corroborative articles by Werstein and Brooke (Taylor and Lavagnino 2007a, 690).

<sup>18</sup> Sara Jayne Steen notes that in the printed *octavo* text of Brome's manuscript play, the stage directions 'are more specific'. Do these therefore derive from the 'author', the play house or elsewhere? How *could* we know? (Steen 1983, 26).

Another fascinating example of the apparent adaptability of textual critics comes in a Bald footnote – as he explains ‘the disturbance of the text in the autograph MS of Massinger’s *Beleeue as You List*’ which Bald (quoting Sisson) believes would have led to ‘false verse lining’ if the document had ever gone to print. For the same feature in Middleton’s autograph *Trinity* MS, the explanation is apparently that Middleton was ‘copying mechanically from papers in which the last word or so was crowded out, and did not trouble to make the correction’ (1929, 35n.). Apparently then the fault lies here with a lazy ‘author’. Yet is it not this feature which elsewhere is seen as an error in the print shop? Mis-lineation – the curse of bad quartos everywhere? Where scribes and compositors are normally blamed?<sup>19</sup> Or, wherein the corruption of stage house documents is seen to be at fault? Yet here *because for once we actually have the document in the author’s own hand*, the explanation is altered in order to fit with the perceived evidence. Consider then the multiple explanations available to Scott McMillin to explain similar facts:

Both *Famous Victories of Henry V* and *True Tragedy of Richard III* are printed with long stretches of mislineation – verse printed as prose, or (the more interesting case) prose printed as verse. The former of these, verse printed as prose, presents no puzzle, for it can be readily explained as a way of saving space, either in the printing house or in the theatre manuscript. Turning verse into prose, which runs to wider margins, would be an economical move for either a printing-house compositor or a playhouse scribe. (The manuscript play called *John of Bordeaux* shows verse being written out as prose, apparently by a playhouse scribe). (McMillin 1998, 113)

Note how the mis-lineation *presents no puzzle* though the explanation is *either* the need to save space in the printing house *or* something in the nature of the theatre manuscript itself – surely two very different things – one being a printing issue (in which case, the question as to what kind of manuscript the printers used is still pertinent) the other being a textual issue (i.e. who wrote the document used by the printers, and how did the printers in fact print this document?). Note, too, the move into speculation concerning what *would be economical* for the supposed printers and the manuscript of *John of Bordeaux*, which was *apparently* redacted by an ‘unknown’ scribe. Where has our ‘author’ gone? The slide into speculation is so confident and so contradictory depending on the context, that we are apt to forget that any such induction is occurring at all.

It is Gary Taylor who provides us with what is perhaps the best example of the textual scholar’s narrative adaptability. Taylor believes that the Folio-only

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Duthie, on the argument between Greg and Hubler on the reason for mislineation in *Q Lear* – Hubler suggested compositors (1941, 23).

text of *Macbeth* was set by two compositors (A and B) from a 'late theatrical adaptation of an earlier original play by Shakespeare' having spelling 'primarily compositorial and to a lesser extent scribal'. The text is said to resemble *All is True* (*Henry VIII*) for having scene divisions, extensively using round brackets (though not the ones so apparently loved by Ralph Crane) and preferring the spellings 'ha's' and 'o'. It is also apparently connected with the scribe who set the 1622 edition of *Othello*, and also with 'Shakespeare', who favoured 'o' as well as the author Thomas Middleton who favoured 'ha's' (but not both the scribe and the author at the same time, since Middleton also apparently prefers 'oh'). Since however, this scribe is 'unknown', and since 'we know little (some would say nothing) about Shakespeare's preferred spellings' (except, presumably 'o'), Taylor sets his own text of *Macbeth* in 'modern' spelling, commenting that 'the resulting orthography is not authoritative, but that is part of its point: there *is* no authority in these matters' (Taylor and Lavagnino 2007a, 690-691). But if there is *no authority* in these matters, then what of all these textual arguments? What of the presence of 'Middleton' in *Macbeth*? What of the 'unknown' scribe who shares some (but not all) traits with both 'Middleton' (i.e. 'ha's', 'o') and 'Crane' (i.e. use of brackets, but not indeterminacy of 'o' to 'oh' and lists of persons in the play)? What of the whole great game of attributing all these scribes, compositors, printers and authors? If there really is *no authority* in these matters, then why all these debates about authorship and the need for 100 page textual introductions? Something is clearly amiss.

In his review article on 'The Oxford Middleton' (2011-2012), Kenneth Tucker quotes the argument which arose between the two Shakespeare biographers A.L. Rowse and S. Schoenbaum concerning methodology, in which statements logically deduced from reasonable premises, were contrasted to the need for 'invincible evidence'. This argument, as Tucker sees, is of course eternal, yet it seems particularly pressing to key questions of canon construction, authorship and bibliographical studies today. Tucker notes that for many of the key texts in the new Middleton edition, there are elaborate attributional arguments underlying their inclusion in the collected Works. Yet, it seems, the 'evidence' and 'methodology' which puts these texts in print in their present form is far from being universally agreed upon, nor the wider implications, results and objectivity of this scholarly and editorial venture objectively verifiable.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> This verification is of course doubly required if reliable statistical results are to be gleaned from linguistic and quantitative analysis of the electronic texts of the works. Cf. Tucker 2011-2012, 97-98.

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# Shakespeare in *Arden of Faversham* and the Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy*: Versification Analysis

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## *Abstract*

The essay describes versification particulars of *Arden of Faversham*. The findings suggest that the central part, scenes 4-8, was composed by Shakespeare while the remainder of the play was created by an older playwright, possibly Thomas Kyd. It shares features with Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*. The essay confirms the hypothesis that the Additions to Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* had been composed by Shakespeare in the early seventeenth century. Thus Shakespeare had collaborated with Kyd twice: as a younger poet and a later refurbisher.

*Keywords:* Collaboration, Kyd, Shakespeare, Spelling, Stressing, Syntactic Breaks

## 1. *Arden of Faversham: Authorship*

*Arden of Faversham* is an Elizabethan play of contested authorship (its original spelling was *Arden of Feversham*). It was entered into the Stationers' Register on 3 April 1592 and printed anonymously in quarto (Q1) later that same year, then again in 1599 (Q2) and 1633 (Q3). The authorship problem of *Arden of Faversham* is particularly tantalizing because it is such a great play, composed by someone who knew how to write for the stage. *Arden of Faversham* is a so-called domestic tragedy, 'a bold experiment in portraying the passions of ordinary Englishmen in the setting of contemporary society and in a language appropriate to the characters and theme' (Wine 1973, lxxiii). Its plot is based on real and relatively recent history: the 1551 murder of Thomas Arden, a successful middle-aged businessman in Tudor England, by his young well-born wife Alice and her low-born lover Mosby (the class distinctions between the high-born and low-born are emphasized many times in the play). After several botched attempts on his life by hired assassins, Arden was murdered in his own home. Alice and Mosby, who enthusiastically participated in the



carnage, became the chief suspects. They were put on trial, convicted of the murder and executed, as were their accomplices. The story was considered important enough to be included in Holinshed's *Chronicles*. The murder was still so recent and so gruesome that it might have been in the living memory among the author's older acquaintances and his public. The tragedy has been in the theatre repertoire through the twentieth century, and the theme of 'Arden must die' was invoked many times in different genres.

The authorship of the play has long been questioned. Arthur F. Kinney, in the collection *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship* (Craig and Kinney 2009, 78-99), gives a detailed historical overview of the play's suggested authorship. It has mostly been attributed to Thomas Kyd, Christopher Marlowe, and William Shakespeare, solely or in collaboration. *Arden of Faversham* has been included in Shakespeare's apocrypha. The title pages, as was often the case at that time, do not indicate performance or company. In 1770 the Faversham antiquarian Edward Jacob claimed for the first time that Shakespeare had written the play (Jackson 2014, 14). The poet Algernon Charles Swinburne and the critics Charles Knight and Nicolaus Delius also felt that Shakespeare had been the author of *Arden* (Jackson 2014, 1). These impressions were mostly grounded on the artistic skills of the playwright and on some circumstantial connections with Shakespeare. For example, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, the theatre company with whom Shakespeare performed and for whom he wrote, staged the play at least once. The play's publisher, Edward White, also published an edition of Shakespeare [and Peele's] *Titus Andronicus*. And Shakespeare's mother's maiden name was Arden. Marlowe has been suggested as a possible author of the play because the strong passions of the personages and the lack of a virtuous hero are in line with Marlowe's dramatic practice. Another plausible candidate has been Thomas Kyd: Fleay (1891), Crawford (1903), Boas (1925), and Sykes (1919) attributed *Arden* to Kyd, and Erne (2001) stops short of recognizing Kyd as its sole author. Crawford includes *Arden of Faversham* into his Kyd concordance. In 2008 Brian Vickers reported in the *Times Literary Supplement* that his computer analysis, based on recurring collocations, indicates Thomas Kyd as the sole author of *Arden*.

Marion B. Smith (1940) in her study of Marlowe's imagery was struck by the resemblance of *Arden*'s images to those of Shakespeare's early chronicles. MacDonald P. Jackson, in his numerous works dedicated to *Arden* since 1963 (see Jackson 1963, 1993, 2006a, 2006b, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2015; see also Bruster 2015, Tarlinskaja 2015) has been comparing Shakespeare's imagery (also lexicon and morphology) with certain episodes of *Arden*, particularly in the famous quarrel scene, scene 8. Jackson also finds Shakespearean features in scenes 3 and 4 (cf. Michael's soliloquies in scenes 3 and 4). Craig and Kinney (2009) did a statistical analysis of the vocabulary frequency and attributed *Arden of Faversham* to two coauthors: Kinney attributed to Shakespeare scenes

4 through 9, while the rest is, in his view, either by a still unknown playwright or less possibly by Marlowe, and even less possibly by Kyd. Tarlinskaja (2014, chapters 3 and 4) with the help of versification analysis, attributed to Shakespeare scenes 4 through 8, and the rest of the play, hesitantly, to Kyd. In this essay I continue my research of the play's versification.

## 2. Principles of Versification Analysis

All English Renaissance plays are composed mostly as metrical texts, specifically as iambic pentameter. An iambic pentameter text consists of ten- or eleven-syllable verse lines with alternating predominantly unstressed and stressed syllables. The scheme of the meter can be deduced from the text: the syllables that tend to be unstressed occupy weak syllabic positions (W) and syllables that tend to be stressed occupy strong syllabic positions (S). Thus, the scheme of the iambic pentameter is W S W S W S W S W S. Here is a line that fully complies with the meter: 'The Nymph accepts him, granting all his Pray's'. However, actual iambic lines frequently deviate from the ideal metrical scheme. English metrical canon allows stresses on W and omitted stresses on S, sometimes next to each other; for example: *Seems to reject him, tho' she grants his Pray'r* (Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*, 4.80). This line contains an extrametrical stress on syllabic position 1 and two missing stresses on S, on positions 2 and 6.

The line *Seems to reject him, | tho' she grants | his Pray'r* contains nine dictionary words but only three metrical words, separated in the example by vertical bars. Metrical words contain a dictionary word or their groups whose stress falls on a metrically strong syllabic position. Other dictionary words in the group cling to the stress on S. Thus Pope's line contains only three metrical words, because only three stresses fall on strong metrical positions 4, 8, and 10. M.L. Gasparov (1974, 93) introduced the concept of metrical words, and it proved to be particularly useful for English versification with its liberal metrical licenses and plethora of monosyllables, both stressed and unstressed. Notice that a 'potentially stressed' monosyllable on W is drawn into the metrical word with its stress on S; thus in Shakespeare's line *And dig | deep trenches | in thy beauty's | field* (sonnet 2.2) the potentially stressed monosyllable 'deep' is drawn into the metrical word 'deep trenches'; the syllable 'tren-' falls on S. We use the concept of 'potential' stress because in declamation a stressed monosyllable on W may weaken or lose its stress altogether.

Here a question arises: how do we stress monosyllables in verse, words such as *deep, dear, though, but, he, thou, thine*? The system of stressing in English verse was solved in Tarlinskaja 1976, chapters 1 and 2. Monosyllables have no sense-differentiating word stress as do polysyllabic words (e.g., *a PREsent, to preSENT*), and may gain or lose sentence accentuation almost

at random – almost at random, but not quite. Some classes of monosyllables in connected speech are stressed more often than others. To determine a consistent approach to the material, following V.M. Zhirmunsky (1925), we conventionally divide monosyllables into three categories: predominantly stressed (lexical words; e.g., nouns, verbs, such as *talk*, *ride*, *swell*, as well as adjectives and adverbs), predominantly unstressed (grammatical words such as articles, prepositions, and conjunctions), and ambivalent, sometimes stressed and at other times unstressed (such as personal, demonstrative, and possessive pronouns). Personal pronouns, for example, are considered always unstressed on W positions, while on S positions they are considered unstressed if they are adjacent to their syntactic partner, and stressed if they are separated from the syntactic partner by a phrase. Compare the two examples: *My glass shall not persuade me **I am old*** (sonnet 22.11) versus *That **I** in thy abundance **am sufficed*** (sonnet 37.11). In the first line the pronoun *I* is considered unstressed (*I*, the subject, is adjacent to its predicate *am old*); in the second it is considered stressed (the subject *I* is separated from its predicate *am sufficed* by a phrase *in thy abundance*). Emphasis is taken into consideration only if it is overtly expressed in the text; for example, by obvious contrast, as in Donne's line *Makes me her medal, and makes **HER** love **ME***, rather than *and **MAKES** her **LOVE** me*. The variant 'MAKES her LOVE me' (stressed syllables capitalized) would be possible in prose, but in his verse line Donne makes us understand the weight of the opposing pronouns 'her' and 'me' by placing them on S syllabic positions, 8 and 10. The first four lines of Donne's *Elegy X, The Dream*, shown below, include the line mentioned above (the third line). The pronouns *I, she, her, me* are opposed throughout the poem:

IMAGE of her whom I love, more than she,  
Whose fair impression in my faithful heart  
Makes me her medal, and makes her love me,  
As kings do coins, to which their stamps impart ...

If variants of oral rendition of a verse line are possible, we select the one that is closer to the meter (see Tarlinskaja 2004, Hall 2003).

### 2.1 *Parameters of versification analysis*

Stressing is the first parameter of versification analysis. From the discussion above it is clear that we differentiate between an abstract scheme, the meter, and actual stressed and unstressed syllables in each line of the poetic text. By comparing actual lines one after another with the metrical scheme, we establish which syllables or their strings deviate from the abstract scheme. In the line *And **the pale** Ghosts **start at** the Flash of Day* (Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*, 5.52), syllables 2, 3, 6, and 7 deviate from the metrical scheme. A

line complying with the scheme might sound something like ‘And ghosts emerge on dark and foggy days’. Stressing on each syllabic position, W or S (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6...) of each poetic text is calculated as a per cent from the total number of lines. Stressing is conventionally tabulated for even (S) and odd (W) positions separately. The ensuing strings of numbers are called the ‘stress profile’ of the text. As I have shown earlier (Tarlinskaja 1976, 1987, 2014), the minimum of midline stressing (a ‘dip’ in the diagrams) fell in Elizabethan plays on the sixth syllabic position, but after 1600 it shifted to position eight. A dip on 6 often accompanied symmetrical syntactic and rhythmical structures of lines, as shown in these lines from Shakespeare’s *Richard II*:

The caterpillars **of** the commonwealth (2.3.166)

To dim his glory, **and** to stain the track (3.3.68)

But let thy spiders **that** suck up thy venom (3.2.14)

The heavy accent **of** thy moving tongue (5.1.47)

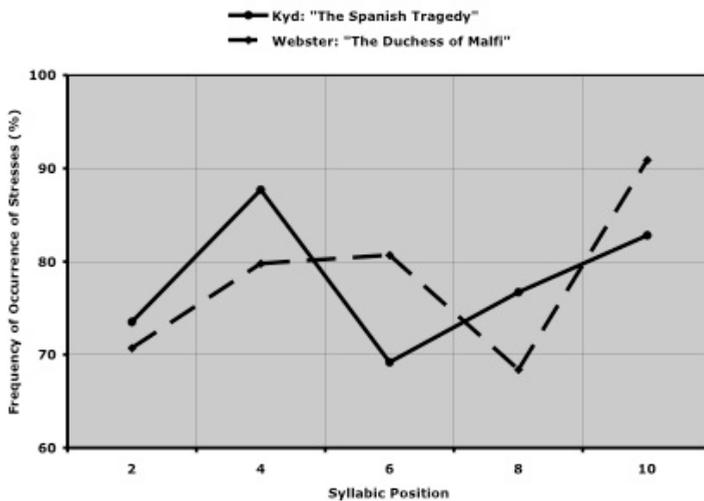


Fig. 1 – Evolution of Stressing in Early and Late Renaissance Plays

The dip on 8 accompanies the asymmetrical rhythm of Jacobean texts. A loss of stress on syllable 8 sometimes co-occurs with a loss of stress on syllable 4. Here are examples of stressing patterns in John Ford’s *The Broken Heart* (the word *reckonings* in line 2.3.150 is disyllabic):

I tell ye, **you** grow wanton **in** my sufferance (2.3.108)

I laugh at **mine** own confidence; my sorrows (2.3.119)

To live so, **that** our reckonings **may** fall even (2.3.150)

Stars fall but **in** the grossness **of** our sight (2.3.157)

As opposed to Elizabethan and early Jacobean plays, the contrast in stressing of strong positions decreased in time; instead of a peak on position 4 and a dip on 6 or 8 in earlier dramas, Caroline playwrights smoothed out the difference between even syllables 2-4-6-8 (see Fig. 1, the data from Tarlinskaja 2014, Appendix B, Table 1).

## 2.2 Phrasal Stressing

The next parameter of analysis is phrasal stressing. Unstressed grammatical monosyllables (*the, to, and, is*) tend to cling to the following or the preceding stressed lexical word, something like *the CHILD, GIVE me, to GIVE it*. Potentially stressed lexical monosyllables on W may also cling, even if their stress is not reduced: *start WARS; to TALK thus*. Linguists call clinging grammatical monosyllables ‘clitics’, and the whole group of words is called a ‘phonetic word’ or a ‘clitic group’. For convenience, let us call clinging lexical monosyllables that fall on position W in verse also clitics; they are drawn into the metrical word with a stress on S. Here are some examples (in proclitic and enclitic phrases stressed syllables on S are in capitals and bold; stressed syllables on W are in bold and underlined):

When to the SESSions | of **sweet Silent** | THOUGHT (Shakespeare, sonnet 30, 1)

ReSEMBLing | **STRONG youth** | in his MIDdle | AGE (Shakespeare, sonnet 7, 6)

The first line contains a metrical word with a potentially stressed adjective, *sweet*, preceding a stress on S; the metrical word is of **sweet Silent**. In the second example, the metrical word with a potentially stressed noun on W is **STRONG youth**; the noun *youth* follows a stressed syllable on S. The first type of phrase, as in *sweet Silent*, is called a ‘proclitic phrase’; the second phrase, *STRONG youth*, is called an ‘enclitic phrase’. In English verse there are many stressed monosyllables that occur on W syllabic positions. We need to differentiate them from stressed monosyllables that fall on S, otherwise a verse line may fall apart or become prose. Here is the first line from Shakespeare’s sonnet 113: ‘*Since I left you mine eye is in my mind*’. In prose, it might be analyzed *Since I LEFT you*, but in an iambic line we divide the line into four metrical words: *Since I | **left YOU** | mine EYE | is in my MIND*. The poet placed

*I* and *you* on S; in this way he gave us a clue that the pronouns are contrasted and need to be emphasized. Some syntactic patterns of enclitic phrases, such as subject plus predicate, clearly tend to be used for expressiveness:

Even as the **AXE falls**, if I be not faithful (Shakespeare, *Henry VIII*, 2.1.61)

The beaten **ROCK breeds**, till this night is done (Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Maid's Tragedy*, 1.2.225)

Enclitic phrases are less frequent than proclitic. Enclitics create a syncopated rhythm enhanced by a frequent syntactic break after the phrase. The syncopated rhythm of enclitic phrases disrupts the iambic flow of verse considerably more drastically than do proclitic phrases. Enclitic phrases therefore are more frequent in the looser iambs of the Jacobean dramas than in earlier, Elizabethan poetry (re enclitics at the ends of lines, see Oras 1953).

Phonetically, enclitic phrases also contain addresses, both monosyllabic and disyllabic:

Remember **THAT, Pawn**. / May a fearful barrenness... (Middleton, *A Game at Chess*, split line at 3.1.237)

We are not **SAFE, Clarence**, we are not safe (Shakespeare, *Richard III*, 1.1.70)

### 2.3 Word Boundaries and Frequent Syntactic Breaks

The next two parameters of versification analysis are the placement of word boundaries and of the most frequent syntactic breaks after syllables 2-10 (or 2-11) between adjacent metrical words and adjacent lines. There are many nuances of syntactic cohesion between adjacent words, but to simplify the analysis I differentiate only three.

The strongest link occurs between a modifier and the modified noun or between a verb and a direct object. The strong link is designated with a single slash, /: *a living / Death / I bear* (Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*, 5.61).

A medium link (which is also a medium break) occurs between a subject and a predicate (the building blocks of an English sentence) or between any two adjacent words that have no immediate syntactic link. It is designated with two slashes, //: *What tho' no Credit // doubting Wits // may give?* (*The Rape of the Lock*, 1.39).

A strong break occurs between two sentences or between the author's and reported speech. It is designated ///: *Those Eyes are made so killing— /// was his last* (*The Rape of the Lock*, 5.64).

David Lake gives a more detailed classification (Lake 1975, 257, 261). In the placement of strong and medium breaks in the middle and at the end

of the line I rely on syntax, not on punctuation, as is conventional in the Russian school of versification (see Tomashevsky 1929 and 1959, 438-482; Gasparov and Skulacheva 2004, chapters 2, 7, and 8;<sup>1</sup> Gasparov 2012, 182-218, see especially ‘Sintaksissintagm v stikheiproze’ [The syntax of phrases in verse and prose], 204-218).

Ants Oras (1960) and his follower MacDonald P. Jackson (2012) rely on punctuation and call the breaks ‘pauses’. In Elizabethan verse before 1600, the most frequent word boundary and the most prominent syntactic break fell after syllabic position 4 (dividing the line into two half-lines, 4 + 6 syllables), while after 1600 in Jacobean plays the break fell after syllable 6 and even after 7, dividing the line into 6 + 4, 7 + 3, or 7 + 4 syllables; see Fig. 2 (data from Tarlinskaja 2014, Appendix B, Table 3).

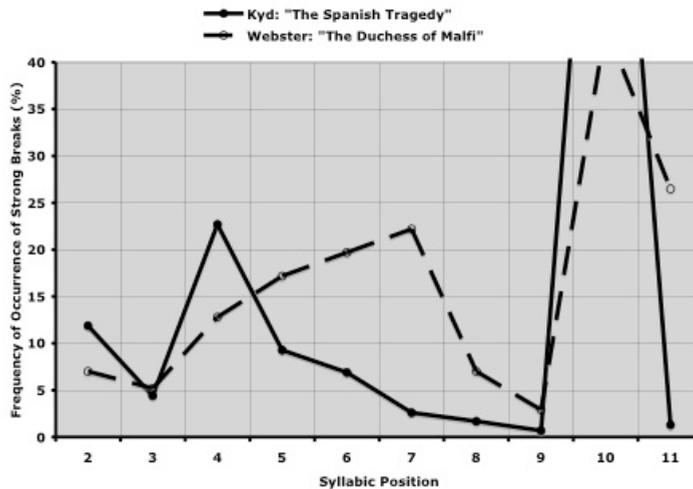


Fig. 2 – Strong Breaks After Positions 2-11 in early and late Renaissance Plays

Comparing actual lines to the scheme we can also see which weak syllabic positions contain more than one syllable and which positions, weak or strong, contain an omitted syllable. Lines where the first syllable is omitted are called ‘headless’; lines with an omitted syllable 5 are called ‘broken-backed’. Jacobean playwrights, especially Webster, Middleton, and Massinger, frequently filled

<sup>1</sup> Chapter 7 begins [translated by M. T.]: ‘What does a verse line consist of? A hundred years ago the answer would have been: out of feet. Seventy years ago, after Tomashevsky and Shengeli, the answer would have been: out of words. Now, it seems, one more step can be made, and the answer is: out of [syntactic] phrases’ (120).

their W positions with two (or rarely three) syllables, as in *Such in my free acknow**ledgement** that I am* (Massinger, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, 5.1.83), in which there are two syllables in position 7. A syllable can be omitted both on an even and an odd syllabic position. In the following line there is a missing syllable on position 4, marked in square brackets: *So, sirrah, [4] you may not wear a sword* (*Arden of Faversham*, 1.310). Jacobean such as Webster, Middleton, and Massinger particularly often omitted syllables on both odd and even syllabic positions. In *The Devil's Law Case* (1623) by Webster, for example, two (and even three) unstressed syllables filling the same metrical position are especially frequent on positions 1 and 5 (15.2 and 11.1 per cent of all lines), and the rare omitted syllables concentrate on positions 1 and 6 (3.7 and 1.4 per cent).

Recall that the minimum of midline stressing (a dip in the diagrams) fell in pre-1600 plays on syllabic position 6, but after 1600 it shifted to position 8 (Fig. 2). A stressing dip on position 6 often accompanies symmetric grammatical and rhythmic structures of lines that have a word boundary or a syntactic break after position 5. The dip on 8 that accompanies asymmetrical patterns of Jacobean and Carolinian plays is more noticeable in plays that follow a strict decasyllabic model and less obvious in dramas with a loose syllabic structure. For example, in the syllabically loose play by Richard Brome, *Antipodes* (1638), the stressing dip on position 8 is 81.1 per cent, while in the more regular play by James Shirley, *The Cardinal* (1641), the dip on 8 is really a 'plunge', down to 67.5 per cent.

#### 2.4 Line Endings

Among other parameters discussed here are the types of line endings: syllabic, accentual, and syntactic. Syllabic types classify line endings into masculine, feminine, dactylic, and very rarely hyperdactylic. Masculine line endings can be stressed and unstressed, and the unstressed syllable on position 10 may be created by a polysyllabic word (poly) as in *Mean time, let this defend my loyalty* (*Richard II*, 1.1.67) or by a weakly stressed or unstressed monosyllable (mono) such as a preposition or a conjunction, as in *Of these thy compounds on such creatures **as*** (*Cymbeline*, 1.5.20).

Feminine and dactylic endings can be simple<sup>2</sup> and compound, and compound endings can contain unstressed monosyllables on position 11 or a stress on 11. Here is an example of a light (unstressed) compound feminine ending:

<sup>2</sup> The number of simple feminine endings depended on the interpretation of such words as *heaven*, *spirit*, *power*, and *higher*. Their syllabic interpretation depended on the use of such words in midline. In earlier Elizabethan verse, such as Marlowe's, they are frequently used as monosyllables in midline, so they were not assumed to create feminine endings at the ends of the lines; in later verse, these words are frequently disyllabic in midline, and so they were assumed to form feminine endings at the ends of the lines. I disregarded iambic tetrameter lines, and these tend to have more frequent feminine endings.

The same, the same. Mea't's cast away up **ON him**<sup>3</sup> (Massinger, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, 1.2.52)

This is a heavy (stressed) compound feminine ending:

Why, thou unthankful villain, dar'st thou **TALK thus**? (Massinger, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, 1.1.29)

This is a compound heavy dactylic ending:

Never a green silk quilt is there i' th' **HOUSE, Mother** (Middleton, *Women, Beware Women*, 3.1.27)

Syntactically, line endings can be end-stopped or run-on. Run-on lines (enjambments) are connected to the following line by a medium or strong link. To determine the period and authorship of a play it helps to calculate the ratio of syllabic suffixes *-ed* and *-eth*, of pleonastic verbs *do*, and of the disyllabic form of the suffix *-ion*. The latter is used by some playwrights from the 1580s through at least the first half of the seventeenth century, as in *Whoever misses in his func-ti-on* (Massinger, *An Old Way to Pay Old Debts*, 1.2.4). I also calculated the ratio of grammatical inversions and cases when deviations from the meter emphasize the meaning of a micro-situation, as in *Swills your warm blood like wash* (*Richard III*, 5.2.9), instead of something more iambic such as 'He swills your blood like wash'. In this episode from *Richard III*, Henry the Earl of Richmond is speaking to encourage his army before a decisive battle with the king. Deviations from the meter that emphasize the meaning of micro-situations are called 'rhythmical italics' (see Tarlinskaja 2012, 65-80; Tarlinskaja 2014, Appendix A). Statistically, rhythmical italics contain verbs several times more frequently than the same poetic text outside rhythmical italics. Rhythmical italics work not unlike onomatopoeia. Below are some more examples from *Venus and Adonis*:

**Shaking** her wings, devouring all in vain (56)

**Breaketh** his reign and to her straight goes he (265)

**Shows his hot** courage and his high desire (277)

<sup>3</sup> Here and later the stressed syllable on the metrically strong position 10 is capitalized and in bold, and the stress on position 11 is bold and underlined. The same notation is used in proclitic and enclitic phrases, as in *my SWEET love*.

**Beating** his kind embracement with her heels (313)

**Burneth more** hotly, swelling with more rage (333)

**Claps her pale** cheek till clapping makes it red (468)

In the last five tests the ratio of the cases is calculated per 1000 lines.

### 3. *Evolution of Shakespeare's Versification Style*

Before 1600, Shakespeare's stress profile showed a stressing dip on position 6, and after a short period of vacillation in 1600-1604 the dip moved to position 8. The same happened to the major syntactic break: from the 1590s to the early seventeenth century it fell after position 4, while in later Shakespearean plays it begins to fall after position 6. Unstressed syllables of polysyllabic words on position 10 are typical of early Shakespeare, while monosyllables on position 10 become particularly frequent in later Shakespeare. Compare stressing on position 10 in *All's Well That Ends Well* (1604-1605) and Shakespeare's portion in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (1613-14). The proportion of poly on position 10 in *All's Well* is 4.4 per cent of all lines, and of monosyllables 0.4 per cent, and in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* the numbers are 7.8 and 8.9: the number of missing stresses on position 10 has increased and the per cent of unstressed monosyllables grew more than twenty times.

The mellifluous Shakespeare never favoured enclitic phrases and heavy feminine ending. The ratio of the latter never rose above 1 per cent of all lines, and only in the two plays collaborated with Fletcher, *Henry VIII* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Enclitic phrases are often followed by a syntactic break, and Shakespeare avoided this syncopated rhythm. Disyllabic suffix *-ion* was rare in later Shakespeare, while grammatical inversions and pleonastic verb *to do* were quite frequent and became Shakespeare's signature features. The ratio of rhythmical italics grew from earlier to later Shakespeare: this was a learned stylistic device, and Shakespeare gradually became its master.

### 4. Arden of Faversham: *Analysis*

My earlier analysis of *Arden of Faversham*, years ago, made me puzzle over scene 8: its stress profile had a firm dip on position 6, as was characteristic of earlier Elizabethans including Shakespeare. The imagery of scene 8 pointed to Shakespeare, while the rest of the play showed an equal stressing on positions 6 and 8. The scene, however, contains only 155 iambic pentameter lines, not enough for a conclusion based on versification analysis. The equal stressing of positions 6 and 8 in scenes 1-7 and 9-end was unlike most Elizabethans and early Shakespeare: he arrived at this stressing mode only after 1600 (e.g.,

*Troilus and Cressida* 1602). I hesitantly attributed the rest of the play to later Kyd (Tarlinskaja 2014, chapter 4).

Recently, following Arthur Kinney's attribution (2009), I re-analysed *Arden of Faversham*. Kinney had found Shakespearean features in scenes 4-9. I first analysed every scene separately, then groups of scenes that show similarity in any way. Scene 9 in my analysis of stressing was definitely not by Shakespeare as its dip fell on position 8, while early Shakespeare favoured a dip on 6. Recall that the date of the play is 1592 or even earlier. I grouped the scenes in the following way: Portion 1, scenes 1-3; Portion 2, scenes 4-8; and Portion 3, scenes 9-end. The results are reported below.

*Arden of Faversham*, according to M.L. Wine, is 'reported', meaning it is believed to be a memorial reconstruction of the text by an actor who might have played a role in *Arden* (1973, lxxxv). One of the signs of memorial reconstruction is syllabic looseness of the text indicated by disyllabic and even trisyllabic intervals between adjacent S and missing syllables both on S and W. The tentative actor was not a poet. Let us therefore start with the syllabic structure of the portions. Portion 3 seems the most syllabically sloppy; it contains numerous prose utterances (they often belong to the hired assassins), and some segments are questionable – are they loose verse or prose? Below is an example of three unstressed syllables between adjacent S: *Coming into the chamber **where it** hangs, may die* (1.237): *-ber where it are* assumed to fill syllabic position 7. In this line, *And make **me the** first that shall **adventure on** him* (14.136), positions 3 and 9 both seem to contain two syllables. 'Master' and 'Mistress' are frequently monosyllabic (unless they form two syllables between adjacent S), so are the names 'Arden' and 'Alice', as in, *I'll fetch **Master** Arden home, and we, like friends* (14.95) in which "Master" is monosyllabic. But in *Ab, **Master** Arden, you have injured me* (1.318), 'Master' is disyllabic. Compare also *Sweet **Alice**, he may draw thy counterfeit* (1.233), where 'Alice' is disyllabic, but in *To London, **Alice**? If thou'lt be ruled by me* (1.224), 'Alice' is monosyllabic, unless we interpret the line with two syllables at the syntactic 'seam' at the caesura, on position 5: *-lice? If: I did not stretch the lines too much to fit them into iambic pentameter; I tried to pronounce the text in the most natural way, paying attention, however, to the putatively underlying metrical scheme. The most frequent place of omitted syllables is position 1 (headless lines); next comes 5, the first syllable of the second hemistich (broken-backed lines); and next either 4 or 6. Here are the numbers of iambic pentameter lines with omitted syllables.*

Portion 1, scenes 1-3	48 per 786 lines	(6.1 per cent)
Portion 2, scenes 4-8	17 per 395 lines	(4.3 per cent)
Portion 3, scenes 9-end	106 per 787 lines	(13.5 per cent)

Portion 2 has the least and Portion 3 the most number of such lines. Here are some examples; missing syllables are indicated in square brackets:

[1] Lime your twigs to catch this weary bird (9.39)

Your way and mine [5] lies four mile together (9.127)

Faith, Alice, [4] no longer than this night (14.87)

Husband, why pause ye? [6] Why eat you not? (1.364)

If there was a syllable missing on position 10 (a sort of iambic tetrameter line with a feminine ending), I excluded such segments from my line count.

However, in line 13.5 the clusters ‘stop-plus-sonorant’ [dr] in *children* was assumed syllabic, and thus the line was counted as regular iambic pentameter of the early Elizabethan kind: *Yet will it help my wife and chil-dr-en* (13.15). The sound combinations stop-plus-sonorant such as [dr] often constituted a syllable in early Elizabethan and sometimes even in later verse; e.g., *A hundred-ed and fifty thousand horse* (Marlowe, *1 Tamburlaine*, 4.3.53); *Some made your wives, and some your chil-dr-en* (5.1.27). Sometimes no matter how you twist and turn a segment, it does not become iambic pentameter. It needs to be emphasized that we only look at segments that might be easily stretched to fit the iambic pentameter scheme, and I try to enunciate them in the most natural way. Lines with what seems like two omitted consecutive syllables did not count; e.g., the line *Black Will and Shakebag*, [6, 7] *will you two* (14.88) was excluded. The discrepancy between the percent of lines with omitted syllables in scenes 9–end compared to scenes 1–8 and even 1–3 is considerable.

What is the explanation of the syllabic looseness of Portion 3? The play, as we remember, bears signs of memorial reconstruction (Wine calls it ‘reportorial nature of the text’; see Wine 1973, lxxxv). The most plausible explanation is that whoever reproduced the text from memory probably didn’t remember the end of the play well. The second explanation depends on the contents of Portion 3, where it deals with the assassins plotting and acting out their attempts; such characters often speak prose, or verse close to prose. And a third very tentative explanation might be the process of literary composition; my former experience has shown that a poetic text often begins in a more constrained and even archaic way and becomes looser towards the end (see the stress profiles of Shakespeare’s plays analysed per act in Tarlinskaja 1987, Table 3.1, 97–102). Notice the difference between Acts 1 and 5 in, for instance, *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, and *The Merchant of Venice* where the stressing dip on position 6 is the most pronounced in Acts 1 and 2, while in the fifth act the stressing on syllables 6 and 8 is either equal (*Love’s Labour’s Lost*) or the dip moves to position 8 (*A Midsummer Night’s*

*Dream, The Merchant of Venice*). In the first act of Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* the ratio of disyllabic suffixes *-ion* is huge (49.1 per 1000 lines), while it falls towards the end of the play. In Surrey's translation of *The Aeneid*, Book 2, the text is more iambic in the first two-thirds of the poem and slips closer to a syllabic mode of his Italian original towards the end (on Marlowe and Surrey, see Tarlinskaja 2014, chapters 2 and 3). I compare this phenomenon to a handwritten letter: the correspondent begins in a neat handwriting and nice parallel lines, but toward the end of the page he slips into a more careless handwriting with his lines sloping to the right.

*Arden's* scenes 1-3, and in particular scene 1, show signs of a more archaic style, as though composed by an older author. Only in scene 1 we find trisyllabic forms of the adjective *jea-lo-us* at the end of the line:

*In any case be not too jea-lo-us* (1.48)

*Because my husband is so jea-lo-us* (1.134)

*Yet pardon me, for love is jea-lo-us* (1.212)

*Your loving husband is not jea-lo-us* (1.379)

Compare with Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy: Ay, danger mixed with jea-lo-us despite* (1.2.56). *Arden of Faversham* contains other old-fashioned word forms: *Gallop with Arden 'cross the o-ce-an* (1.96); *That I am tied to him by mar-ri-age* (1.100). Compare this with numerous old-fashioned phonetic forms at ends of the lines in Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy: Those bloody wars have spent my tre-a-sure* (1.3.35); *For love resisted grows im-pa-ti-ent* (2.3.119); *And in our sight thyself art gra-cio-us* (1.2.150); but not in midline as shown in *To gra-cious fortunes of my tender youth* (1.1.7). Also compare Marlowe's *The mighty Soldan of Ae-gyp-ti-a* (*1 Tamburlaine*, 1.2.6).

The old-fashioned syntactic structure of the type, *You cannot tell me, I have seen it, I* (*Arden of Faversham*, 1.169) occurs three times in *Arden* in scene 1: *You cannot tell me I have seen it, I* (1.169); *But, Mosby, I'll have no such picture, I* (1.244); and *Thou that wouldst see me hang, thou, Mosby, thou* (1.375). It occurs only once in scenes 4-8: *To let thee know I am no coward, I* (5.25), but not a single time in scenes 9 – end, though Portion 3 is as long as Portion 1. Compare Marlowe's *I am not of the tribe of Levi, I* (*The Jew of Malta*, 2.3.18). The particulars of Scene 1 may indicate the age of the first coauthor, an older playwright. In Wine's opinion, *Arden of Faversham* seems to have been influenced by the story in the second edition of Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1587) rather than by its first edition of 1577. The play was published in 1592, after its entry in the Stationers' Register on 3 April of that year. No part of *Arden* can be more than about three years older than the rest. Wine argues for the use

of the second edition, 1587, throughout (Wine 1973, xli). But the play might have been written before the entry into the Stationers' Register. Arthur Freeman (1967, 71) dates *Arden* 1591 or earlier, and I agree with the earlier dating.

The **stress profiles** of *Arden* are a striking indication of its double authorship and the possible difference in the age of the collaborators. Table 1 displays the stress profile on S of the three portions; see also Fig. 3.

	2	4	6	8	10	Lines
Portion 1, scenes 1-3	72.1	86.6	75.7	<u>74.4</u>	90.5	786
Portion 2, scenes 4-8	77.9	90.9	<u>71.8</u>	81.0	89.1	394
Portion 3, scenes 9-end	75.5	87.4	78.7	<u>74.1</u>	93.1	788

Table 1 – *Arden of Faversham*: Per cent of Stresses on Strong Syllabic Positions

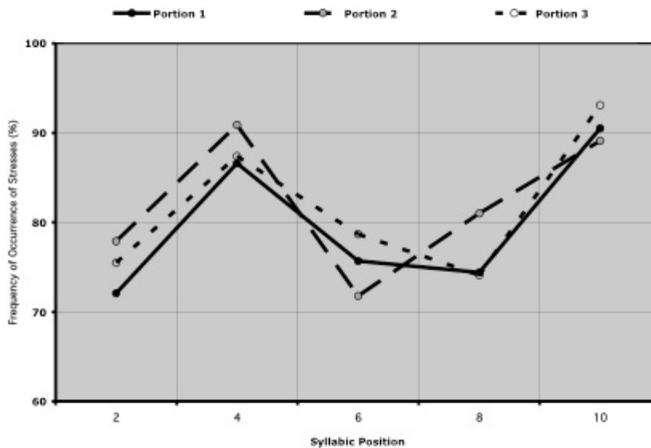


Fig. 3 – Three Portions of *Arden of Faversham* Stresses on Strong Syllabic Positions

As we see, Portion 2 contains a substantial dip on syllable 6 and a peak on syllable 8, while in Portion 1 stressing on 6 and 8 is almost equal, and in Portion 3 the dip decisively falls on syllable 8. The stress profiles of the three portions explain why my earlier results showed equal stressing on positions 6 and 8: the data indicated average numbers. A dip on 6 is typical of early Elizabethan verse; early Marlowe, early Shakespeare and Kyd in his three acknowledged plays all had this stress profile (Tarlinskaja 2014, Appendix B, Table 1). While Shakespeare began to develop a dip on syllable 8 only after 1600, Marlowe had changed already by 1592 in *Edward II*. Below are typical lines from *Arden's* scene 8. The prevalence of such lines creates a stress profile with a dip on syllable 6.

- And dries my marrow **with** their watchfulness.  
 Continual trouble **of** my moody brain  
 Feebles my body **by** excess of drink (8.2-4)
- I left the marriage **of** an honest maid (8.88)
- And wrapt my credit **in** thy company (8.92)
- Look on me, Mosby, **or** I'll kill myself;  
 Nothing shall hide me **from** thy stormy look. (8.112-13)
- The holy word that **had** converted me (8.117)

An alternative reason of such a stress profile might be its long soliloquy (Mosby), monologues, and other lengthy utterances, as well as the general lyrical and passionate tone of the scene. Such texts are usually more constrained than short and lively give-and-take exchanges, especially between lower characters (Tarlinskaja 1987, chapter 4). However, a different hand in scene 8 seems a more plausible explanation. Below are typical lines from *Arden*, scene 13; their prevalence creates a dip on syllable 8:

- Why, Mosby taunts your husband **with** the horn (13.138)
- More than the hateful naming **of** the horn (13.142)
- But men of such ill spirit **as** yourself (13.146)
- I know my wife counsels me **for** the best (13.149)
- And salve this hapless quarrel **if** I may (13.151)
- Poor gentleman, how soon he **is** bewitched. (13.153)
- His friends must not be lavish **in** their speech (13.155)

This could be an argument for Marlowe's authorship of parts of the play. The stressing on position 10 in all three portions of *Arden* is higher than in Kyd's or Marlowe's plays, which is an argument against their authorship.

The ratio of enclitic phrases in Portion 1 is 54.5, in Portion 2 it is 63.8, and in Portion 3 it is 53.4. The indices of Portions 1 and 3 are very close (their mean ratio is 53.9), while Portion 2 stands out. The indices indicate an opposition between Portion 2 and the rest of the play, which suggests

two different hands; however, the numbers are too high for Marlowe. In Marlowe's plays, especially in both *Tamburlains*, enclitics are particularly rare: 1 *Tamburlaine* 11.1; 2 *Tamburlaine* 14.5; cf. *Edward II*, 21.9 per 1000 lines. The author of the anonymous *Lochrine* follows the rhythm of early Marlowe: 16.1 per 1000 lines. The numerous enclitic phrases in *Arden* may result from the memorial reconstruction of the play, but they still point to two different playwrights. Here are examples of enclitic phrases from *Arden of Faversham*:

My saving husband <b>HOARDS up</b> bags of gold	(1.220)
And <b>HUNG up</b> in the study for himself	(1.239)
The like will <b>I do</b> for my Susan's sake	(1.272)
Ay, Fortune's <b>RIGHT hand</b> Mosbie hath forsook	(8.86)
Whose dowry would have <b>WEIGHED down</b> all thy wealth	(8.89)
Weigh all thy <b>GOOD turns</b> with this little fault	(8.131)
And let our <b>SALT tears</b> be his obsequies	(14.329)
Out at the <b>BACK door</b> , over the pile of wood	(14.341)

#### 4.1 *Word Boundaries and Strong Syntactic Breaks*

Word boundaries and strong syntactic breaks in the three portions of *Arden* are distributed according to the Elizabethan trend: the major break falls after syllable 4 and there are relatively few breaks after 6. This indicates that the date of composition must be around 1590 and not much later. However, there is some difference between Portions 1 and 3 as opposed to Portion 2. Let us combine the data of Portions 1 and 3.

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Run-ons
Portions 1 & 3	9.9	9.6	<b>20.4</b>	13.2	11.4	6.3	2.0	0.9	86.6	6.1	7.3
Portion 2	6.5	5.5	<b>18.8</b>	8.3	8.0	2.5	0.8	0.8	84.4	4.8	<b>10.6</b>

Table 2 – *Arden of Faversham*: Strong Syntactic Breaks After Positions 2, 3, 4-11.  
Run-on Lines

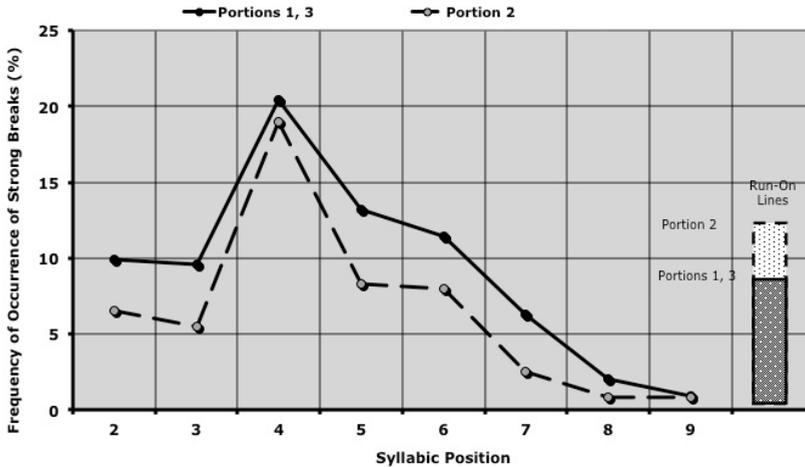


Fig. 4 – Three Portions of *Arden of Faversham* Strong Syntactic Breaks

In Portion 2 the breaks are lower after syllabic positions 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 than in Portions 1 and 3 (Fig. 4); Portion 2 is syntactically smoother than the rest of the play. The number of run-on lines, however, is higher in Portion 2 than in Portions 1 and 3, a tentative argument for Shakespeare's authorship of Portion 2.

#### 4.2 Miscellaneous Features

Miscellaneous features that might point to authorship are, as we remember, pleonastic *do*, syllabic *-ed* and *-eth*, disyllabic *-ion* (as in *ac-cu-sa-ti-on* and *ques-ti-on*), grammatical inversions, rhythmical italics, and alliterations (from Tarlinskaja 2014, Appendix B, Table 4). Not tabulated are the syllabic clusters [dr] (*hun-dr-ed*, *chil-dr-en*) in the middles of the words, nor the polysyllabic words such as *o-ce-an*, *mar-ri-age*, or *jea-lou-sie* that prevail in Portion 1. One more difference is observed in the use of syllabic *-ed* and *-eth*: 14.0 per 1000 lines in Portion 1, 18.0 in Portion 3 (their mean is 16.0), and 35.4 in Portion 2—more than twice as often as in Portions 1 and 3. The most significant difference is in the ratio of pleonastic *do*, higher in scenes 4-8 than in the rest of the play: 17.3, 27.8, and 13.9. Shakespeare often used pleonastic *do* throughout his writing career. Rhythmical italics are also more frequent in scenes 4-8. The last two features might be interpreted as 'Shakespearean'. Here are some examples of rhythmical italics from *Arden*, Portion 2:

**Staring** and grinning in thy gentle face (4.73)

**Knock with** thy sword; perhaps the slave will hear (5.37)

**Crying** aloud, 'Thou art the game we seek' (6.19)

**Breaks my** relenting heart in thousand pieces (8.53)

If the play is collaborative, who was the older co-author? The stress profile might point to later Marlowe (cf. *Edward II*). Kinney also sees more signs of Marlowe than of Kyd, though both seem to him unlikely. The vocabulary, in Kinney's statistics (2009), seems to have common features with Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda*. Vickers attributed *Arden* to Kyd alone (Vickers, 2008). I did an independent analysis of *Arden* long ago and stumbled upon some features that pointed to Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*. The exception was scene 8. As I see it now, *Arden's* scenes 4-8 might be Shakespearean. Besides versification, their imagery brings to mind Shakespeare's use of images. Similar images recur, for example, in the King's monologue of *2 Henry VI* (3.1.198-222) bemoaning Humphrey Gloucester, and Michael's soliloquy in *Arden of Faversham* (3.191-209), bemoaning Arden: *submissivel/harmless/gentle, wail/pleading, calf/lamb; wicked/remorseless/ bloody; mangle/ eat up, wolf/butcher/ slaughter-man, slaughter-house*. The non-Shakespearean portions of *Arden*, as my most recent analysis has shown, share versification features with the non-Shakespearean parts of *2* and *3 Henry VI* (but not with the 'Kyd' portion of *1 Henry VI*). Let us tentatively assume that the older collaborator of *Arden* was Kyd.

##### 5. *The 1602 Additions to The Spanish Tragedy: Shakespeare?*

If in *Arden of Faversham* it was Kyd who collaborated with the young playwright Shakespeare, there is one more play where Shakespeare collaborated with Kyd, by then dead for more than eight years: the refurbished *Spanish Tragedy*. How did Shakespeare's segments in the co-authored or refurbished plays of 1592 and 1602 compare with his own dramas of these periods?

Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* was one of the most popular plays with the Elizabethan theatregoers and readers. It must have been first performed in one of the Inns of the city of London and next in theatre buildings specifically constructed in 1579-1580 for performances. The Lord Strange's Men revived the play in 1592 at the Rose theatre, and five years later it was again performed by their successor, the Lord Admiral's Men, with the famous tragic actor Edward Alleyn as Hieronimo. It is presumably in connection with the latest revival that Philip Henslow, owner of the Rose theatre during the 1590s, recorded two payments in his account book: 'Lent unto m'alleyn the 25 of September 1601 to lend unto Bengeman Johnson upon [his] writtinge of his adicians in geronymo the some of XXXXS' and 'Lent unto Bengemy Johnson<sup>(1)</sup> at the Apoyntment of E. Alleyn & W<sup>m</sup> Birde the 22 of June 1602 in earneste of A Boocke called Richard Crockback, & for new adicyons for Jeronymo the some of x<sup>li</sup>' (Foakes and Rickert

2002, 17-19, 203). We do not know whether Jonson or Bird ever delivered these additions, but they *were* composed, 320 lines altogether (not all of them iambic pentameter or even iambic), and some scholars have assumed it was Ben Jonson who wrote them (Barton 1984, 13-28; Riggs 1989, 87-91). However, critics who examined the language and style of these additions have found no trace of the rational thinking or smooth flow of verse characteristic of Jonson's tragedies (Edwards 1986, lxi-lxv).

Another possible candidate for the additions, per Coleridge's perceptive observations, has been Shakespeare. *The Spanish Tragedy* had not been claimed the exclusive property of either Strange's or Admiral's Men; therefore, according to the permissive copyright practices of the epoch, other theatre companies were free to perform it. There is some evidence suggesting that Shakespeare's company, the Chamberlain's Men (after 1603 the King's Men), may also have performed *The Spanish Tragedy* with their tragedian Richard Burbage as Hieronimo. E.K. Chambers comments:

The company which originally produced *The Spanish Tragedy* is unknown. The Admiral's revived it with 'adicyons' in 1602. But the Chamberlain's must also have played it, and probably about the same time, since the authentic version of the elegy on Burbage's death [the anonymous 'Elegy on the death of the famous actor Rich: Burbage', circa 1618] names 'ould Heironymo' as one of his parts [...] It is even possible that the edition of 1602 may contain the version of the Chamberlain's and not the Admiral's men. (1930, I, 148)

If *The Spanish Tragedy* was indeed performed by Shakespeare's company, it is not unlikely that 'their premier dramatist may have been the author of the Additions' (Vickers 2012, 17).

Warren Stevenson, in his lifelong study of the Additions, noticed the phrasal recurrences that are shared by the Additions and Shakespeare's plays (2008). Brian Vickers and Marcus Dahl, with the help of a computer program, dredged out unique three-word collocations that recur only in the Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy* and Shakespeare's works but in no other Elizabethan dramaturgy (Vickers 2012). Their results support Shakespeare's authorship of the Additions.

I look for common versification features in three plays by Shakespeare and a tragedy by Ben Jonson that might be roughly contemporary with the Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy*: Shakespeare's *Henry V* (1598-99), *Hamlet* (1600-01) and *Othello* (1603-04 or possibly earlier) as well as Jonson's *Sejanus His Fall* (1603-04). The results are reported below. *Sejanus His Fall* is Jonson's first tragedy and the first of the two whose plot is based on Roman history. I try several versification tests that had previously worked well.

See below the per cent of strong syntactic breaks after positions 2-11 and the per cent of run-on lines (data from Tarlinskaja 2014, Appendix B, Table 3).

Texts	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Enj.	Lines
<i>H V</i>	6.6	3.2	<b>14.3</b>	11.1	<b>13.5</b>	6.8	2.8	1.0	62.5	15.8	21.8	1796
<i>Ham.</i>	8.2	4.0	<b>17.6</b>	11.0	<b>19.1</b>	7.9	6.5	1.0	58.9	19.4	21.7	1723
<i>Add.</i>	15.1	4.9	<b>20.5</b>	14.6	<b>21.5</b>	6.8	3.9	2.0	73.2	<b>20.5</b>	8.7	207
<i>Oth.</i>	9.3	4.5	<b>20.8</b>	15.3	<b>21.0</b>	11.7	7.3	2.2	60.5	<b>23.1</b>	16.3	2272
<i>Sej.</i>	8.6	4.6	17.1	16.5	<b>20.1</b>	15.2	9.3	4.9	52.0	17.7	<b>30.3</b>	2674

Table 3 – Additions and Contemporary Plays: Strong Syntactic Breaks. After Position 2, 3, 4-11

In spite of the time difference between *Henry V*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*, they show some similar tendencies, and there are differences between Shakespeare's plays and Jonson's *Sejanus*: 1) The numbers of breaks after positions 4 and 6 in *Henry V*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and the Additions are identical or close, while in *Sejanus* there are more breaks after position 6 than after 4, a later tendency of Jonson's. Of the three Shakespearean texts, *Hamlet* has a more noticeable difference between positions 6 and 4, as though *Hamlet* followed rather than preceded *Othello* 2) The number of breaks after positions 7 and 8 increase in *Othello* compared to *Henry V* and *Hamlet*, but in *Sejanus*, created at about the same time as *Othello*, there are more breaks after syllables 7, 8, and 9. In *Henry V* and *Hamlet* there is just 1 per cent of breaks after syllable 9. There are almost twice as many run-on lines in *Sejanus* as there are in *Othello*, and 10 per cent more than in *Henry V* and *Hamlet*.

Now look at the Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy*, composed probably in 1601-1602. I can analyse only iambic pentameter lines, and their number is a mere 207, while the text of the Additions is a string of segments that are indeed 'mad' – they elaborate the subject of Hieronimo's grief and madness. The added text might have been reproduced erroneously, but perhaps it had been composed in this way to mirror a deranged mind. Hieronimo's utterances are intermixed with Isabella's interjections (*Ay me; Alas*) and the exchange with the Painter, another bereaved father, whom Hieronimo is asking to paint *a groane, or a sigh*. The whole Addition consists of short syntactic segments in verse and non-verse, which is why there are so few run-on lines (see below) and so many breaks after position 2, not just after 4 and 6. The number of breaks after positions 4 and 6 is equal, which is similar to *Henry V* and particularly *Othello*, but not *Sejanus* with its peak after position 6. The number of syntactic breaks after position 9 in the Additions is similar to *Othello* at 2 per cent, while in *Sejanus* it is almost 5 per cent. The second half-line in *Sejanus* is often syntactically 'chopped', while in all three Shakespearean plays and in the Additions it is the first half-line that is more often syntactically split.

The chart below of miscellaneous features shows the ratio (per 1000 lines) of proclitic phrases, enclitic phrases, pleonastic *do*, syllabic *-ed*, disyllabic *-ion*,

grammatical inversions and rhythmical italics, as well as per cent (from the total number of lines) of enjambed or run-on lines (see also Table 3, above) and of feminine endings.

Texts	Procl.	Encl.	<i>do</i>	<i>-ed</i>	<i>-ion</i>	Invers.	Italics	Enj.	Fem. endings
<i>H V</i>	322.9	33.4	<b>40.1</b>	26.7	<b>13.9</b>	37.3	138.6	21.8	19.1
<i>Ham.</i>	330.1	45.3	<b>40.0</b>	15.3	3.7	30.5	91.5	21.7	23.5
<i>Add.</i>	401.0	48.3	<b>67.6</b>	14.5	<b>14.5</b>	9.7	67.6	8.7	20.1
<i>Oth.</i>	295.8	56.8	<b>59.4</b>	11.4	4.4	31.7	113.1	16.3	27.4
<i>Sej.</i>	316.8	47.5	27.7	14.2	7.9	13.1	66.2	30.3	21.8

Table 4 – Additions and Their Contemporary Plays: Miscellaneous Features

Out of the eight parameters in the table above, the feature that unites the Additions with the Shakespearean texts is only the high number of pleonastic *do*: we know that Shakespeare was fond of it throughout his writing career. One feature that unites the Additions with *Henry V* is the numerous cases of disyllabic suffix *-ion*. There was a period in Shakespeare's career between 1595 and 1599 when, for some reason, he increased the use of disyllabic *-ion*: *King John* (1595-96), 13.7; *1 Henry IV* (1596-97), 20.1; *2 Henry IV* (1596-97), 17.3; *Henry V* (1597-98), 13.9; and *Julius Caesar* (1598-99), 10.7. In all earlier plays (except *The Comedy of Errors*, 1589-90) and in all later plays, the index of disyllabic *-ion* is below 10 per 1000 lines. The increased ratio of disyllabic *-ion* in the Additions might be the influence of the main text of Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* with its ratio of 16.3 per 1000 lines. There is only one feature that unites the Additions with *Sejanus*, the ratio of rhythmical italics; however, their quality is different. Jonson's rhythmical italics are pedestrian: *Travails withal* (2.2.34); *Earnest to utter* (2.2.33); *Greater than hope* (3.1.90); *More than ten criers* (5.8.22); and a rare verb of motion, *Flock to salute my lord* (5.8.17). The most expressive rhythmical italics occur only in 5.10, the culmination of the play:

After a world of fury on herself,

**Tearing** her hair, defacing of her face,

**Beating** her breasts and womb, **kneeling** amazed... (Jonson, *Sejanus*, 5.10.426-428)

Almost all of Jonson's rhythmical italics occur at the beginning of the line, a traditional location. In the Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy* the italics occur in both hemistiches. They concentrate in the third and fourth Additions, mostly in the discourse on why a man should love a son. In the 97 iambic pentameter lines of Additions 3 and 4 there are 11 rhythmical italics, or 113.4 per 1000 lines – a Shakespearean ratio. The first seven examples below are from Addition 3, the last one is from Addition 4.

To make a father dote, **rave or run** mad?  
 [0] Being born, it pouts, **cries, and breeds** teeth

**Beat at** the bushes, stamp our grandam earth,  
**Dive in** the water, **and stare up** to heaven

**Reckons** his parents among the rank of fools,  
**Strikes** cares upon their heads with **his mad** riots,  
**Makes them look** old, before they meet with age...

Then starting in a rage, **falls on** the earth. (*The Spanish Tragedy*, Additions 3 and 4, 10-12, 20-21, 23-25)

Both **Falls on** (*the earth*) and **Beat at** (*the bushes*) are formulaic: the verbs *fall* and *beat* recur in rhythmical italics from Surrey through Tennyson. The use of rhythmical-grammatical-lexical formulas shows how much the extraordinary and the conventional features intertwine. The frequency and the quality of rhythmical italics in the Additions point to their Shakespearean authorship. The rare phrase *grandam earth* occurs also in *1 Henry IV*, 3.1.33.

The features that the Additions share with the Shakespearean texts of the early seventeenth century are as follows: 1) The equal percent of syntactic breaks after positions 4 and 6; 2) a percent of strong breaks after position 11; 3) the negligent percent of strong breaks after positions 7, 8, and 9 in contrast to their higher numbers in Jonson's *Sejanus*; 4) a high ratio of pleonastic verb *do*; 5) a relatively high ratio of disyllabic suffix *-ion* in *Henry V* and the Additions; and 6) a Shakespearean quality of rhythmical italics that concentrate in Additions three and four.

## 6. Conclusion

Numerous features of versification, combined, suggest Shakespeare in collaboration with Kyd at different phases of Shakespeare's career: in *Arden of Faversham* (early Shakespeare) and in the Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy* (Shakespeare of the early seventeenth century).

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## Exploring Co-Authorship in *2 Henry VI*

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### *Abstract*

The article explores the possibility extended by Hugh Craig and Arthur Kinney that *2 Henry VI* is a collaborative play. Passages attributed to Peele and Shakespeare in *Titus Andronicus* were tested for 'rare' tetragrams (i.e. instances which occur less than five times in plays first performed between 1580-1600) in order to gain an insight into authorial borrowing and self-borrowing. In this respect, the article combines Martin Mueller's work on tetragrams plus (four plus word sequences) in 'Shakespeare His Contemporaries', with that of Ian Lancashire's studies on authors' working memories. The same methodology was also applied to passages attributed to Shakespeare and his co-author in *Edward III*. In particular, this study tests Act 3 of *2 Henry VI*, which is considered Shakespeare's primary contribution by Craig and Kinney, against the remainder of the play, in order to examine whether shared verbal parallels signify associative groupings at the forefront of Shakespeare's mind as he composed the play, or whether these parallels indicate separate authorial cognitive processes.

*Keywords:* Authorship Studies, Collaboration, Collocations, Self-repetition, Shakespeare

Questions have abounded about whether the *Henry VI* plays are collaborative since 1733, when Lewis Theobald doubted the authenticity of the trilogy. In 1790, Edmond Malone, attempting to account for the differences between Shakespeare's Folio texts and their corrupt derivatives, conjectured that the second and third parts of the trilogy were Shakespeare's rewrites of Peele and/or Greene collaborative ventures: the quartos and octavos known as *The first part of the Contention of the two famous houses of Yorke and Lancaster, with the death of the good duke Humphrey* (1594), and *The true Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke and the death of good King Henry the Sixt* (1595). In 1928 and 1929, Madeleine Doran and Peter Alexander provided independent studies that showed these texts to be unauthorised versions of the Folio plays, put together by actor-reporters who had featured in Shakespeare's plays for Pembroke's Men, prior to the company's collapse in 1593. Over a decade later, Alfred Hart provided what remains the most comprehensive examination of these unauthorised texts. He concluded that they were 'garbled abridgements of the acting versions made by order of the company from Shakespeare's



manuscripts' (1942, ix). Nevertheless, Malone's theory was perpetuated by John Dover Wilson in 1952, who argued in his editions of the *Henry VI* trilogy that Shakespeare had rewritten lost plays, originally part-authored by Greene, in the 1623 First Folio texts *2* and *3 Henry VI* (1591).<sup>1</sup> Recently, the theory that these plays are collaborative has been revived by Hugh Craig and Arthur Kinney.<sup>2</sup> They argue that 'The evidence converges to support the idea that' *2 Henry VI* 'is a collaboration, that one of the collaborators was Shakespeare, and his contribution is mainly in what is designated Act III in modern editions' (2009, 69).

My focus in this paper is on the second part of the trilogy. I aim to explore the hypothesis that *2 Henry VI* is a collaborative play by running linguistic tests on two early Shakespeare plays that are now widely considered as collaborative: *Titus Andronicus* (1592) and *Edward III* (1593). In my view, the most convincing cases for the divisions of authorship in these plays have been put forward by Brian Vickers, who argues that George Peele is responsible for Act 1 and 2.1, 2.2, and 4.1 of *Titus Andronicus* (Vickers 2002). This division is more or less supported by Craig and Kinney's function-word tests. Vickers also argues that Shakespeare was responsible for 2.1, 2.2 and 4.4 of *Edward III* (known as scenes 2, 3 and 12 in the Oxford edition),<sup>3</sup> and that the rest of the play was authored by Thomas Kyd (Vickers 2014, 102-118). According to these divisions, I shall investigate 'rare' tetragrams (by rare I mean instances which occur less than five times in plays first performed between 1580-1600) shared between scenes (omitting stage directions, which may or may not be authorial) attributed to Shakespeare and his co-authors. I employ anti-plagiarism software known as 'WCOPYFIND' (<<http://goo.gl/u3B9Gz>>) to highlight strings of words shared between the selected texts. I use the software program 'Info Rapid Search and Replace' (<<http://goo.gl/rHZecj>>) to check matches against a corpus of 134 plays first performed in

<sup>1</sup> I have utilised Martin Wiggins and Catherine Richardson's excellent *British Drama 1533-1642: A Catalogue: Volume III: 1590-1597* (2013) in order to reflect the most likely dates of first performances. I wish to thank Marcus Dahl, Ian Lancashire, Martin Mueller, Lene B. Petersen, Brian Vickers and Richard Proudfoot for their continuing support and critical feedback on this essay.

<sup>2</sup> As for *1 Henry VI* (1592), I align myself with scholars such as Paul J. Vincent and Brian Vickers in the belief that Shakespeare was asked by the Chamberlain's Men to revise a play originally written by Thomas Nashe and (as Vickers contends, and as I now endorse, following years of independent research on Kyd's canon) Thomas Kyd, for Lord Strange's Men. I would suggest that the figures for internal parallels are likely to be higher in revised texts, particularly if the reviser were commissioned to rewrite scenes, as seems to be the case with 4.5 and 4.6 of that play.

<sup>3</sup> Quotations of Shakespeare's works are from the 2005 edition of Wells and Taylor's *Oxford Complete Works*, where the text of *Edward III*, ed. by William Montgomery, was printed for the first time.

London between the decades 1580-1600 (these are old spelling versions of the texts drawn from 'ProQuest'). I also check the rarity of these matches using the databases 'Literature OnLine', or 'LION' (<<http://goo.gl/13rIqV>>), and *Early English Books Online*, or *EEBO* (<<http://goo.gl/Omw41l>>), for variant spellings. In this respect I have attempted to consolidate the approaches of attribution scholars such as Brian Vickers, Marcus Dahl and MacDonald P. Jackson towards verbal parallels. My findings reveal that on the basis of (internal) contiguous word sequences, *2 Henry VI* is closer to Shakespeare's sole-authored works than his early collaborations.

Ian Lancashire observes that collocations 'are the linguistic units we work with most: they fit into working memory and resemble what we store associatively' (2010, 180). Martin Mueller has created a database that records repetitions in early modern drama ('Shakespeare His Contemporaries'), which reveals that 'If we look more closely at shared' tetragrams plus (four plus word sequences, ranging from tetragrams to pentagrams, hexagrams etc.) 'by same-author play pairs, we discover that on average plays by the same author share five dislegomena, and the median is four. Roughly speaking, plays by the same author are likely to share twice as many dislegomena as plays by different authors' (2014).<sup>4</sup>

I propose that an investigation of rare tetragrams repeated by authors or shared by co-authors within single texts could give us an insight into the level and meaning of internal verbal parallels. They provide us with the opportunity to scrutinise function-units (such as determiners, conjunctions and subordinators), and could help to bridge methodologies in attribution studies, such as computational stylistics and collocation analyses. Lene B. Petersen has observed that 'Most, if not all, of Vickers and Dahl's phrases of three or more words' consist of 'function words, which may be the triggering factor in the collocation picked up by the software applied' (2010, 160).

A similar methodology to my own was applied to the works of Cicero by Eric Laughton, who analysed 'subconscious repetitions' and claimed, somewhat presciently, that 'this psychological factor may, with due caution, be invoked to aid in the establishment of a disputed text' (1950, 73-83). Nevertheless, Craig and Kinney contend that 'it would seem perilous to argue from a set of' rare 'parallels alone for authorship', for 'If a given section has no such parallels, does that argue for a different author? How long should a section go without a significant parallel before we suspect a second author? Such questions of segmentation bedevil any method, of course, but weigh especially heavily on a method that relies on rarities' (2009, 61). Perhaps an investigation of recurring internal rare tetragrams in Shakespeare's early

<sup>4</sup> All references to Mueller are to online sources without page numbers. Mueller 2014, <<https://goo.gl/LSoJLy>>, accessed 12 January 2014.

collaborations and sole-authored plays could help to answer such sensible questions.

This investigation is intended to take a step towards differentiating between associative lexical units at the forefront of respective authors' minds, which Lancashire terms a writer's 'connected discourse span' (Lancashire 1999, 753), and separate authorial cognitive processes. Following an examination of my findings for *Titus Andronicus* and *Edward III*, I shall investigate the nature of internal parallels within the non-collaborative Shakespeare plays, *Richard III* (1593) and *Romeo and Juliet* (1595). I selected these plays for collocation analyses on the basis of genre and chronology, for, as Vickers observes: 'It is a basic principle in authorship attribution studies that the practitioner compare like to like' (Vickers 2011, 122). I shall turn to *2 Henry VI* in order to demonstrate how the word sequences I have collected render the play closer to these sole-authored Shakespeare plays.

A search for rare tetragrams shared between scenes attributed to Peele and Shakespeare in *Titus Andronicus* yielded few results, which suggests that Peele and Shakespeare's mental repertoires of verbal formations were quite different, despite the fact that, as Craig and Kinney put it, they 'worked on their joint assignment, writing dialogue for the same characters in the same settings in a shared plot' (2009, 33). I could detect just three n-grams of four or more words shared between the playwrights' portions. Shakespeare therefore (in scenes attributed to him, amounting to 14613 words in total) averages 0.02 matches with his collaborator. Nevertheless, as Vickers puts it, 'mathematics is not the only arbiter of probability' (Vickers 2014, 110). Close reading of the parallels themselves could highlight the differences and similarities between the dramatists' usages of parallel phrases.

The formation 'my first-born son' is employed in similar ways, as Tamora begs Titus to 'spare my first-born son' (*Titus Andronicus*, 1.1.120) and Aaron threatens to kill anyone who 'touches this, my first-born son and heir' (*Titus Andronicus*, 4.2.91). Will Sharpe observes that 'In any given passage we could be witnessing conscious or unconscious imitation of the style of the other writer on the part of the collaborator' (Sharpe 2013, 648). However, these parallel phrases could be regarded as an unavoidable feature of the plot and family relationship in *Titus Andronicus*:

Thrice-noble Titus, spare *my first-born son* (*Titus Andronicus*, 1.1.120)  
That touches this, *my first-born son* and heir (*Titus Andronicus*, 4.2.91)

The second rare parallel, which constitutes a pentagram (five-word sequence), 'from me to the Empress', is employed by Peele when Titus tells Lucius to 'carry from me to the Empress' sons / Presents that I intend to send them both' (*Titus Andronicus*, 4.1.114-115), while Aaron implores Lucius to save his child and 'bear it from me to the Empress' (*Titus Andronicus*, 5.1.54) in Shakespeare's

scene. It seems this formation is play-specific and dependent on dramatis personae. It could therefore be accidental, as opposed to any conscious or unconscious attempt by the authors to homogenise their respective portions:

Shalt carry *from me to the Empress*' sons (*Titus Andronicus*, 4.1.114)  
And bear it *from me to the Empress* (*Titus Andronicus*, 5.1.54)

The third and final rare parallel, 'let it be your', is employed in contextually dissimilar ways and suggests separate authorial cognitive processes. In the line 'Sons, let it be your charge, as it is ours' (*Titus Andronicus*, 2.2.7), Peele repeats a formation he employed in *The Battle of Alcazar*: 'My Lord Zareo, *let it be your charge*' (line 1450). The repetition in Shakespeare's scene, 'Listen, fair madam, *let it be your glory*' (*Titus Andronicus*, 2.3.139), is quite unlike Peele's use of the phrase:

Sons, *let it be your charge*, as it is ours (*Titus Andronicus*, 2.2.7)  
Listen, fair madam, *let it be your glory* (*Titus Andronicus*, 2.3.139)

The evidence seems to consolidate Vickers, Craig and Kinney's divisions of authorship in *Titus Andronicus*, for, in terms of both quality and quantity, the shared parallels signify different authors' associative memories.

I could detect zero rare tetragrams shared between Shakespeare's proposed portions (amounting to 8239 words in total) and the remainder of *Edward III*. It would therefore seem that Shakespeare and his co-authors shared few extended verbal details in early collaborative works. Contemporary evidence, such as Robert Daborne's letters, suggests that collaborators had lengthy conversations prior to initiating their respective writing processes, but that playwriting was a relatively hasty process in order to supply theatrical companies with material.<sup>5</sup> It would thus seem unlikely that co-authors would have the opportunity to scrutinise the verbal details of each other's portions in attempts to achieve textual homogenisation. These results support the theory I have expounded thus far, anticipated by Mueller, that 'you may expect differences between authors to be rather larger than differences within the work of a single author' (Mueller 2008).

Malone noted in 1787 that in Shakespeare's 'genuine plays, he frequently borrows from himself, the same thoughts being found in almost the same expressions in different pieces' (1787, 34). Let us turn to a text that is accepted as 'genuine' Shakespeare, *Richard III*, to see if Shakespeare repeated himself more frequently than he repeated his co-authors as he composed his individual plays. I divided Act 3 from the remainder of *Richard III*, in accordance with the division of *2 Henry VI* by Craig. The results for internal rare parallels

<sup>5</sup> Brian Vickers gives a detailed overview of Daborne's letters to Philip Henslowe (2002, 28-32).

between the portions I divided as ‘Shakespeare’ (Act 3) and ‘Non-Shakespeare’ (the remainder of the play) were manifestly higher than could be found for the collaborative plays I investigated. Shakespeare averages 0.14 repetitions (of phrases found in the remainder of the play) in Act 3, which amounts to 6908 words in total. The first formation that I detected, ‘my Lord of Buckingham’, would seem to be play-specific and the result of a necessity for the title Lord of Buckingham. It tells us little about Shakespeare’s lexicon of phrases:

What doth she say, *my lord of Buckingham?* (*Richard III*, 1.3.293)

Why with some little train, *my lord of Buckingham?* (*Richard III*, Additional Passage E. 2.2.1)

*My lord of Buckingham*, if my weak oratory (*Richard III*, 3.1.37)

O do not swear, *my lord of Buckingham* (*Richard III*, 3.7.210)

The second formation, ‘how fares our loving’ is accompanied by ‘brother’/‘mother’ in the following examples:

Richard of York, *how fares our loving brother?* (*Richard III*, 3.1.96)

Tell me, *how fares our loving mother?* (*Richard III*, 5.5.35)

The four-word sequence ‘No doubt, no doubt’ is employed as a line-opening in both examples uttered by Richard. Although this tetragram features the repetition of a single function-unit (‘no doubt’), one could argue that it tells us something about the ways in which Shakespeare was apt to fill out his lines of blank verse (or perhaps these sequences are a result of stylistic characterisation, as Richard repeats himself impatiently):

*No doubt, no doubt* – and so shall Clarence too (*Richard III*, 1.1.130)

*No doubt, no doubt.* O, ’tis a parlous boy (*Richard III*, 3.1.153)

The pentagram ‘Upon the stroke of four’ follows (as a shared line) Hasting’s interrogative ‘What is’t o’clock?’ (*Richard III*, 3.2.2), as well as Richmond’s ‘How far into the morning is it, lords?’ (*Richard III*, 5.5.188):

*Upon the stroke of four* (*Richard III*, 3.2.2)

*Upon the stroke of four* (*Richard III*, 5.5.189)

We also find the rare tetragram ‘upon the stroke of’ in Buckingham’s line ‘*Upon the stroke of ten*’ (*Richard III*, 4.2.114), which, as in the Hasting’s example, follows the phrase ‘what’s o’clock?’ (*Richard III*, 4.2.114) as a shared line. A concern with time is a device that seems to have been consciously employed by Shakespeare in this play, and might very well constitute deliberate repetition. The tetragram ‘kindred of the Queen’ is employed in relation

to death in both examples, as Gloucester points out (fallaciously) that ‘the guilty kindred of the Queen / Looked pale, when they did hear of Clarence’ death’ (*Richard III*, 2.1.137-138), while Catesby states that ‘The kindred of the Queen, must die’ (*Richard III*, 3.2.47). We might note a semantic cluster shared between the former example and Bolingbroke’s dialogue in *Richard II* (1595): ‘Pale trembling coward, there I throw my gage, / Disclaiming here *the kindred of the king*’ (*Richard II* 1.1.69-70), which also contains the three units ‘kindred’, ‘of the’, with ‘king / queen’.

How that the guilty *kindred of the Queen* (*Richard III*, 2.1.137)  
The *kindred of the Queen*, must die at Pomfret (*Richard III*, 3.2.47)

The formation ‘by the Holy Rood’ provides evidence for common authorship of these scenes, when we consider that the oath (not found elsewhere in Shakespeare) is shared by Stanley and the Duchess of York, and is accompanied by the personal pronouns ‘you’ and ‘thou’ (although we should note that the formation ‘by the Holy’ is fairly common in early modern plays). It therefore seems that this four-word sequence was at the forefront of Shakespeare’s associative memory as he composed *Richard III*:

You may jest on, but *by the Holy Rood* (*Richard III*, 3.2.72)  
No, *by the Holy Rood*, thou know’st it well (*Richard III*, 4.4.166)

We might observe that, as in the example of ‘the Holy Rood’, the phrase ‘tomorrow, or next day’ is not found elsewhere in Shakespeare’s dramatic corpus. Such formations give us an insight into Shakespeare’s recent memory, but not necessarily his long-term memory. These sequences seem to have been ‘repeated unconsciously because of their persistence’ (Poteat 1919, 150) in Shakespeare’s mind as he composed the play:

*Tomorrow, or next day*, they will be here (*Richard III*, 2.4.3)  
To visit him *tomorrow, or next day* (*Richard III*, 3.7.60)

When I investigated *Romeo and Juliet* I discovered that a similar pattern emerged as with the sole-authored *Richard III*. I could detect eight repetitions in Act 3 (6747 words), which gives us a figure of 0.12.

The Nurse delivers the tetragram ‘live to see thee’ in both examples. This formation was perhaps restimulated by the superlative ‘best friend’, in the line ‘the best friend I had’ (*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.2.61), which is akin to ‘the prettiest babe that e’er I nursed’ (*Romeo and Juliet*, 1.3.62).

An I might *live to see thee* married once (*Romeo and Juliet*, 1.3.63)  
That ever I should *live to see thee* dead (*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.2.63)

The next example could have been prompted by the phonetically similar lexical choices 'mad' and 'Mab', for stored units may be manipulated and processed mentally according to both meaning and sound. However, this formation can also be found in *Richard III*: 'O, then I see you will part but with light gifts' (*Richard III*, 3.1.118). The sequence is employed as a line-opening in each example. We might also note the phrasal verb 'see' + 'that', with present tense auxiliary in these lines:

*O, then I see* queen Mab hath been with you (*Romeo and Juliet*, 1.4.53)  
*O, then I see* that madmen have no ears (*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.3.61)

The tetragram 'in her best array' is delivered by Friar Laurence in both examples:

Happiness courts thee *in her best array* (*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.3.141)  
 All *in her best array* bear her to church (*Romeo and Juliet*, 4.4.108)

The formation 'commend me to thy lady' can be found in 3.3 and 2.3, as a pentagram, while the line 'Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress' (*Romeo and Juliet*, 2.3.161) provides a striking heptagram match:

*Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress* (*Romeo and Juliet*, 2.3.161)  
*Commend me to thy lady* (*Romeo and Juliet*, 2.3.204)  
 Go before, *Nurse. Commend me to thy lady,*  
 And bid her hasten all the house to bed (*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.3.154-155)

The tetragram 'be married to this' concerns Paris in both examples, and follows an emphasis on Juliet's being married 'O' Thursday' (*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.4.20). Mueller observes that 'the occurrence of n-gram repetition within a play is strongly motivated by scenic context' (2011):

She shall *be married to this* noble earl' (*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.4.21)  
 On Thursday next *be married to this* county (*Romeo and Juliet*, 4.1.49)

The sequence 'not to be gone' serves a similar purpose in both examples, as Juliet entreats Romeo to remain with her, while Capulet entreats his guests to stay for 'a trifling foolish banquet' (*Romeo and Juliet*, 1.5.121):

Nay, gentlemen, prepare *not to be gone* (*Romeo and Juliet*, 1.5.120)  
 Therefore stay yet. Thou need'st *not to be gone* (*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.5.16)

The final match that I could detect, 'God in heaven bless', similar to the oath 'by the Holy Rood' in *Richard III*, appears to be unique to this play, and

therefore provides strong evidence of a single author's recent memory as he composed his work. Both examples are uttered by the Nurse:

Now *God in heaven bless thee* (*Romeo and Juliet*, 2.3.183)

*God in heaven bless her* (*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.5.169)

These results would seem to support the notion that examinations of internal repetends within Shakespeare's plays can tell us about Shakespeare's individual idiolect and self-repetition in sole-authored texts and the dissimilarities involved in his collaborative ventures. An investigation of Act 3 in relation to the remainder of *2 Henry VI* could therefore contribute to discussions on whether the play is indeed collaborative.

The data that I present below conflicts with the hypothesis that Act 3 of *2 Henry VI* is distinct from other acts. Shakespeare averages 0.13 repetitions in Act 3 (6853 words), which is only slightly lower than the sole-authored *Richard III* and higher than *Romeo and Juliet*. In 1.1, which Craig argues is non-Shakespearean, the Cardinal Beaufort stresses that Gloucester 'is the next of blood / And heir apparent to the crown' (*2 Henry VI*, 1.1.149-150). In Act 3, which Craig gives to Shakespeare, Margaret, similarly to the Cardinal's caution, warns her husband that Humphrey 'is near you in descent, / And, should you fall, he is the next will mount' (*2 Henry VI*, 3.1.21-22). The formation 'he is the next' is employed to serve the same purpose in the Cardinal and Margaret's speeches respectively. The contiguous cluster of words seems to have been restimulated by the similar context of Margaret's caveat, and thus could signify unconscious repetition:

Consider lords, *he is the next* of blood (*2 Henry VI*, 1.1.149)

And, should you fall, *he is the next* will mount (*2 Henry VI*, 3.1.22)

The sequence 'oft have I seen', which cannot be found elsewhere in Shakespeare's dramatic corpus, occurs on three occasions in *2 Henry VI* (all with the exact same metrical template), which would seem to indicate a single author's storehouse of iambic phrases:

*Oft have I seen* the haughty Cardinal (*2 Henry VI*, 1.1.183)

*Oft have I seen* a timely-parted ghost (*2 Henry VI*, 3.2.161)

*Oft have I seen* a hot o'erweening cur (*2 Henry VI*, 5.1.149)

Another word sequence, 'Suffolk and the Cardinal', repeated three times during the course of the play, is less useful for identifying the play as collaborative or wholly by Shakespeare, and is influenced by the dramatis personae (and perhaps plot, for they are linked as villains) of the play:

The pride of *Suffolk and the Cardinal* (2 *Henry VI*, 1.1.201)  
 Yet am I *Suffolk and the Cardinal*'s broker (2 *Henry VI*, 1.2.101)  
 By *Suffolk and the Cardinal* Beaufort's means (2 *Henry VI*, 3.2.124)

However, a striking match occurs in the consecutive ten-word sequence 'Cold news for me for I had hope of France', followed by the discontinuous four-word sequence 'as I' with 'fertile England'. This sequence of words is memorable, and could very well have been deliberately repeated by Shakespeare or a co-author, although we might note that neither *Titus Andronicus* nor *Edward III* contain sequences remotely akin to York's asides:

*Cold news for me – for I had hope of France,*  
 Even as I have of fertile England's soil (2 *Henry VI*, 1.1.237-238)  
*Cold news for me, for I had hope of France,*  
 As firmly as I hope for fertile England (2 *Henry VI*, 3.1.88-89)

We might observe that Duke Humphrey is referred to as 'good' three times in this play. However, a collaborator could also have drawn this association from Holinshed:

With 'God preserve *the good Duke Humphrey!*' (2 *Henry VI*, 1.1.160)  
 That virtuous prince, *the good Duke Humphrey* (2 *Henry VI*, 2.2.74)  
 They say, by him *the good Duke Humphrey* died (2 *Henry VI*, 3.2.250)

The final tetragram 'on a mountain top' is unique to this play. The sequence appears to be the product of the same author's imagination, for Suffolk asserts that 'Well could I curse away a winter's night, / Though standing naked on a mountain top' (2 *Henry VI*, 3.2.339-340), while Warwick states 'This day I'll wear aloft my burgonet, / As on a mountain top the cedar shows / That keeps his leaves in spite of any storm' (2 *Henry VI*, 5.1.202-204). Both passages concern harsh weather on a mountain, which the characters, figuratively speaking, are willing to endure. They could be considered examples of what J.R. Firth has called recurrent 'contexts of situation' (1957, 35). Craig acknowledges that 'Act V has a more mixed pattern' (Craig and Kinney 2009, 69) than other portions he attributes to Shakespeare's co-author/s.

Though standing naked *on a mountain top* (2 *Henry VI*, 3.2.340)  
 As *on a mountain top* the cedar shows (2 *Henry VI*, 5.1.203)

For the sake of comparing 'like to like' (Vickers 2011, 122), I conducted searches for rare tetragrams shared between the third act of *Titus Andronicus* and the remainder of the play, as well as the third act of *Edward III* and the remaining four acts. This test is identical to the tests that I applied to *Richard*

*III*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *2 Henry VI*, and can help us see if there is a difference in the patterns of repetition between the third acts of collaborative and non-collaborative plays, in relation to the remainders of each text. There are three repetitions (giving us an average of 0.09) in Act 3 of *Titus Andronicus*:

Titus Andronicus, *my lord the Emperor* (*Titus Andronicus*, 3.1.150)

Whiles I go tell *my lord the Emperor* (*Titus Andronicus*, 5.2.138)

*My lord the Emperor*, resolve me this (*Titus Andronicus*, 5.3.35)

All of these parallels are shared between scenes attributed to Shakespeare. The third repetition, 'Come, let me see', is spoken by Titus in the lines 'Come, let me see what task I have to do' (*Titus Andronicus*, 3.1.274) and 'Sirrah, hast thou a knife? Come, let me see it' (*Titus Andronicus*, 4.3.107). Both examples are delivered by the eponymous character during his search for 'Revenge's cave' (*Titus Andronicus*, 3.1.269), although it could be argued that such 'formulae fulfil various transitional functional purposes relating to general stage business and plot progression' (Petersen 2010, 99) in early modern texts. Similarly, the one rare tetragram I could detect in the third act of *Edward III*, the formulaic line-opening 'My gracious father and', delivered on both occasions by Prince Edward, in the lines 'My gracious father, and these other lords' (*Edward III*, 1.1.92) and 'My gracious father and ye forward peers' (*Edward III*, 3.3.206), features in scenes that Vickers attributes to Kyd. We should note that the formation 'My gracious father' occurs in Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (1587), where it appears in Lorenzo's line: 'My gracious father, beleeue me, so he doth' (2.14.86). Act 3 of *Edward III* contains 0.02 repetitions of the remainder of the play.

When analysed closely, these rare parallels repeated by Shakespeare and Kyd respectively signify authorial associative groupings, but the overall lower figures are indicative of collaborative plays, as opposed to a single author's linguistic resources employed throughout the texts. There seems to be a disparity of data when we compare the third acts of the collaborative plays *Titus Andronicus* and *Edward III*, which yield three tetragram repetitions and one tetragram respectively, with the sole-authored plays. The third act of *Richard III* contains nine tetragram repetitions and one pentagram. *Romeo and Juliet* yields six tetragram repetitions, one pentagram and one heptagram. *2 Henry VI* yields seven tetragram repetitions, one pentagram and one striking decagram.

It is intriguing that rare tetragrams are shared between Act 3 of *2 Henry VI* and every other act of the play except Act 4, which features Jack Cade. Craig argues that 'certainly' the Cade scenes 'are detachable from the rest of the play' (Craig and Kinney 2009, 70). We might observe, however, that there is only one rare tetragram match with the fourth act of *Richard III*, which has a similar pattern of parallels distributed throughout the play. While the verbal evidence suggests that Shakespeare's hand can be detected not only in

Act 3 but the first, second and fifth acts of *2 Henry VI*, it seems prudent to test Act 4 against the remainder of the play to see if the Cade rebellion does indeed ‘stray beyond the bounds of Shakespearean style in a way quite unlike other early plays we know to be Shakespeare’s’ (Craig and Kinney 2009, 76).

Before I present my findings for Act 4 of *2 Henry VI*, I must add this caveat: tetragrams often serve similar functions in terms of verse structure. I would suggest that Elizabethan dramatists were more likely to repeat four-word sequences in the same prosodic positions, such as formulaic line-openings or line-endings. We are therefore less likely to find iambic phrases repeated in prose sections. This would go some way to explain why (hypothesising that *2 Henry VI* was written wholly by Shakespeare), in my third act tests, there are rare matches with all of the remaining acts except Act 4, which features much prose. Mueller, having tested ‘whether POS n-grams distinguish sharply between prose or verse’ in Shakespeare’s plays, observed that ‘The differences between prose and verse are more striking than other differences. This suggests the rule of thumb that one should always measure prose and verse separately’ (2008). Close analysis of the contextual dissimilarities between Peele and Shakespeare parallels would seem to provide evidence of separate authorial imaginations. It would thus seem that, despite the key differences between prose and verse, such reading-based methods still have a place in modern authorship attribution studies.

I could detect five n-grams of four or more words (with six repetitions in total) shared between Act 4 and the remainder of the play, which gives a figure of 0.09 repetitions. The first match is the name ‘William, de la Pole’, which seems unremarkable, although it is interesting that its one other appearance in Shakespeare’s corpus features in a scene commonly attributed to him in *1 Henry VI*, the Temple Garden scene, in the line ‘Away, away, good *William de la Pole*’ (2.4.80).

French King Charles and *William de la Pole* (*2 Henry VI*, 1.1.42)  
 And *William de la Pole*, first Duke of Suffolk (*2 Henry VI*, 1.2.30)  
 The Duke of Suffolk, *William de la Pole* (*2 Henry VI*, 4.1.46)

We might note that the title, ‘Mortimer, Earl of March’, concludes verse lines in both six-word sequences presented below, as well as in *3 Henry VI*: ‘Thy grandfather, Roger *Mortimer, Earl of March*’ (*3 Henry VI*, 1.1.106).

Who *married Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March* (*2 Henry VI*, 2.2.36)  
 Marry this: *Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March*,  
 Married the Duke of Clarence’ daughter (*2 Henry VI*, 4.2.134-135)

The formulaic line-ending ‘the heart of France’ also features in *3 Henry VI*, in the line ‘His father revelled in *the heart of France*’ (*3 Henry VI*, 2.2.150).

Thy late exploits done in *the heart of France* (*2 Henry VI*, 1.1.194)  
 Will he conduct you through *the heart of France* (*2 Henry VI*, 4.7.191)

The pentagram ‘the reason of these arms’, consisting of the three function-units ‘the reason’, ‘of these’ and ‘arms’, is unique to this play. Buckingham is ordered by the King to ‘go and meet’ York, and ‘ask him what’s the reason of these arms’ (*2 Henry VI*, 4.8.37-38). The line is therefore repeated by Buckingham at the beginning of Act 5, and suggests common authorship of these scenes:

And ask him what’s *the reason of these arms* (*2 Henry VI*, 4.8.38)  
 To know *the reason of these arms* in peace (*2 Henry VI*, 5.1.18)

The last rare tetragram I could detect is the formation ‘to do me good’, which can also be found in Marlowe’s *Edward II* (1592) as ‘They would not stir, were it *to do me good*’ (*Edward II*, 1.4.95).

And will they undertake *to do me good*? (*2 Henry VI*, 1.2.77)  
 was born *to do me good* (*2 Henry VI*, 4.9.10)

Marlowe is Craig’s primary candidate for the authorship of the Cade scenes. *He observes that* ‘The likeness of Marlowe in style and vocabulary’ is ‘strong in IV.iii–ix’, but ‘does not extend to IV.ii’ (Craig and Kinney 2009, 73), in which I have highlighted the six-word sequence ‘Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March / Married’ (*2 Henry VI*, 4.2.134-135).

If we omit 4.2 from the tests, we are given an average of 0.10 repeated phrases between the selected scenes and the remainder of the play. Vickers has criticised Craig’s attribution, for Marlowe ‘used little prose in his sole-authored works’, while the ‘linguistic and dramaturgic means’ employed to keep Cade ‘in his place’ (Vickers 2011, 125) are not found in Marlowe, but are typical of Shakespeare. Mueller notes that ‘Shakespeare shares far more n-grams with Marlowe or Thomas Heywood than with any other writer’, and that ‘In the case of Marlowe, the n-grams involve links between *Edward II* or *The Massacre at Paris* with the three parts of *Henry VI*, *Richard II* and *King John*’ (2011). Mueller’s findings suggest that Shakespeare was indeed prone to ‘imitating Marlowe’s diction and syntactic habits’ (Craig and Kinney 2009, 76), although it is not unreasonable to conjecture that Marlowe could also be indebted to Shakespeare’s early works. Furthermore, Marlowe is a particularly difficult authorial case, given the possibly collaborative and corrupted nature of some of his texts. We might ask ourselves: if Marlowe is the author of most of Act 4, and Shakespeare the author of Act 3 of *2 Henry VI*, is a third dramatist responsible for 4.2 (the largest sample in the play’s fourth act)? Jackson agrees with Vickers that ‘Any findings concerning Marlowe – and

particularly Craig's identification of his hand in some scenes of *1 and 2 Henry VI* – must be tentative' (2014, 46).

It would seem that the overall data I have presented here renders *2 Henry VI* closer to the sole-authored Shakespeare plays than the collaborative works. I would suggest that close-textual analyses of internal verbal parallels could add to our knowledge of authorial associative groupings during composition, as well as the working relationships between co-authors. I would also like to add that although I have tested the third and fourth acts against the remainder of *2 Henry VI*, in accordance with Craig's argument that these portions are detachable or distinct in terms of style, we should be careful in our assumptions of authorial divisions of labour. Attribution studies have demonstrated that collaborating authors did not always divide their labours according to acts. As Richard L. Nochimson has observed, 'out of 162 opportunities there are only two where Henslowe chose words that to me suggest some kind of possibility of reading into Henslowe's language a hint at' dramatists 'dividing the work by acts' (Nochimson 2002, 45). Vickers' divisions of authorship in *Titus Andronicus* and *Edward III* suggest that Shakespeare and his collaborators often worked scene by scene, and that such divisions were often influenced by character, theme and plot. Dividing plays according to act divisions appears to be useful for investigations of internal parallels, but such investigations should be recognised as potential first steps in establishing whether a text is collaborative or not. Closer scrutiny of the portions with high or low quantities of parallels, and examinations of the nature of repeated phrases, would seem to be a sensible progression.

As with any form of linguistic analysis of early modern plays, there are textual complexities involved in this methodology, which should be noted. For example, could recurring function words/units and word sequences be the result of scribal or compositorial interference, as well as the theatrical vernacular of certain acting troupes and/or repertoires?<sup>6</sup> Also, are some of these formulas, as Lene B. Petersen might argue, oral-formulaic rather than author-specific? Some of the word sequences I have listed could very well pertain to oral-transmission influence on the Folio texts, but I would argue that many of them signify distinctly authorial patterns of thought through their contextual similarities and recurring metrical characteristics. These seemingly authorial patterns appear to be more prominent in Shakespeare's sole-authored Folio texts.

<sup>6</sup> I would argue that *The first part of the Contention of the two famous houses of Yorke and Lancaster* (1594) is likely to contain high frequencies of recurring internal parallels, as reporters drew upon formulaic vocabulary from other plays in the repertory, and struggled to recall passages from Shakespeare's 'authentic' text. Internal tetragrams are therefore considerably less useful as authorship markers in such texts, although it would be interesting to examine the relationships between 'memorial' variants and the Folio plays, in terms of internal parallels.

It would be interesting to see if Shakespeare unconsciously repeated himself more or less frequently as he progressed as a playwright, and whether the patterns of self-repetition in his plays distinguish him from his contemporaries.<sup>7</sup> It seems to me that if Elizabethan playwrights were governed by a muse, it was Mnemosyne, the muse of memory. Perhaps the next step in attribution studies would be a similar methodology applied to Shakespeare's whole corpus, or what we might call his 'books of memory' (*2 Henry VI*, 1.1.97).

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<sup>7</sup> For example, I suspect that Peele, whose verse is often repetitive and monotonous (with a heavy reliance on formulaic utterance), was apt to repeat himself more frequently than Shakespeare.

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# Shakespeare and Middleton's Co-Authorship of *Timon of Athens*

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## *Abstract*

The essay focuses on Shakespeare's collaboration with Thomas Middleton on *Timon of Athens* (1605-1606). It provides new evidence concerning the patterns of imagery in the play and argues that these support the authorial divisions established by earlier attribution studies. Beyond the issue of 'who wrote what' are questions about how Shakespeare co-wrote with Middleton. Previous analysis of the play has suggested that *Timon* was co-written consecutively, Shakespeare first, Middleton second. However, it is argued here that a mixture of consecutive and simultaneous co-writing would better explain the play as it stands. In the course of making the case, the essay reasserts the value of attribution evidence to the study of collaboration. Middleton's skill in writing cynical urban scenes for his city comedies is often cited as the reason why he and Shakespeare worked together on *Timon*; and it is argued that Middleton's early pamphlets should also be considered as evidence of his ability to satirise greed, and therefore as a reason why he was valuable to Shakespeare as a collaborator.

*Keywords:* Attribution, Collaboration, Middleton, Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens*

## 1. *Authorship of the Play*

*Timon of Athens* concerns itself with a man who becomes so disappointed by his false friends, so embittered with mankind in general, that he sends himself into exile: 'Timon will to the woods, where he shall find / Th' unkindest beast more kinder than mankind' (Taylor and Lavagnino 2007, 12.35-36). Timon's contempt for the flatterers who used him for his money leads him to seek solitude; his misanthropic view of the world means that he rejects even a genuine offer of friendship from his Steward. It is ironic, then, that *Timon of Athens*, with its protagonist who wants nothing more than to isolate himself, was brought into being through the co-operative efforts of two writers, Shakespeare and Thomas Middleton.



Evidence suggests that Shakespeare and Middleton composed *Timon* around 1605-1606. Since the connections between *Timon* and the work its co-authors were doing in the same period will come into play later in this essay, it is worth dwelling a little on its date of composition here. In his discussion of the play's chronology John Jowett looks to the fact that *Timon* was 'almost certainly' written for the King's Men (2007, 356). The company moved to Blackfriars Theatre in August 1608 and the plays written for them after this point included act divisions so the candles in this indoor venue could be tended; *Timon* has no such divisions. A date prior to 1608 agrees with the verdict reached by MacDonald P. Jackson, whose study compares rare words in the sections of *Timon* attributed to Shakespeare with other Shakespearean texts and proposes that the play was written around 1604-1605 (1979, 155). Linguistic analysis carried out by Gary Taylor pushes the date just slightly later; his colloquialism-in-verse tests put the date of composition for the Shakespearean parts of *Timon* between those of *All's Well that Ends Well* in 1604-1605 and *Macbeth* in 1606 (1987, 128).

The collaborative status of *Timon* was not recognised immediately: it was first published in 1623, as part of the First Folio, without mention of any co-author. The authorship of the play has been discussed for over one hundred and sixty years, a debate summarised only very briefly here.<sup>1</sup> Charles Knight (1849) was the first to propose that Shakespeare co-wrote *Timon* with an unknown contributor. Twenty-five years later, F.G. Fleay (1874) suggested that the co-writer was also the author of *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1606), at the time believed to be by Cyril Tourneur but now widely attributed to Middleton. William Wells (1920) and H. Dugdale Sykes (1924) worked separately using verbal parallels to identify Middleton as Shakespeare's *Timon* co-writer. However, the view that Shakespeare collaborated on *Timon* has not gone unchallenged. E.K. Chambers (1930) argues the play was not co-written but unfinished instead. He raises the possibility that the presence of inconsistencies in *Timon* imply that Shakespeare had been enduring stress or illness when he wrote the play, solo. Building on Chambers' argument, Una Ellis-Fermor (1942) concludes that *Timon* was a rough draft in which one sees Shakespeare (and him alone) in the midst of composing his verse. Years later, the same idea of solo composition was expressed by Giorgio Melchiori, who considered *Timon* an 'experimental' work because it was 'unfinished' (1978, 1063; my translation).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a more comprehensive survey of nineteenth and twentieth century scholarship on *Timon*'s authors see Vickers 2002, 244-290. My thanks go to Willy Maley, Paola Pugliatti and the anonymous reviewers at *JEMS* for their helpful comments and advice on this article.

<sup>2</sup> Melchiori proposed that *Timon* was unfinished 'not in the sense that it was not completed, but in the sense that many of its scenes are just jotted down, and seem to be waiting for revision as regards internal linguistic coordination' (1978, 1063; my translation).

Chambers and Ellis-Fermor's 'unfinished' theory held a lot of traction until the 1970s and the meticulous work of two separate attribution studies by David Lake (1975) and MacDonald P. Jackson (1979). Lake's study agrees with the theory that *Timon* is unfinished, he notes its 'theatrically unviable condition', but rejects outright Ellis-Fermor's view (1942) that this alone can explain inconsistencies in the play's verse style (279). Lake examines linguistic features such as contractions and oaths and concludes that the evidence is 'strong enough to justify a strong suspicion of Middleton's presence' although not adequate to 'resolve the problem of authorship' (285). Jackson's study is less equivocal in its conclusions. Like Lake, Jackson identifies the presence of several Middletonian features in *Timon*: contractions like *h'as*, *h'ad*, *'tas*, *'em*, and others which 'occur uniquely or with unusual frequency for Shakespeare'; higher ratios of particular word forms in certain scenes (*does* and *has* which Middleton prefers to *doth* and *hath*) and oaths like *Faith* and *Push* (1979, 58). For Jackson, the only satisfactory explanation for the presence of these markers in *Timon* is that sections of the play are indeed Middleton's work (63).

Confidence in Middleton as the co-writer of *Timon* was bolstered by Lake and Jackson's evidence-based studies; the play was published under both Shakespeare and Middleton's names in the Oxford *Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (Wells and Taylor 1986, and again in the 2005 edition). In an essay for the *Textual Companion* to the *Complete Works*, Jowett cites the evidence of Sykes, William Wells, Lake, and Jackson in support of this decision (1987, 501). He also summarises the findings of what he calls 'the most detailed and comprehensive study' of *Timon*, R.V. Holdsworth's unpublished doctoral dissertation (1982), which provides large amounts of evidence for Middleton's presence in the play (Jowett 1987, 501). In *The Authorship of Shakespeare's Plays*, Jonathan Hope presents the results of his socio-linguistic analysis of *Timon*; he concludes that one of his tests, the 'auxiliary *do*' test, is in 'broad support' of the notion that *Timon* was co-written by Shakespeare and Middleton (1994, 104). The weight of evidence led Brian Vickers to argue in *Shakespeare: Co-Author* that Shakespeareans who deny Middleton's significant role in *Timon* 'risk forfeiting their scholarly credibility' (2002, 290). Yet more support for Middleton's claim came when *Timon* was published by Oxford in *Thomas Middleton: the Collected Works* (Taylor and Lavagnino 2007).<sup>3</sup>

Of course, lots of the scholarship concerned with proving that Middleton had a hand in *Timon* not only seeks to establish the fact of his involvement but also aims to discern where he made his contribution (Wells 1920; Sykes

<sup>3</sup> Lene B. Petersen notes that the linguistic analysis she carried out on Shakespeare's canon places *Timon* closer to George Chapman than to either Shakespeare or Middleton. She observes that Chapman 'was conceivably in the right place and with the right sort of views to have had a hand in *Timon*' but acknowledges that it is 'perhaps unlikely' that he did so (2010, 182-183).

1924; Lake 1975; Jackson 1979; Holdsworth 1982; Jowett 2004a). In the *Collected Works*, Jowett offers an analysis of *Timon's* authorship based on the wealth of attribution evidence outlined above, including his own earlier findings (2004a, 2; 2007, 356-358). Jowett's experience with *Timon* as well as the breadth and quality of the sources he employs makes his distribution of the scenes between Shakespeare and Middleton highly credible. His attribution of the play can be summarised as follows:

Scene	Authorship
1	Mostly S but with M hand at 38.1-41.1 and 276-86(?)
2	Middleton
3	Shakespeare
4	'Thoroughly collaborative'
5-10	Middleton
11	Mostly M (0.1-35(?) and 104.1-114.1) but with S hand in middle section
12	Shakespeare
13	Mostly S but with M hand at 0.1-29.1 and 30-51
14	Mostly S but with M hand at 66-9 and 459.2 to 538.1
15-19	Shakespeare

Table 1 – Jowett's Attribution of *Timon*

The largest single section of the play attributed to Middleton, Scenes 5 to 9 (almost all of Act 3 in editions with interpolated act divisions), are known as the 'dunning' scenes because they depict Timon's servants visiting his friends to borrow money so Timon can repay his creditors. Even though Timon has been generous to a fault, his friends refuse him the same help. Scene 10 (3.6) in some editions), also attributed to Middleton, is rather incongruous to the action of the play which surrounds it. It focuses on the story of Alcibiades, a Captain in the army who is banished when he offends the senators with his impassioned pleading on behalf of a junior officer. Scene 11 (3.7) moves back to Timon as he arranges a mock banquet to punish those friends who have disappointed him. The distribution of markers would suggest that Middleton wrote most of this scene but that Shakespeare was responsible for Timon's outburst in the middle of it. The large section attributed almost entirely to Shakespeare, Scenes 12-19 (Acts 4 and 5), focuses on Timon's self-imposed exile from Athens and his newfound hatred of mankind.

## 2. Evidence in Support of Attribution: Imagery

One method which has not been attempted by previous attribution studies is that of analysing the patterns of imagery in the play. The aim with this method

is to track examples of imagery, metaphors and similes, in a text and to cross-reference them against the authorial boundaries ascertained by other attribution methodology. The value of this approach lies in the way it allows for links between scenes to be identified. And, as will become clear, the technique builds on existing attribution work as a way to think about how playwrights wrote together.

The first stage with this method involves reading the play in question and noting every metaphorical, or non-literal, use of language. These figures of speech can then be grouped into categories based on the type of image being used in the comparison. In the case of *Timon* these categories were broad initially but narrowed as certain themes recurred often. For instance, the category 'animals' quickly became broken down into types (dogs, wolves, birds) to allow for more specificity. The categories which occurred most frequently were then identified. In the event that any examples had been missed in the manual reading, electronic searches were carried out on the First Folio edition of *Timon* available through *EEBO* and the *Text Creation Partnership*. The search function allows for spelling variations and variant forms (for instance, 'wolf' and 'wolves') to be identified and alternative words were also entered as search terms (so, 'cur' and 'mongrel' as well as 'dog'). Once confident that the lists were complete, the instances of these figures of speech and where in the play they appear were cross-referenced by author, using Jowett's attribution in the *Collected Works* (Wells and Taylor 1986, 883) as a guide.

This might sound a little complicated but the first example should clarify the process. One image used throughout *Timon* is 'dog' ('dogge' in the Folio), which most often appears as a way for one character to insult another and occasionally with the idea of a man transforming into a dog. The Painter says to Apemantus, 'Y'are a Dogge' (Gg2v/1.204) while the Page says to the same character 'Thou was't whelpt a Dogge, and thou shalt famish a Dogges death' (Gg4v/4.83-84).<sup>4</sup> One notable example appears when Timon reveals to his disloyal friends the fake banquet he has prepared for them: 'Vncover Dogges, and lap' (hh1/11.84). The frequency of dog imagery makes sense in this play, having a strong connection to its concern with misanthropy. Timon's followers frequently aim the insult 'dogge' at Apemantus, the play's sole cynic at the outset, as a way to set themselves above him by saying that he is less than man. When Timon insults his false friends as 'Dogges', it implies that they too are subhuman. Once Timon reaches the depths of his hatred of mankind, the hierarchy of man and dog is flipped: Timon tells Alcibiades, 'I am Misanthropos, and hate mankinde, / For thy part, I do wish thou wert a dogge, / That I might loue thee something' (hh2/14.53-55).

<sup>4</sup> The quotes here are taken from the First Folio (1623). The relevant signature from the folio is given, followed by the scene and line reference from the *Collected Works* edition (2007) so as to show where the passage appears relative to the proposed authorship of the play.

The repeated use of 'dog' imagery, then, is a way of emphasising the play's concern with misanthropy but what is of more importance to my purpose is the distribution of this imagery relative to Shakespeare and Middleton's authorship. Here, the evidence overwhelmingly links the use of dog imagery to Shakespeare: of the twenty instances of the word 'dogge' in the Folio edition of the play, eighteen appear in scenes or sections of scenes attributed to Shakespeare. What is more, on the two occasions where the word 'dogge' appears in Middleton's scenes it is used in a different way, not as an insult or in the comparison of man and dog. Scene 2 has Apemantus' Grace with its lines 'Or a Harlot for her weeping, / Or a Dogge that seemes asleeping' (Gg3/2.66-67). In scene 14, Timon aims to show his Steward how little he now cares about people, advising him to 'let the famisht flesh slide from the Bone, / Ere thou releuee the Begger. Giue to dogges / What thou denyest to men' (hh4/14.529-531). The high frequency with which the image appears in the parts of *Timon* attributed to Shakespeare, coupled with the way the word is used in parts attributed to Middleton, leads me to conclude that the dog imagery was of Shakespeare's devising.

Linked to the use of dog imagery in *Timon* are references to wolves, again as a way to indicate distaste for people. 'Wolves' or 'wolf' ('Wolues' or 'Wolfe' in the Folio) is used five times and always by Timon himself. In the second banqueting scene, Timon describes his flattering 'Mouth-Friends' as 'affable Wolues' (hh1/11.88, 94). In scene 12 he shows his disdain for the citizens of Athens when addressing the city wall, saying 'O thou Wall / that girdles in those Wolues' (hh1/12.1-2). It is used again to put down mankind in another example of apostrophe whereby Timon addresses the planet earth as though it were a mother; he argues that she should prefer 'Tygers, Dragons, Wolues, and Beares' to men (hh2v/14.190). In Scene 14 Timon rails against Apemantus saying, 'still thou liu'dst but as a Breakefast to the Wolfe. If thou wert the Wolfe, thy greediness would afflict thee, & oft thou should'st hazard thy life for thy dinner' (hh3/14.335-336). As well as being similar to 'dog' in its use as an insult, 'wolves' is likewise strongly connected to Shakespeare's presence in *Timon*: it occurs only in scenes or parts of scenes attributed to Shakespeare.

On first appearance, metaphors of illness and disease seem to be woven through the whole of *Timon*, employed in scenes attributed to either Shakespeare or Middleton. Disease imagery works well in the play to reflect Timon's disgust with mankind; Timon himself does not use disease-related language until after he has been disappointed by his false friends. However, while language fitting into the broad category of 'disease' is present throughout the play, an examination of the specific lexicon used to create these metaphors reveals that Shakespeare and Middleton take different approaches.

Middleton prefers to use the term 'disease' while Shakespeare's preference tends towards words like 'plague', 'leprosy' and 'infection'. Of the five times

the word 'disease' appears in *Timon*, four are found in scenes or parts of them which have been attributed to Middleton. In Scene 5, Flaminius insults Lucullus for refusing to help Timon by calling him a 'disease of a friend' (Gg5/5.52). In an early part of Scene 13, attributed to Middleton, one of Timon's servants describes 'his disease, of all shunn'd pouerty' (hh1v/13.12-14). The example of 'disease' which appears in a part of the play attributed to Shakespeare occurs when Timon instructs two prostitutes to work amongst the people of Athens and 'giue them diseases' (hh2/14.85). However, with this command Timon is not using disease as a metaphor but rather attempting to organise a very literal revenge.

The examples of illness-orientated language in the Shakespearean sections of *Timon* are even more clear-cut: all fourteen instances of the word 'plague' in *Timon* occur in parts of the play attributed to Shakespeare. It should be noted that not every example of 'plague' necessarily refers to disease: 'the Gods plague thee' (hh2/14.74), for instance, might refer to the more general misfortune wished by Timon on his enemies, with connotations of a Biblical plague. However, on the vast majority of occasions where 'plague' is used, it is surrounded by a vocabulary which makes it clear that it is disease which is under discussion. When Timon's fellow (if that word can be appropriately used here) misanthrope, Apemantus, makes himself scarce to avoid visitors, he says, 'The plague of Company light vpon thee: / I will feare to catch it, and giue way' (hh3/14.354-355). So, while 'plague' could mean various afflictions, 'catch it' in the next line confirms that 'company' is a disease. The word 'infect' and its various derivations are similarly confined to the Shakespearean sections of the play: all eight occasions on which it is used are in scenes or parts of scenes attributed to Shakespeare. As with 'plague', a couple of examples do not refer clearly to disease but most do. Timon's initial rage at his friends' betrayal is expressed in a long speech addressed to Athens' walls, in which he asks: 'Your potent and infectious Feauors, heape / On Athens ripe for stroke / ... Breath, infect breath' (hh1v/12.21-22; 30). Timon wishes nothing but ill on the people of Athens at the same time as he imagines the city as a place ripe with disease. The line 'Breath, infect breath' has obvious connections to illness but might also allude to the speech of Timon's flatterers, whose empty words led him towards financial ruin.

There are some examples of figurative speech crossing the proposed authorial boundaries. However, there seems to be a high likelihood that the plot of the play has influenced the particular imagery which does this (in fact, a major reason for focusing on non-literal language in the first place is because there is less chance that it would arise from the action of the play). There are, for instance, examples of eating or cannibalistic imagery in parts of the play attributed both to Shakespeare and to Middleton. Such imagery appears in the opening scene in which Apemantus and Timon argue:

*Apemantus.* No: I eate not Lords.

*Timon.* And thou should'st, thoud'st anger Ladies.

*Apemantus.* O they eat Lords; So they come by great bellies. (Gg2v/1.208-211)

This part of Scene 1 has been attributed to Shakespeare; it contains his preferred form 'O' rather than Middleton's favoured 'Oh', a difference first identified by Jackson (1979, 215). There are some parallels to be found between this extract and a scene credited to Middleton. In this scene, Apemantus bemoans the way in which so many people take advantage of Timon's generosity, saying 'It greueus me to see so many dip there meate in one mans blood' (Gg3/2.40-41). Both these passages employ cannibalistic imagery to evoke a sense of people taking advantage of others: the first has a sexual undertone with women said to consume men sexually and the second implies that those who would drain Timon's wealth by feasting at his table might as well be eating the man himself. The coincidence of these examples is somewhat diminished when we remember that two of the key scenes in *Timon* involve banquets: an initial feast which demonstrates Timon's largesse towards his friends and then a second, mock, feast in which Timon takes revenge on those friends for their disloyalty. Given the significance of these feast scenes, it seems unsurprising that eating imagery occurs in scenes by both authors. While these examples do cross the Shakespeare-Middleton divisions of the play, the likelihood that such imagery would have been inspired by the action of the scenes means that this example does not contradict the authorial boundaries indicated by earlier attribution work.

It is important to be clear that the words and images under discussion here are not indicative of one or other author's presence by themselves. In order for the examples to be used as evidence of Shakespeare's presence, one would have to rule out the possibility that Middleton could have created the imagery. This involves a process called 'negative testing' whereby Middleton's work is searched for similar examples of the images. In this case, the testing shows that Middleton's characters in other plays compare people to dogs occasionally and that the trope of infection does appear in his work elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> Since it is not possible to rule out Middleton as the author of these metaphors by reference to his other works, the metaphorical language in *Timon* is useful as evidence of authorship only when considered alongside divisions established by other forms of attribution. As Harold Love observes, 'wording in a collaborative work belongs to no one unless the division of labour has

<sup>5</sup> There are not many examples of 'dog' as an insult in Middleton but it does appear, for instance, in *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* when Allwit describes two Promoters, a type of professional informant, as 'pricking up their ears / And snuffling up their noses, like rich men's dogs / When the first course goes in' (2.2.57-59). In terms of illness, Middleton's *The Phoenix* (1603) has 'I cannot otherwise think but there are infectious dealings in most offices' (1.110-111).

been conclusively demarcated' (2002, 90-91). In other words, the dog, wolf, plague and leprosy imagery in *Timon* are not Shakespearean because they cannot be Middletonian, they are Shakespearean because they appear in only his parts of the play. What is revealing is not the particular word or image itself but rather its recurrence in patterns which coincide precisely with the authorship divisions previously established in *Timon*. Were the images to cross the established authorial boundaries, it would raise questions for further investigation: is the attribution correct? Did one of the authors redraft the whole play? Did Middleton and Shakespeare discuss metaphors in advance? Patterns of imagery can work to confirm or challenge the conclusions of other attribution work, but in the case of *Timon*, they support strongly the authorial divisions proposed by Jowett.

### 3. *How Did Shakespeare and Middleton Co-Write?*

The goal of understanding which author was responsible for which parts of a collaborative play has been criticised. In his oft-quoted treatment of co-written Renaissance drama, *Textual Intercourse* (1997), Jeffrey Masten argues that attributionists' pursuit of 'who wrote what' misrepresents collaborative writing by 'disintegrating' a co-written play into acts, scenes, passages and words before parcelling these off to authors. For Masten, this approach is not useful because co-written texts are more than the sum of their parts, or as he puts it, 'two heads are different than one' (19). Other scholars too believe that attribution involves erroneously mapping a model of individual authorship onto co-written plays by assuming that they are nothing more than Playwright A's contribution plus Playwright B's contribution (Hutchings and Bromham 2008, 34-35; Hoenselaars 2012, 113). I agree with the concept that two or more writers in collaboration produce work different from that which they would have created separately. However, it does not necessarily follow from this that co-writing involves the total effacement of every aspect of a writer's individual style. This is particularly true considering that many of a writer's personal tics (like using a particular form of an oath or contraction) are almost certainly unconscious.

Not only is it possible to trace an individual author's presence in a collaborative text, it is also worthwhile. The true value of attribution evidence lies not in its utility for 'disintegrating' a text but in its power to provide clues as to how that text was written. In the case of *Timon* this approach is particularly interesting because the play was very likely printed from an authorial rough draft; it stands, therefore, as a textual witness to an early stage of joint composition. Identifying which parts are by Shakespeare and which are by Middleton is a step towards understanding their co-writing process. It is with this mind that the rest of this essay will focus on how Shakespeare and Middleton might have co-written *Timon* and why they did so. Critics of

attribution scholarship are correct when they say that the methods have the potential to exacerbate misunderstandings of collaborative writing by reducing it to its constituent parts. However, by using attribution evidence to discuss how writers collaborated, it is possible for a path to be negotiated between the text as a collaborative whole on the one hand and the role individual writers played in its creation on the other.

In his essay 'The Pattern of Collaboration in *Timon of Athens*', John Jowett uses attribution evidence to contend that Shakespeare drafted his parts of *Timon* first, with Middleton making his contribution soon afterwards (2004b, 194-202). Shakespeare is named as the initial drafter because of his seniority and his share in the King's Men, the acting company for whom *Timon* was in all likelihood written. Another factor is the influence of Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* (1579) on *Timon* since it is also a source for *Julius Caesar* (1599), *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1606) and *Coriolanus* (1608) (Jowett 2004b, 202). In raising the possibility that Middleton wrote his parts after Shakespeare, Jowett does not aim to imply that he was an adaptor or reviser of *Timon*, as some earlier scholars have proposed (Fleay 1874; Sykes 1924). Instead, Middleton's involvement is portrayed in this scenario as an act of collaboration planned from the outset.

Jowett's theory of what I will call 'consecutive collaboration' pays particular attention to the scenes of *Timon* which show signs of both Shakespeare and Middleton's presence: Scenes 1, 4, 11, 13 and 14.<sup>6</sup> His argument is that in most scenes of mixed authorship, 'Shakespeare supplied the core and Middleton added passages to it' (2004b, 202). For instance, the Middleton markers at the beginning and end of Scene 1 seem as though they have been added to an existing Shakespeare scene (Jowett 2004b, 185-189). Or, in the mock banquet scene (Scene 11) it is possible that Shakespeare supplied Timon's outburst which forms the centrepiece, with Middleton then writing the rest of the scene around it (Jowett 2004b, 195). The most intriguing pattern of co-authorship appears in Scene 4, in which Timon's creditors begin to demand repayment and he learns about the extent of his debt. The scene seems to have been written mainly by Shakespeare but there are signs of Middleton's presence throughout: his markers are intermixed with Shakespeare's at lines 4-115 and appear in a self-contained section at lines 116-160 (Jowett 2004b, 194). In an explanation he describes as 'conjectural', Jowett posits that Shakespeare wrote the scene originally, after which time it was transcribed by Middleton who made changes as he went (2004b, 194). Jowett is correct to pick this scene out as requiring special

<sup>6</sup> Jowett's analysis in his essay refers to act and scene divisions but for the sake of consistency the scene numbers have been changed to those he supplies in the *Collected Works* (Taylor and Lavagnino 2007). These Scenes are given as 1.1, 2.2, 3.7, 4.2, 4.3.

attention because the mixture of markers is unlike anything seen elsewhere in the play. His analysis of the pattern of collaboration in *Timon* provides a sensible explanation of the scenes in which both Shakespeare and Middleton's markers appear. It also presents an opportunity to think about the act of collaboration in a pleasingly tangible way: an incomplete manuscript passed from one author to another; Middleton's hand filling in the deliberate gaps left by his co-writer but taking the time to copy one scene out in full so he could make more intricate changes.

However, there is one aspect of the *Timon* text which does not sit comfortably with this version of events: its inconsistencies. Shakespeare and Middleton preferred different spellings for some characters' names: Shakespeare used 'Apemantus' (abbreviated as 'Ape' in the Folio) and 'Ventidius' to Middleton's 'Apermantus' (abbreviated as 'Aper') and 'Ventigius' (Jackson 1979, 231). In his work on the printing of the First Folio, Charlton Hinman (1963) demonstrated that *Timon* was printed by one compositor, thus ruling out the possibility that the discrepancies in spelling were introduced by the typesetting process. Another inconsistency is the value of a 'talent', the currency used in the play. In Shakespeare's sections of the play, the talent is given a significant value while in Middleton's sections it seems to be worth much less (Jackson 1979, 214). In Scene 1 (mostly by Shakespeare), a messenger tells Timon that Ventidius is in prison for a debt of 'five talents' and an Old Man explains that his daughter's dowry of 'three talents' means he is unwilling to let her marry Timon's servant (1.97; 145). However, when in Scene 6 (by Middleton) Timon's servant requests money from his friends, the amount under discussion is 'fifty-five hundred talents' (6.38). Such inconsistencies are not surprising in a rough draft of a co-written play but they do imply that Middleton was not fully aware of the way in which Shakespeare had spelt certain character's names or the value he had ascribed to a talent. This could imply a scenario whereby Middleton wrote at least some parts of *Timon* before he received Shakespeare's scenes. What is more, had Middleton read Shakespeare's sections before writing his own, it is possible we would see the movement of metaphors and imagery across authorial boundaries. This might have happened deliberately, with Middleton striving for a unity of imagery, or subconsciously as he was influenced by what had already been written.

Jowett's claim that Shakespeare wrote first, followed by Middleton is convincing for the scenes of mixed authorship in *Timon* but less so elsewhere, given the play's inconsistencies. These lead me to wonder if there were not two different methods of co-writing at work in *Timon*. It is possible that Shakespeare and Middleton began by working simultaneously then, as time went on, Shakespeare could have passed his completed sections on to Middleton, who wrote around his work in certain scenes. Simultaneous co-writing of the sort I am proposing for the individually written scenes would

have been enabled by a 'plot' or 'plot scenario'.<sup>7</sup> Tiffany Stern has provided evidence which shows that plot scenarios were documents which, despite some differences, shared key common elements such as a list of characters and a plan of how the action would be divided between scenes (2009, 8-35).<sup>8</sup> Her examination of these contemporary sources explains how the use of a 'plot-scenario' composed ahead of time would have given writers a way to negotiate co-writing a play. One such document seems to be the subject of a letter written by the dramatist John Day about the play *The Conquest of the West Indies* (1601, lost). Day makes a request of his co-writers: 'I have occasion to be absent about the plot of the Iyndes therfre pray delyver it to will hauton' (Greg 1904-1908, II, 57). The letter implies that even though Day could not be present for the construction of the plot, an act presumably carried out by the play's co-writers William Haughton and Wentworth Smith, he expected a copy of it to be passed on to him. The plot, then, was a document, a copy of which would be held by each co-writer (Stern 2009, 23). It is plausible that Shakespeare and Middleton began work on *Timon* simultaneously using, like their contemporaries, a plot-scenario to guide their work. The value of a talent would most likely not have been discussed beforehand and the discrepancy in the spelling of names could be explained easily by mistakes made in the copying out of the character list, in which the names would have appeared only once.

#### 4. *Why did Shakespeare and Middleton Co-write?*

If Shakespeare and Middleton used a plot-scenario to enable some simultaneous writing, then it may have helped them accelerate the production of *Timon*. Another letter, this time from the dramatist Robert Daborne to the theatre impresario Philip Henslowe, supports the idea that playwrights used co-writing in this way. Daborne advises that he has 'given Cyrill Tourneur an act of the Arreignment of London to write that we may have that ... ready' (Greg 1904-1908, II, 75). In his description Daborne shows himself to be using co-writing as a means to finish his play more quickly. Working swiftly was advantageous to playwrights because it meant they would get paid (either for the play in full or a final instalment) and could move on to their next piece. However, while the notion of earning money as soon as possible might

<sup>7</sup> For further discussion of plot-scenarios, including the distinctions between them, other kinds of theatrical plots, and the *scenari* of *commedia dell'arte* see Pugliatti 2012, 117-136.

<sup>8</sup> The plots Stern examines are those of Ben Jonson's *Mortimer* (which found its way into the 1641 edition of his *Works*), an unpublished manuscript plot of an English tragedy by the amateur playwright Sir Edward Dering, and a plot to *Paradise Lost*, a mystery play abandoned by John Milton.

satisfy as an explanation for co-writing in general, it is insufficient as a way to explain specific combinations of writers: why Shakespeare and Middleton?

Shakespeare and Middleton themselves were most likely responsible for the decision to work with one another. As Grace Ioppolo's comprehensive survey of documents from the period has led her to conclude, 'dramatists seem to have chosen their own collaborators rather than accepting those forced on them by Henslowe or other entrepreneurs' (2006, 32). Daborne's letter to Henslowe (quoted above) emphasises this point: the entrepreneur was not informed about the playwright's decision to give an act of the play to Tourneur until after the event. In the case of Shakespeare and Middleton, the argument that a dramatist would not have had co-writers forced upon him is all the more compelling. Shakespeare's role as a sharer in the King's Men would have given him the power to partake in the management decisions of the company (Gurr 2004, 87-89). Middleton, on the other hand, was not tied at all to any particular company. By 1605 he had already worked for the Lord Admiral's Men, the Children of Paul's and the King's Men and he would go on to work for others. These two, the sharer and the freelancer, were as likely as any two playwrights to have had a say in their writing partners.

Shakespeare was far more experienced than Middleton when they co-wrote *Timon* in 1605-1606; he had been working as a dramatist for around sixteen years and had written more than thirty plays. By contrast, Middleton was very near the beginning of his professional life. The earliest record of his being involved with the acting companies comes from February 1601 when he was described as being 'in London, daily accompanying the players' (Taylor 2007, 35).<sup>9</sup> Middleton likely began writing for the theatre in 1602 when, along with Munday, Drayton, Dekker and Webster, he worked on the lost play *Caesar's Fall* for the Admiral's Men.<sup>10</sup> Given this difference in their experience, one possibility worth exploring is that Shakespeare co-wrote with Middleton because he wanted to train the more junior playwright.

The idea of co-writing as a teaching process is aired in the Prologue to Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (1606). Jonson implies there was a hierarchy amongst those writing plays, claiming that he wrote his play 'without a coadjutor, / Novice, journeyman, or tutor' (16-17). Novice and tutor are fairly clear categories: the former would have been an inexperienced writer, 'a kind of apprentice' in Stanley Wells' words, while the latter was 'a master craftsman guiding a novice' (2006, 26). The definition of 'journeyman' is more contentious: according

<sup>9</sup> This reference to Middleton in London comes from the testimony of Anthony Snode, given in a family lawsuit. The phrase provided the title for *Accompanying the Players: Essays Celebrating Thomas Middleton, 1580-1980* (Friedenreich 1983).

<sup>10</sup> Henslowe's diary notes: 'Lent unto the company the 22 of ma[y]1602 to geve unto antoney monday & mihell drayton webester & the Rest [interlined: mydelton] in earneste of a Boocke called sesers ffalle the some of v<sup>li</sup> (Greg 1904-1908, I, 166).

to Ioppolo, they are ‘writers who are newly qualified having finished their apprenticeship’ but Wells perceives them as ‘hack[s] brought in perhaps to supply a comic subplot’ (2006, 32; 2006, 26). Jonson’s Prologue itself does not support such a negative reading of the term; the word ‘hack’ is pejorative in a way that ‘journeyman’ is not because it lacks the connotation of being trained in a particular trade. Ioppolo’s definition of ‘newly qualified’ writers therefore seems more fitting here, although Wells’ idea of them being ‘brought in’ could be usefully added since a journeyman worked as a hired servant in his trade.

The term ‘co-adjutors’ is more problematic still: Ioppolo goes with ‘helpers or assistant writers’ but Wells says a coadjutor was ‘an equal collaborator’. While ‘adjutor’ does indeed mean a ‘helper’ or ‘assistant’, the prefix ‘co-’ suggests that it refers to work which is joint or shared (which Wells acknowledges). However, Jonson’s list may provide a clue to the meaning of ‘co-adjutor’ in the way that it is ordered. The word’s position at the end of its own line separates it from the rest of the list; the comma afterwards and the rhyme with ‘tutor’ also force a pause. In light of this, ‘co-adjutor’ could be read instead as a general term for a co-writer, which is to say anyone who assists with writing regardless of their status. The three roles given on the following line would then refer to three specific types of co-writing relationship. This would mean that the list moves in an orderly way from the least to the most experienced co-writers (novice, journeyman, tutor) rather than jumping from ‘assistant’ (or ‘equal collaborator’) in the first line to the surely most junior category of ‘novice’ in the next.

With their different levels of experience, it might seem as though Shakespeare and Middleton would slot easily into the roles of ‘tutor’ and ‘novice’, but those parts are not entirely fitting. The fact that Shakespeare had been a playwright for much longer only tells us so much. Worth considering are the types of writing in which these dramatists had experience. In the period immediately preceding the *Timon* collaboration, Middleton had written five city comedies: *The Phoenix* (1603), *The Honest Whore* (1604) with Thomas Dekker, *Michaelmas Term* (1604), *A Trick to Catch the Old One* (1605) and *A Mad World, My Masters* (1605). The many parallels between these plays and the dunning scenes in *Timon* hint that the younger playwright brought his comedic experience to the table. William Wells, who was the first to identify Middleton as Shakespeare’s co-author, notes several of these parallels in his article on *Timon*’s authorship (1920, 267). Wells notes Middleton’s frequent use of the word ‘occasion’ and unexpected verbs when he talks about money in *Mad World* and *Michaelmas Term*, and observes that these appear also in *Timon* (1920, 267). He provides several examples, such as, ‘Let them both rest till another occasion ... go to Master Quomodo, the draper, and will him to furnish me instantly’ (*Michaelmas Term*, 2.1.96-99; emphasis is Wells’, as with the examples to follow), and ‘I would we could rather pleasure you otherwise’ (*Michaelmas Term*, 3.4.221-222). He compares these instances to

examples from *Timon*: 'I come to entreat your honour to *supply*, who, having great and *instant occasion* to use fifty talents, hath sent to your lordship to *furnish* him' (*Timon*, 4.16-18), and 'I count it one of my greatest afflictions, say, that I cannot *pleasure* such an honourable gentleman' (*Timon*, 6.55-57). Wells gives these examples as evidence of Middleton's presence in *Timon* but they also serve to draw attention to where the writer's skills and interests lay at the point he came to work on that play. Further, several other scholars have observed connections between Middleton's city comedies and *Timon*. Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith note *Timon*'s urban setting, its use of character types found in city comedies (such as false friends) and the lack of context provided for the character of Timon (for instance, we are told nothing of his family or profession). Maguire and Smith argue the dramaturgical parallels between Middleton's *A Mad World* and *Timon* mean that the 'initiative' for the latter play would be 'at least as logical' from him as it is from Shakespeare (2012, 190). John Jowett and Stanley Wells connect *Timon*'s cynical, satirical edge to Middleton's previous writing of city comedies (2004b, 203; 2006, 184) while James Bednarz argues that Middleton's experience in this area allowed him to impart 'a contemporary urgency' to the otherwise classical *Timon* by transporting the worries of London life to Athens (2011, 212). Accordingly, it may be the case that rather than co-writing with Middleton to train him, Shakespeare worked with the younger writer to benefit from his experience in a particular style of writing. After all, even though Shakespeare was in a great many respects Middleton's senior, he had no experience in the city comedy genre.

It is very likely that Middleton's value as a collaborator on *Timon* was connected to his familiarity with the city comedy genre but it would be a mistake to focus on only his dramatic experience. In 1603-1604, the playhouse closures occasioned by the death of Elizabeth I and an outbreak of the plague interrupted Middleton's theatrical career. During the shutdown Middleton wrote four pamphlets: two with Thomas Dekker, *News from Gravesend: Sent to Nobody* (1603) and *The Meeting of Gallants at an Ordinary* (1604a), and two on his own, *Father Hubbard's Tales* (1604a) and *The Black Book* (1604b). It is unfortunate that the pamphlets' connections to *Timon* have been largely overlooked, particularly since in 1605-1606, they formed a fairly significant proportion of Middleton's output and his experience as a writer. Like his city comedies, Middleton's pamphlets share many tonal and thematic similarities with *Timon*; they tend towards cynicism and convey disdain towards money lenders. The most immediate link is a parallel which draws on a marker identified by William Wells (1920): in *The Black Book* Middleton uses the phrase 'she was *furnished* of the money for a twelvemonth, but upon large security and most tragical usury' (272-273; emphasis added). Beyond the verbal similarity in this description, Middleton's pamphlets are full of a concern with debt and greed which would have served him well in *Timon*'s

dunning scenes. *The Black Book* describes a usurer whose fire remains unlit even though the Thames 'was half frozen with the bitterness of the season'; the moneylender's customer wonders why 'a usurer should burn so little here, and so much in hell?' (277; 283-284). *Father Hubbard's Tales* tells two stories: one is of a ploughman who can only look on helplessly as the new heir to the land he works sells it off to buy clothes and play dice; the other concerns a soldier who returns home injured to be met only with 'frost-bitten Charity' (1015). The profligacy of the young heir and the lack of kindness shown to the soldier would both seem at home in *Timon*. Even Middleton's sections of *News from Gravesend* and *The Meeting of Gallants*, pamphlets whose main focus is the plague, use usury metaphors to depict the spread of the disease. In *The Meeting of Gallants* the personified figure of Pestilence describes how she infects a usurer:

When I have changed  
 Their gold into dead tokens ...  
 They have left counting coin, to count their flesh,  
 And sum up their last usury on their breasts. (78-83)

The usurers 'count' their flesh as they once counted coins; perhaps they are counting each plague sore or perhaps they are taking account of their flesh, recognising the transience of both their bodies and their wealth in contrast to the spiritual aspects of life which they have neglected. The next image builds upon this when the usurers 'sum up their last usury on their breasts'; their bodies have become account sheets on which sins can be tallied. These few excerpts from Middleton's early pamphlets indicate that the connections between them and Middleton's role in *Timon* is an area deserving of further investigation.

### 5. Conclusion

The examples given here speak to the idea that, although Middleton was less experienced than Shakespeare when they collaborated on *Timon*, he was very well equipped to write the scenes focused on debt collection. Importantly, Middleton's experience in this respect came not only from his dramatic work but also his pamphlets. To return to Jonson's term, when it came to the dunning scenes Middleton was far from a 'novice'. Middleton's familiarity with plays and pamphlets on this topic is a key reason to think he wrote some scenes of *Timon* without reading Shakespeare's scenes first. Middleton would have needed no help from the elder playwright's work when it came to writing about matters of debt, dunning, and greed.

A process of co-writing which combined simultaneous and consecutive stints would also explain *Timon*'s mixture of Shakespeare-only, Middleton-only, and Shakespeare-Middleton scenes. This approach would have made

use of Middleton's experience as a writer of debt whilst allowing the play to benefit from Shakespeare's greater experience elsewhere, with him taking the lead role in the scenes where both writers were to have a hand. Although positing this potential (and it can only ever be potential) scenario has involved using attribution evidence, both existing and my own, the aim has not been to 'disintegrate' *Timon*. Far from undermining the play's collaborative status, attribution evidence has been used to highlight it and celebrate it, even, by shedding light on the ways two individual writers could bring their own skills to bear on a shared project.

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‘ready apparelled to begyn the play’:  
Collaboration, Text and Authorship  
in Shakespeare’s Theatre  
and on the Stage of the *Commedia dell’Arte*

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*Abstract*

Comparative examinations of the *Commedia dell’Arte* and early modern English theatre (and Shakespeare in particular) have been directed mainly to the study of texts. These studies have argued convincingly that scripted and non-scripted comedies of the Italian stage and those of early modern English theatre developed similar themes, characters and conventions, constituting – in the words of Louise George Clubb – ‘an international movement of playmaking recognizable as Renaissance Drama’. Less attention has been devoted to a study of the material organizational side of these (different but similar) theatrical enterprises. The article is a first attempt to consider, in a comparative perspective, what in both contexts happened ‘behind the scene’: in other words, how – in some cases similarly, in others differently – players and other professional figures collaborated in preparing the staging of plays.

*Keywords:* Collaborative Authorship, English Theatre, Italian Theatre, Staging Practice

1. *Introduction*

Kathleen Lea was the first to suggest competently a comparison between the Italian *Commedia dell’Arte* and Shakespearean drama (1934). Her study was followed, years later, by an important book by Allardyce Nicoll (1963) and by other works, produced mainly in the field of Anglo-American scholarship.<sup>1</sup> These works discussed mainly the influence of the Italian *commedia* on Shakespeare, both in their fully scripted version (the so-called *commedia*

<sup>1</sup> Clubb 1989, 2007 and 2010; Andrews 1993 and 2014; Grewar 1993; Henke 2002; Katritzky 2006; Henke and Nicholson 2008 and 2014 to name only a few. I wish to thank Bill Leahy and Mirella Schino for reading an early version of this article and for suggesting strategies and reconsideration of certain issues.



*erudite*) and in the abbreviated version of *scenari* or *canovacci* that were the basis of the *improvvisa*. Their main concern, therefore, was textual in a broad sense: those elements that Clubb calls ‘theatergrams’, or ‘reshuffleable pieces’ which ‘included types of characters, of relationships between and among characters, of actions and speeches, and of thematic design’ (2010, 4).<sup>2</sup>

While its influence on plays has been convincingly supported, much less attention has been devoted to a comparative study of the material organizational side of these (different but similar) theatrical enterprises – to the way in which the fully scripted English dramaturgy and the stenographic outlines of *Commedia dell’Arte* scenarios were prepared for the stage.

Work by theatre historians has acquainted us with the distribution of tasks among the personnel that contributed to the staging of plays in the Elizabethan-Jacobean playhouses. Important reference works on these issues are, to name only a few, the four volumes of Chambers’ *The Elizabethan Stage* (1923), the critical editions of Henslowe’s *Papers* and *Diary* (Greg 1907; Foakes and Rickert 1961), the seminal books by G.E. Bentley (1971, 1984), the many contributions by Andrew Gurr (1980, 1996, 2004; Gurr and Ichikawa 2000) as well as a number of articles on more specific themes. Recently, attention has been devoted to rehearsal (Stern 2000), the distribution of parts to players (Palfrey and Stern 2007), or the ways in which the whole process was fragmented and collaboratively realized (Stern 2009). But in the case of the Elizabethan-Jacobean theatre, we have evidence on which to rely – not only Henslowe’s papers, but also the plays themselves. Indeed, in the chapter entitled ‘Staging in the Theatre’, Chambers notes that to reconstruct ‘the structural resources which were at the Elizabethan manager’s disposal for the accomplishment of his task’, he mainly relied on ‘the numerous indications in dialogue and stage-directions’ (1923, III, 70-71).

When we search for similar evidence as regards the preparatory steps that led to the staging of *Commedia dell’Arte* scenarios, we find an almost complete lack of documents. This is surprising, since the peculiar trait of the *improvvisa* was precisely the way in which comedies were staged. We may rely on the treatise Andrea Perrucci wrote in 1699, but Perrucci was a late witness; and the only direct documents we possess, the many letters from the *comici* themselves, nearly all of which are addressed to their noble protectors or to their protectors’ secretaries, contain almost exclusively complaints about financial or logistical difficulties or the private troubles disturbing the harmony of the companies. The few hints at their material organization and task division concern the fact that the box office was manned in turn by one of the players,<sup>3</sup> that certain players were charged with props and costume

<sup>2</sup> Clubb developed the concept of ‘theatergram’ for the first time in her 1989 book.

<sup>3</sup> There is a story about a player, Battistino, who was manning the box office while his company, the Gelosi, was performing in Paris. A gentleman, whom Battistino asked to pay

transportation, or that others were sent as ambassadors to the courts where their services were required in order to hear their employers' requests.<sup>4</sup> All we can glean from more than one thousand surviving *scenari* is a certain *ratio* of entrances and exits, as well as the positioning of the *zanni*'s comic interludes (usually announced by the formula 'X fa lazzi', which means 'makes jokes').

It is beyond doubt that, while in both cases we are talking about exceptionally successful commercial enterprises, the Elizabethan-Jacobean theatrical organization was incomparably more complex and professional than that of the Italian *comici*, much more 'domestic' and almost wholly internal to the group. This consideration allows us to outline an initial basic difference. While, in the case of English players, the authorship, so to speak, of staged plays was fragmented and distributed among a number of professional figures of which players were one of the components, in the case of the Italian *comici* the whole process seems to have been their exclusive creation. This meant a heavier weight on their shoulders, but also a closer control of the whole process and therefore a more direct authorial responsibility.

The aim of this article is to consider, in a comparative perspective, the practical steps which led to the realization of the two perfect machines that constituted the most innovative manifestations of European Renaissance theatre; what, in both cases, happened 'behind the scene' in terms of preparation and collaborative practices, from signing contracts, to the players' lives as communities sharing professional and personal interests, to the text readings and rehearsals that constituted the actual preparation of plays for the stage, to – finally – the side activity players performed, in both cases, to redeem their ill-reputed practice by trying to ascend the higher spheres of poetry and literariness.

A methodological premise appears necessary. What, in comparative treatments of the two phenomena as regards texts and themes, has been discussed in a perspective of influence, of kinship, or, at least, of 'resources in common' (the expression is in the title of Andrews 2014) is here meant as a comparison between means and methods employed in the two different contexts to reach the final aim of performing on a stage or in a room. The comparison, based on the few relevant documents we possess, shows similarities and differences; and it may help to initiate a debate on models of collaborative authorship as regards the activity of preparing (scripted as well non-scripted) texts for performance.

for his ticket, beat him and said, 'I paid you with the money you deserve' (quoted by Schino in Taviani and Schino 2007, 280-281).

<sup>4</sup> In a letter dated 28 August 1629, Pier Maria Cecchini informs his patron, Ferdinando Gonzaga, that a *comico* named Gallotta had just returned from the French court where he had prepared his company's tour (Ferrone *et al.* 1993, I, 286).

## 2. *Contracts and Agreements*

On Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 1545, in Padua, eight men went before a notary. They desired to establish 'una fraternal compagnia' (a brotherly company) that should last 'in amor fraternal' (in brotherly love) between Easter 1545 and Carnival 1546 'without hate, rancour and dissolution'. They agreed to 'lovingly observe, as is good custom between good and faithful companions, all the following articles, under pain of losing the moneys disbursed'.<sup>5</sup>

Their names are 'ser Maphio ditto Zanini da Padova, Vincentio da Venetia, Francesco de la lira, Hieronimo da s. Luca, Zuandomenego detto Rizo, Zuane da Treviso, Thofano de Bastian, et Francesco Moschini'. Their agreement implied a bond of obedience to Maphio, who was acknowledged as the *capocomico* of the *compagnia*: the signatories committed themselves 'to do all he would command' as concerned 'the performing of *his comedies* in all places where they will be' (Schino in Taviani and Schino 2007, 184; my emphasis). Obedience was due to Maphio also as regarded 'the order of performing' (184); as F. Marotti explains, 'the distribution of roles, but also entrances and exits, that is, the whole assembling of the scenic actions' was 'the *capocomico*'s responsibility' (in Marotti and Romei, eds, 1994, xxvii). They also agreed that if one of them got sick, he would be helped with the money earned in common; that all the arrangements for travel would be made by Maphio; that the income from their communal work would be put in a *cassella* (little box) whose three keys would be held 'one by the said leader, the other by Francesco de la lira and the other by Vincenzo da Venetia' (Schino in Taviani and Schino 2007, 184); also, if while the company lasted any of the associates left the same, he would not have any of the money and would also be fined 'lire cento'. The confederates also agreed that the money kept in the *cassella* would be divided between the members of the company the following month of June, when they would again be in Padua (185).

This is the first of a group of documents that have survived from the dawn of the *Commedia dell'Arte*. In other agreements, certain tasks or functions of individual *comici* are specified. For instance, in a contract signed in November 1549, again in Padua, there appears a certain Checo, a blacksmith, 'che fa da donna' or 'who plays women's roles' (190); it is stated that Moschin (Francesco Moschini) is charged to find a place for rent and, once found, 'to fit out the scene and do whatever is necessary' (190).

The formula for 'the performing of *his* [Maphio's] comedies' and the engagement of the signatories to follow Maphio's prescriptions 'as regards the

<sup>5</sup> The contract was first published by Cocco (1915). This and the following contracts are quoted from the texts published by M. Schino in Taviani and Schino (2007, 177-204). Unless otherwise specified, translations are mine.

order of performing the said comedies' has raised doubts about the kind of 'texts' these actors meant to perform. This formula, however, is not repeated in subsequent agreements, where the expression *faciendi comedias* appears, and therefore any allusion to authoriality has disappeared.

A few documents allow us to follow the activity of this company up to 1553. Of those who signed the first agreement, only Maphio and Moschini are found; the others were substituted by different men who signed more or less the same articles, including – as the first agreement also states – 'recitar di loco in loco', which is to tour the country when and where the *capocomico* established. In 1553, following a brawl, Maphio was killed by a horse trainer; on 22<sup>nd</sup> September of the same year, again in Padua, Moschini established a new company in which he took the leading role that had been Maphio's. The formula expressing the signatories' basic obligation is 'ad faciendas comedias' (192). These contracts repeat in slightly different forms (with a mixture of Latin and Italian) the same obligations; but they say nothing about the ways in which performances were prepared, apart from the necessity to 'fit out the scene and do whatever is necessary'. No obligation, for instance, concerns the actors' attending any sort of rehearsal or any previous knowledge of any kind of text.

A contract signed in Rome on 10<sup>th</sup> October 1564 binds seven people, 'omnes ut vulgo dicitur Commedianti ... super faciendis commediis'. This contract binds the signatories to be present 'at the usual times when comedies are played' (182). But the reason this particular contract should be mentioned is that for the first time a woman ('domina Lucretia Senensis') is one of the signatories with the same obligations that bind the male actors. The contract (a mark of regard to the woman?) was signed 'in domo dicte domine Lucretie Regionis Campi Martis' (182). We do not know whether the date on which this particular agreement was signed marks the inception of women's presence on the stage of comedies, for nothing allows us to glean from the text that we are in the presence of a new course.

Only one contract has survived among the documents relating to early modern English professional players. The agreement, dated 7<sup>th</sup> April 1614, was signed by Robert Dawes, actor, before Philip Henslowe and Jacob Meade.<sup>6</sup> Although this is a much later document, certain differences between the two kinds of agreement may be considered unaltered because they appear to be structural. The length of Dawes's engagement is not one 'season' as in the case of the groups of *comici*, but 'three yeares from the date hereof' (Greg 1907, 123), and the wages are going to be 'at the rate of one whole Share' (124). But one of Dawes' main commitments is that he 'shall and will at all tymes during

<sup>6</sup> The original contract has not survived. As Greg notes, it 'was given by Boswell as among the Dulwich papers which he had from Malone' (1907, 123). Quotations are from Greg (1907, 123-125).

the said terme duly attend all suche rehearsall which shall the night before the rehearsall be given publickly out' (124); if he fails to appear, he will be fined.<sup>7</sup>

The article about rehearsal is unclear. The word 'rehearsall' appears twice in the same sentence, but it apparently refers to two different stages of preparation: a private repetition of the text which the players have memorized before the play is presented to the public and (probably) the very public performance. This formula has raised the question about what exactly 'rehearsal' meant. As Tiffany Stern argues, 'rehearse' may both 'refer to something that happens more than once' or simply mean 'to recite'; therefore, 'rehearsal did not necessarily signify a re-hearing or recurrent event' (2000, 24). The term, furthermore, also referred to non-theatrical situations, and, in the first place, to 'the school-room where children learnt to "rehearse", "repeat", or say over their lessons' (24; see also Guarino 2010, 86-87).<sup>8</sup> The very ambiguity of 'rehearsal' and 'rehearse' raises the problem of whether the company's rehearsing encounters were one or more. One might conjecture that only one collective, final rehearsal (usually called 'general') was the rule, unless serious blunders or memory failings suggested a second, either collective or individual, repetition.<sup>9</sup>

Again under pain of a fine, Dawes signed his commitment to 'be ready apparelled ... to begyn the play at the hower of three of the clock in the afternoone' (124). A fine was also applied if the player failed to appear or happened 'to be overcome with drinck at the tyme when he [ought to] play' and also if he failed to be present at the time appointed 'having noe lycence or just excuse of sicknes'. But the highest fine (40 pounds) was applied 'if the said Robert Dawes shall at any time after the play is ended depart ... with any [of their] apparel on his body' or allow any other player to go out of the playhouse with any belongings of the company (125).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Bentley states that fines 'in most companies would be paid not to the owner of the theater but to the company treasury' (1984, 50).

<sup>8</sup> Also private performances given before the town Mayor and Aldermen by the London companies when touring in the provinces were called 'rehearsal', although they were not a repetition, but a sort of *première* that only served to see whether permission to play might be given (Stern 2000, 26-28). The idea that the activity of rehearsing a play is similar to what happens in schoolrooms has also been exploited in treatments of the Italian theatre. Ferdinando Taviani quotes a passage by Evaristo Gherardi who, in 1700, contrasted the practice of improvisation with that of players who play a premeditated text saying that these are 'like students who trembling repeat a lesson they have learned word by word' (in Taviani and Schino 2007, 312). The Jesuit Giovan Domenico Ottonelli, in his *Della Christiana Moderatione del Teatro* (1646), talks admiringly about those players who either do not have a completely written text or, if they do, 'they do not learn [it] by heart as some boy players do, but simply learn the substance of the text' (quoted by Taviani, 316).

<sup>9</sup> Stern concludes that 'there is no evidence to indicate that more than one group rehearsal was normal', and adds that 'Partial rehearsals ... did also take place' (2000, 77).

<sup>10</sup> Particular items of apparel were owned by players. In his will, Augustine Phillips bequeathed certain costumes and props of his to some of his fellow players (Bentley 1984, 19-20).

No mention is made of what on the contrary appears as a vital engagement for the *comici*: the obligation to travel ‘di loco in loco’ as the *capocomico* will enjoy. Indeed, as is known, touring in the provinces was, for the London residential companies, an occasional event, a necessity mainly determined by the closing of the London theatres especially during plague epidemics, while it was a necessity for the *comici*, whose activity (and income) depended on the *signori* who asked for their services. A major disparity is the different overall organization that becomes apparent when reading these two kinds of agreement. By signing a contract, the Italian *comici* established a community that only depended to a certain extent on the *capocomico*, who was himself an actor. Robert Dawes’ obligations (and maybe those of most English players), although he appears to have been a shareholder, were instead due to an outside *impresario* who financed the whole process, from text production to performance,<sup>11</sup> and therefore granted wages to a number of hired men (musicians, stage keepers, prompters, scribes, bookkeepers, etc.) that made up the backbone of the whole enterprise. The companies’ organization, Andrew Gurr explains, ‘was commercial, a core of shareholders and decision-makers, and a periphery of hired hands, backed in many cases by a theatre- and property-owning impresario who supplied ready cash in return for a share of the takings’ (1980, 29).

We are, therefore, in the presence of two different kinds of commercial enterprise: in the first the whole profit was shared among the players to ensure their living by practising the Art, while in the second the entrepreneur must be granted an income large enough both to get his own profit and fuel the theatrical enterprise. But how far these general rules were followed is a different matter. The ‘fraternal’ companies of *comici* seem to have been, at certain times, not fraternal at all; and, as regards the English players, it can be imagined that the shareholders, certain distinguished actors, and probably also the playwrights made their influence felt on important matters.

### 3. *Communities*

But communal work and interests also imply a communal kind of life.

The dynamics governing the companies of *comici* appear clearly from the many letters which have survived.<sup>12</sup> ‘Each player’, Siro Ferrone argues, ‘when admitted to be part of a company, lent to the common enterprise his or her personal store of experience and, at the same time, received a similar loan

<sup>11</sup> As Bentley states, ‘The contribution of capital as well as histrionic ability was a requirement for the sharers’ (1984, 32).

<sup>12</sup> For a rich collection of letters, see Ferrone *et al.* (1993); for an English translation of a few of these, see Pugliatti (2014).

from the others' (1997, 9). Generally speaking, however, what the letters show is not the harmonious relationship 'without hate, rancour, and dissolution' that was wished for in the first contract; instead what prevails, apart from preoccupations about the many material difficulties to be met, are the feelings of rivalry, the meanness of envy and jealousy, the threats of abandoning the group, the gossip and hearsay. In them we read the vicissitudes occasioned by the instability of a vagrant, risky militancy, the pettiness of personal and contingent tribulations, the violent *jalousie de métier*, but also the energy of a 'collective mind'.<sup>13</sup> Ferrone maintains that, 'one may start from there to see how much their mean everyday vicissitudes may have given birth to their brilliance, their hyperboles and their artistic utopias' (1993, 15). Ferrone also gives us an idea of the difficult balance of the group dynamics:

Each player, by joining the company or by leaving it, produced immediate effects not only on the organization, but also on the nature of the *fabula* that was to be represented ... If even one of its constitutive elements was changed (or lost), the *fabula* also had to be changed without altering the overall balance of the performance. (1997, 13)

All players, and especially the *capocomico*, were perfectly conscious of the risks represented by the instability companies experienced in their migrant life, but side by side with the anxiety about mutability and restlessness, their letters display a feeling of complete integration of individuals and their trade, as if nothing else existed for them outside the activity and creativity of playing and the professional pride of their militancy, a militancy that, as is well known, in most cases the *comici* transmitted by legacy to their children.<sup>14</sup> Their complete involvement in the *Arte* is shown, among other things, by the fact that in almost all their letters they refer to themselves not by their actual names, but by those of the characters they impersonated: Lelio, Florinda, Frittellino, Arlecchino, Cintio, Baldina, Bernetta, the Captain, Fichetto, and so on.

As regards the community of English professional players, Bentley remarks: 'An enterprise so popular and so allegedly profitable ... inevitably developed certain standards or customs of organization, of procedure, of remuneration, of division of labor, of conduct, of hierarchy, of the acquisition of property, and even of providing for the widows of deceased members' (1984, 24-25). Raimondo Guarino, in turn, observes that 'beyond the adventurous and uncertain footprints of single players, there appear the marks of a collective identity' in that 'the world of the theatre becomes, in the age of Elizabeth, a world apart, recognizable and circumscribed'. Guarino notes

<sup>13</sup> The expression is by Ferdinando Taviani in a private communication.

<sup>14</sup> The presence of family ties characterized the companies of *comici*, the most frequent being that of husband and wife.

that the concept of the ‘microsociety of players’ that has been formulated by recent scholarship as regards the Italian companies can be usefully applied to this other theatrical community as it emerges from the inextricable net of documents such as testaments and marriage contracts which ‘reveal the intersection between family relationships and professional communities’ (2010, 42-43).

For both groups, the feeling of community was also strengthened by the necessity to pen defences of their trade against detractors. The Italian *comici* had to plead especially about the charges of venality and scurrility as well as about the presence of women on stage; English players were obliged to legitimize the whole of their activity, including the facts that on the stage men played women’s parts, thereby encouraging homoeroticism, and that plays kept people away from church services.

In both contexts, therefore, players were stimulated to establish a dialogue with their detractors. In certain cases, the defence produced extremely subtle reflections, as in the passage in which Heywood contrasts the ‘descriptive’, ‘narrative’, or ‘pictorial’ genres, to stage re-presentation: ‘A Description is only a shadow receiued by the eare but not perceiued by the eye; so liuely portraiture is meerely a forme seene by the eye, but can neither shew action, passion, motion, or any other gesture to mooue the spirits of the beholder to admiration’; only in the theatre are characters presented ‘as if the personator were the man personated’ (1612, B3v).<sup>15</sup>

Certain defences, however, claim the superiority of one particular manner of acting against a different one and use the arguments elsewhere displayed by antitheatrical writers:

Our Players are not as the players beyond sea, a sort of squirting baudie Comedians, that haue whores and common Curtizans to play womens parts, and forbear no immodest speech or vnchast action that may procure laughter, but our Sceane is more stately furnisht than euer it was in the time of *Roscius*, our representations honorable, and full of gallant resolution, not consisting like theirs of a Pantaloun, a Whore, and a Zanie, but of Emperours, Kings, and Princes. (Nashe 1592, H3r)<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> In the soliloquy he pronounces after meeting the players, Hamlet expresses a similar view about the impact of re-presentation when he plans to ‘catch the conscience of the King’ (2.2.601) ‘by the very cunning of the scene’ (2.2.586). Here and elsewhere quotations from *Hamlet* are from Jenkins, ed., 1982.

<sup>16</sup> The most famous defence of Italian theatre is *La supplica* that a *comico*, Niccolò Barbieri, wrote in 1634. In 1646, after Barbieri’s death, the Jesuit G.D. Ottonelli, in his *Della Christiana Moderatione del Theatro* (1646), established a calm dialogue with Barbieri’s book, criticising some of the *comico*’s arguments, but also acknowledging that there were virtuous instances of comedies which might even be attended with profit.

The rivalry and the *jalousie de métier*, it appears, were not only part of the groups' dynamics – they went beyond the sea, up to the point of borrowing the moralists' arguments that it was the players' effort to fight at home.

#### 4. Preparation

##### 4.1 Play-Reading

As regards the steps that led to the acquisition of plays by English companies, Bentley notes that 'There is enough evidence to show that the sharers often had to assemble to listen to the reading of a new composition and to pass judgment on it' (1984, 39); and indeed many items in Henslowe's diary confirm that this was a current practice. Henslowe, for instance, records a sum given to Ben Jonson for introducing a play to a company: 'lent vnto Bengemen Johnson the 3 desembz 1597 vpon a boocke w<sup>ch</sup> he showed the plotte vnto the company' (Foakes and Rickert 1961, 85). In a letter dated 8 November 1599, a player named Robert Shaa recommends to Henslowe the buying of a book after 'hearing' it: 'm<sup>r</sup> Henslowe we haue heard their booke and lyke it' (Greg 1907, 49). Years later, on 8 May 1613, Robert Daborne writes to Henslowe about a play he promises to deliver soon and asks him 'to appoint any howr to read to m<sup>r</sup> Allin' (69). On 16 May, Daborne writes to Henslowe, again about reading part of a play he is writing: 'J will meet y<sup>u</sup> & m<sup>r</sup> Allin & read some ...' (70). In a letter dated 9 December 1613, Daborne again announces a new play; the text, he says, 'shall make as good a play for y<sup>e</sup> publiq' howse as ever was playd ... & J will vndertake vpon the reading it' (79).

From these documents, however, it is unclear whether the whole text of plays was actually read to the company (or to the shareholders), or only an idea of the plot was given (see 'which he showed the plotte', or the unclear expression 'heard their book', in the passages quoted above).<sup>17</sup> Bentley argues that it would have been impossible for shareholders to listen to a reading of the whole five acts of plays (1984, 40).<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> The idea of a plot being read to the company raises a question about what is meant by 'plot'. A special kind of document, also called 'plot', was a stage memorandum for entrances and gave a few elements of what happens in each scene. Of these, only seven fragmentary specimens have survived. They were transcribed and published by Greg (1907) and later by Bradley (1992). For extensive treatments of these plots, see also Stern (2009, 8-35) and Pugliatti (2012). Other documents, also called 'plots', were meant as guidelines for the composition of plays (see *infra*, 5.2).

<sup>18</sup> In one of Leone de' Sommi's dialogues, the author, who was a playwright and *concertatore* (a position similar to that of *capocomico*), has one of his characters, Veridico, who represents Leone's own point of view, explain to his interlocutors how he presents his texts to the players. He first distributes the various roles according to his idea of each character, then

What we know for certain is that after the play was bought for staging, players were given their 'parts' to learn by heart. Parts were copied out by scribes, and each fragment of a player's part included the cue immediately preceding every speech, so that players might know where to enter in the dialogue (see Palfrey and Stern 2007).<sup>19</sup>

#### 4.2 Scenario-Reading

Andrea Perrucci (1651-1704) wrote his treatise *Dell'arte rappresentativa premeditata e all'improvviso* in 1699, when the experience of playing *all'improvviso*, reciting a seemingly absent, or rather unwritten, text, had been rife in Italy for about a hundred and fifty years. What he says is more or less all we have to build up our knowledge of the way in which the *comici* prepared their performances. Obviously, the passage he devotes to this issue, and one furthermore set down by a late witness, cannot be generalized as describing a stable practice for all the companies from the start, but its verisimilitude has the support of what appears reasonable and even obvious.

The *comici* built their performances on the basis of scripts or *scenari*. 'The *soggetto* [*scenario* or plot outline]', Perrucci says, 'is nothing more than a fabric of the scenes on a given subject, which indicates, in outline form, what action is to be spoken or performed *all'improvviso* by the actor' (2007, 186). But the scene-by-scene subject has been read to them before by the director.<sup>20</sup> The reading of the subject was performed as follows: 'All the characters should gather in a circle to listen; they should not rely on already knowing the comedy by heart or having played it before, because it could be that different directors handle the plot in different ways, and the names and places might be different as well' (196). Then, 'Once they have listened to the directions about the *soggetto*, the actors should think about *how to use things they have already prepared*. These can either be made expressly for this play ... or they can be general matters, learned by heart so that they can be applied to any comedy or story' (196, my emphasis). What was needed,

gathers the group and gives each of them his part. He then makes them read the whole text, 'so that even the boys who have a role in it be instructed in its subject, or at least in the role that pertains to each, and that the quality of the character they must impersonate be impressed in their mind; then I dismiss them and give them time to learn their parts' (1968, 39). de' Sommi's dialogues were written between the end of the 1560s and the end of the 1580s.

<sup>19</sup> That of distributing parts to the actors when a play had to be learned by heart was a widespread custom in west European early modern theatre. In the case of the Italian academic plays, actors' parts were called 'parti scannate' (fragments from a marred text), in Spain 'papeles de actor', and in France 'rouleaux'. As documented by Palfrey and Stern (2007), a few parts for English professional players have survived.

<sup>20</sup> The English translation gives 'director' for *concertatore*.

therefore, was a perfect coordination between the characters acting in each particular comedy, which – Perrucci argues – was easily reached because ‘Once the characters have heard what they are to do when entering, and when performing and concluding the scene, they can repeat the scenes with their fellow actors and come to an understanding about any new *lazzo* or jest, however they like’ (195).<sup>21</sup>

The director’s action is summarized as follows:

The director should interpret and explain the *lazzi* and the plot saying: ‘Here we need such-and-such a *lazzo*, which is done like this, and here we need a scene of double meanings, here this metaphor, or that hyperbole, or irony’, and so forth, with all the *lazzi* or jests, assisting the characters in whatever difficulties they face. (195)<sup>22</sup>

Perrucci also deals with technical issues, especially onstage traffic blunders to be avoided:

The characters should be careful not to run into each other when exiting, which is more easily handled in improvised plays than in scripted ones. This is because while an actor is speaking ... he can see which wing is occupied by the character who is about to enter; and so avoid exiting by that wing, and go instead to where there is an empty one – though there is an inviolable rule to enter from the upper wings and exit from the lower ones, unless necessity requires something else. (195)

The dynamics of entrances and exits which appears to be, for the *comici*, part of their general professional training, could not be prescribed by means of general rules to those who played a scripted text, on account of the great variety of plots presented by scripted texts versus the simplified modular structure of the *scenari*. In the case of fully scripted texts, players should memorize their entrances and exits and also *when* to enter, as is shown by the fact that – at least in some cases – characters’ entrances were set out, as a memorandum, in certain plot outlines

<sup>21</sup> There is no evidence to support Stern’s assertion that ‘*Commedia dell’arte* players had a single rehearsal before their (largely extemporized) performances’ (2000, 56, n. 18).

<sup>22</sup> That special suggestions were made about the *lazzi* is explained by the fact that the *zanni* who performed them were the most unruly components of the group and therefore their interventions tended to be uncontrollable. Furthermore, when in a comedy there were two *zanni*, these had to coordinate their comic action and be careful not to interrupt the main plot improperly. In his *Discorso sopra l’arte comica* (1608), Cecchini states that the comic parts ‘are pleasant but they sometimes break the plot of the comedy’ and may run the risk of making the audience lose track of the events staged (Marotti and Romei, eds, 1994, 74). In his speech to the players, Hamlet similarly warns the comic actors about their tendency to overdo by improvising: ‘And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them ... though in the meantime some necessary question of the play be then to be considered’ (*Hamlet*, 3.2.39, 42-43); that is, they risk to break the plot of the play.

which were probably hung on the backstage next to the entrances (see note 17). As David Bradley maintains, 'It is not an exaggeration to say that the action of an Elizabethan play *consists* of entrances. They are the means by which the story is told; the controllers of the illusion of time and place; the sign-posts for the understanding of the plot' (1992, 23).

## 5. *Text*

### 5.1 *Shakespeare and Company*

That the Elizabethan-Jacobean production of plays was intensely collaborative has long been acknowledged, and Shakespeare scholars have accepted (and examined) the fact that even Shakespeare worked in collaboration. But the fact that a Shakespeare existed and that he wrote plays has conditioned the vision of that perfect collaborative machine that English Renaissance theatre must have been, for collaboration inevitably means a diminution of authoriality. Consequently, scholars have been induced to scrutinize his (suspect) texts in order to isolate other writers' hands and restore to posterity the genuine text created solely by his genius.

Recently, however, such terms as collaboration, co-authorship, joint authorship, or play-patching have gained fresh attention in a perspective which is, in part, new. Against distribution and attribution, this study trend tends to discuss the way in which plays were produced – from the first idea of a plot to its production on a stage – and to include or assimilate the various hands, discouraging the work of distinction, separation, and exclusion performed by attribution studies. More or less directly, the questions these studies raise are: in what terms can authorship be evoked? How can the very concept of Author be formulated? How can a Sole Author be isolated given that the hands which worked on the composition and transmission of a play are so indistinguishably entwined? How can a Sole Author be isolated given that each of those different writers working on the same text may have tended, for uniformity's sake, to conform to the style of other writers' hands, imitating them and adopting the co-author's writing habits and even way of thinking? Jeffrey Masten posits that in such a context collaboration should be viewed as 'a dispersal of author/ity, rather than a simple doubling of it' (1997, 19). In the final analysis, therefore, the suspicion arises that the presence of a Shakespeare and the consequent need to construct a strong and convincing personality/individuality structure may have acted against an accurate reconstruction of what collaboration in text-writing may have meant historically and conceptually, for Shakespeare as well as for his fellow playwrights.

These quasi-heretical positions represent the symptom of a certain uneasiness about – if not utter mistrust of – what attribution studies can tell us of the real conditions under which the Elizabethan and Jacobean

playwrights worked, of the real meaning of their being associates intellectually, personally, and materially, for they substitute the idea of Sole Author by an idea of 'corporate authorship'. A similar view of collaboration, when we talk of written texts (and of immensely worshipful written texts), may open up a black hole where all our convictions about authoriality (and, in particular, of the authoriality of Shakespeare's plays) risk being swallowed.

A similar kind of heresy was pronounced as early as 1913-1914 by E. Gordon Craig who asked how it was that no manuscripts of Shakespeare's plays have survived and answered by invoking what he thought was an utter instability of these texts precisely because they must have been inextricably collaborative: 'In my opinion the Dramas were created by Shakespeare in close collaboration with the Manager of the Theatre and with the actors; ... and I believe that a glimpse of the manuscript of the plays would reveal a mass of corrections, additions, and cuts made in several handwritings'. To this, Craig adds the idea that following the 'newly formed dramatic art' that was the *Commedia dell'Arte*, much of the Shakespearean texts as we know them are the fruit of the players' improvisations (1913-1914, 163-165).

## 5.2 *Plots and Scenarios*

One of the issues which have been raised to affirm how impracticable it is to distinguish and apportion the intellectual property of texts produced in these circumstances is that of 'plots', those skeleton outlines which seem to have been prepared either before or during the composition of (some) plays, compiled, as it seems, by playwrights who were acknowledged as good 'plotters'.

From the only quasi-complete plot of this period which we possess, that of a play probably called *Philander, King of Persia*, published by J.Q. Adams (1946), we see that these must have been similar to the *scenari*, although they had an entirely different function.<sup>23</sup> Elements of these plots, as can be drawn from the one published by Adams, are indication of act and scene and, for each scene, characters and a brief summary of the scene's content.

This preparatory plotting seems to have been fundamental for the development of the text to be composed. Quoting the cases of Greene and Munday, who seem to have written plots for plays, W.J. Lawrence claims that 'An engrossing story, if well schemed, was then half the battle' (1937, 101). He then devotes a few pages to Ben Jonson as 'scenario writer' and notes that, as is witnessed by several passages in Henslowe's papers, for many of the plays in which Jonson collaborated he was simply the author of the plot.

<sup>23</sup> About the bare outlines which recorded mainly the players' entrances and were probably hung in the backstage as simple reminders, see note 17. For a comparison between both kinds of plots and *Commedia dell'Arte scenari*, see Pugliatti (2012).

That some sort of preparatory work was considered necessary when preparing both premeditated and unpremeditated texts is witnessed by many sources.

Domenico Biancolelli, maybe the greatest Arlecchino of all times and a *comico* much loved by the French public, wrote down the scenic actions he performed in seventy-three of the comedies in which he played. In a form that is different from both that of the *scenari* and that of the English playwrights' plots, Biancolelli describes act by act and in the first person his own *lazzi*, also summarising the action of the other characters present in those particular scenes. Here is a fragment from one of his *scenari*:

Pantalone arrives and tells me he married Diamantina and shows her to me; I make *lazzi* (I would like to fall dead or swoon, but I don't succeed), then I take off my coat, move a little farther, lay on my coat and feign to be dead. Pantalone lifts me up and lays me against the wall, but when he turns away I rush out and when he again turns towards the place where he left me, not seeing me, is astonished. (Taviani and Schino 2007, 221)

Leone de' Sommi describes a different kind of plot, one that illustrates his activity as *concertatore* when preparing the staging of his plays. After compiling a list of all the props needed by each player, he compiles a different list in which, he says:

I note down all the scenes in the right sequence, with the names of the characters appearing in them, marking down the house or the street they must leave, and after what cue, with also the first words of their speech, so that with this governance the person who is in charge may at the right time direct all players to their place and push forward each at their cue and also remind them of the first words of their speech. (1968, 54)

Flaminio Scala ranges two kinds of plots for the same text in his *scenari* (1611), for each scene-by-scene summary is preceded by an Argument in which the action of the whole comedy is summarized.

When we consider the plots written by English playwrights in preparation of plays, the question arises about what distinct authorial weight should be attributed to the outline of the plot and what to the words of the finished play. Apart from the fact that we have the plays but not the plot outlines, how can we distinguish, at least in a theoretical perspective, so different and differently aimed forms of creativity, both converging onto the composition of one text? To whom is the sequence of actions – so important, for instance, in the case of plays inspired by an existing narrative text – to be apportioned? The creeping heresy hidden behind these questions embodies a radical revision of settled analytical procedures and, one may say, of a settled text-ideology, for it tends to consider plays as the product of a collective personality (as well as the intellectual property of a group) which it is impossible – and probably inappropriate – to dismember.

### 5.3 'Improvisation Is Not Improvisation'

'A famous Spanish comedian named Adriano, who came to Naples with other [actors] to put on their comedies, could not understand how one could produce a comedy by simply coordinating several characters and staging it in less than an hour' (Perrucci 2007, 101). Perrucci acknowledges the exceptional character of the enterprise and explains it as follows:

An undertaking as fascinating as it is difficult and risky, it should not be attempted except by qualified and competent people, who know what the rules of language mean, [who understand] the figures of speech, tropes, and all the art of rhetoric, since they have to accomplish *all'improvviso* what a poet does with premeditation. (101)<sup>24</sup>

If described as a comedy which may be put on 'in less than an hour', the *improvvisa* may appear a miraculous achievement to those who are not familiar with its methods and prerequisites. Indeed Perrucci rightly stresses some of its necessary implications in that those who practice that 'fascinating', 'difficult', and 'risky' way of acting should be equipped with exceptional knowledge of the language and with 'all the art of rhetoric' (101): that is, they must be so competent as to be able to do without a poet's oeuvre.

Perrucci then proceeds with a comparison between premeditated and impromptu comedies. The first, he says, 'win[s] esteem and appreciation' only 'because of the poet's effort in composing [them]' and owing to 'the help, effort, and toil of so many trial runs and rehearsals'. An impromptu comedy, on the contrary, continually runs the risk of blunders because an actor who is not completely in control of the language may pronounce on the stage *quidquid in buccam venit*. Later on, Perrucci explains what he meant by saying that players must know 'what the rules of language mean' as well as master 'all the art of rhetoric': actors who perform 'this attractive and unusual entertainment ... should be armed with some general composition that can be adapted to every kind of comedy, such as *concetti* (literary conceits), soliloquies, and dialogues for the male and female lovers; or speeches of advice, discourses, greetings, speeches with double meanings, and some gallantries for the old men' (103).

Perrucci wrote his treatise when the rules of the *improvvisa* had been settled for a long time; therefore, they had probably also undergone deep

<sup>24</sup> Some players, both in England and Italy, were praised for their ability in extempore rhyming. Adriano Valerini, in his *Oratione* in praise of Vincenza Armani after her death, states that the Academy of the 'Intronati' in Siena 'affirmed many times that this Lady succeeded much better in extempore talking than the most consummate Authors in thoughtfully writing' (1570, 8). Another famous actress, Isabella Andreini, was much praised for her extempore verse composition. In England, Richard Tarlton and Will Kemp were also praised for their talent in extempore versifying.

mutations since the start. But one particular rule among those he mentions had been exposed many years before, in 1628, by Pier Maria Cecchini, one of the *comici* who also wrote precepts for impromptu playing. Cecchini recommended to his colleagues that they frequently ‘read uniformly elegant books, because in those who hear them remains such an impression of most pleasing sentences as, deceiving the hearer, they are believed to be the daughters of the speaker’s wit’ (1628, 19).

Perrucci’s formula to describe this unusual practice of text-building is interesting: the *comici*, he says, ‘have to accomplish *all’improvviso* what a poet does with premeditation’ (2007, 101). Actors, in other words, *create* their texts having freed themselves of the tyranny of the Sole Author and of the stable and immutable text (but how stable and immutable?) which constrains them inside a pre-ordered chain of words. The passage implies they are no less authors than the poets, authors who have invented an extremely refined and sophisticated technique for creating their texts.

However, descriptions of the *Commedia dell’Arte* performance practice have fostered a view of improvisation as the equivalent of unregulated spontaneity and of free creative fantasy (Taviani in Taviani and Schino 2007, 312), an idea that was especially rife in the romantic period. On the contrary, the criteria according to which improvisation should be characterised have nothing to do with ‘naturalness’ or ‘spontaneity’. ‘Improvisation’, Taviani concludes, ‘is not improvisation’, but only less premeditated acting, an acting less ‘by heart’. The issue, therefore, is ‘the composition of comedies after the manner of the *comici*’, and the essential thing is what this manner implied, what was behind it, what substantiated ‘the actors’ dramaturgy’ (322).

Actors, therefore, are authors. As Siro Ferrone says,

They permanently face the dilemma of how to compose, together with their fellow actors, the parts of the action of which each of them is the vehicle. Each time they pose to themselves fresh questions and adapt themselves to the others’ responses, experimenting different solutions. They are, in the final analysis and to all intents and purposes, the authors of their performances’. (1993, xxii)

The relevant alternative, as regards the texts they created, is not the one that contrasts premeditated and unpremeditated production. The distinction to be made is, as Taviani argues, the one between written versus non-written dramaturgy, and in this case ‘non-written’ does not mean

anti-literary, gestural, mimic, but – on the contrary – a kind of theatre which downplayed the written text and sanctioned the composition of cases and actions, and that therefore could by no means be considered as theatre without a literary text, even though that text was produced in such a way as to appear only during performance. (in Taviani and Schino 2007, 330)

### 6. *Literariness and Emancipation*

Tomaso Garzoni (1549-1589), a Lateran canon from Bagnacavallo in northern Italy, was one of the most alert critics of mid sixteenth-century theatrical activities in Italy. He knew there was a continuity between mountebanks, charlatans, and *comici*; and, wishing to shield the reputation of the latter, he drew a sharp difference between certain second-rate players, the immediate heirs of mountebanks, and those *comici* who practised the *Arte* following the example of the famous Roscius (1996, II, 1180). Above all, he honoured certain actresses whose refined elocution and spellbinding speech revealed their literariness and made them accepted and indeed cherished in the high spheres of contemporary culture: ‘The gracious Isabella [Andreini], honour of the stage, ornament of theatres, superb spectacle no less of virtue than of beauty; ‘the learned Vincenza [Armani] who, imitating Cicero’s eloquence, has made the comic art vie with elocution; ‘the divine Vittoria [Piissimi], ... that beautiful love-sorceress who, with her words, entices the hearts of a thousand lovers’ (1182).

But Garzoni also goes a step farther when he admiringly alludes to the other activity of the *comici*, that of writing (and publishing). Those who write are to be praised both for comedies and tragedies because they ‘have crowded their written works with most moral habits, keeping in mind the praiseworthy aim of teaching the art of living wisely, as is suited to all *comici*’ (1185). Indeed it was their activity as writers that ended up by promoting the emancipation of *comici* from their traditional vile repute, and it is true to say that the furthering of this process was fuelled by the intellectual prestige which women players conferred on the profession. As Taviani says, the presence of women, the *meretrices honestae* who were poets as well as players, was not ‘simply a matter of liberalization; it rather meant

the engrafting, in the body of the male actors’ professional playing, of a different cultural trend—academic, Petrarchan, classicizing, lyrical ... The importance of actresses was not limited to their ability to charm and seduce audiences; their presence meant, above all, an enlargement of the companies’ expertise, a broadening of their qualifications, and the inception of a new dramaturgical dimension. (in Taviani and Schino 2007, 340-341)

The theatrical activity of Shakespeare and his fellow playwrights underwent an analogous process of emancipation. Not differently from the *comici*, they had noble protectors to whom they were attached as ‘servants; they wore their sponsors’ liveries and depended for their playing activity on the central government as well as on the municipalities, both in London and when playing in the provinces. They were also subjected to censorship (although less strictly than might be imagined) and were attacked, more violently than Italian players, by both civil and ecclesiastical authorities.

It is therefore not surprising that, in an age of fierce antitheatrical prejudice, in England the emancipation of players and playwrights was also attained far from the stage. It was a process connected not only with writing but with publishing, and even a certain mode of publishing which had distinct characteristics of literariness. Bentley argues that ‘the most tangible impetus to the slowly altering status of the players was the publication of the Jonson folio in 1616’ (1984, 9). Guarino, in turn, believes the publication of the 1623 Shakespeare folio was the inception of a change in the social status of players and playwrights:

The outcome of the work of the theatrical companies of Shakespeare’s time consists in a reversal of values: the literature of commercial theatres, an improper and defective instrument, achieved a consecration at the same time functional and absolute. The leading figure of the printing group that published the 1623 Folio of Shakespeare’s dramatic works had published Montaigne’s *Essais* and Cervantes’ *Quixote*, the books which, together with Shakespeare’s works, reshaped the European literary space. (2010, 10)

But we may go a step farther. Unlike most of his plays, that were published in cheap editions and often with no author’s name during his lifetime and also after his death, both *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594) bore Shakespeare’s signature in the dedicatory letters, and the first edition of his sonnets (1609) was authored in the title-page as *Shake-speares*. But these were poems, not plays; they belonged to an indisputably dignified literary genre, not to the genre of ephemeral scribbled papers whose authorship and author-ity was an indifferent matter, for they served only to feed an ephemeral (and morally dubious) kind of entertainment. Similarly, the cultural promotion of the *comici* was not entrusted to the publication of the even more ephemeral *scenari* (the first collection of *scenari* was published by Flaminio Scala as late as 1611), but to the players’ poems of various kinds, letters, pastorals, dialogues, or to their fully scripted plays composed *à la manière de* ‘comédie erudite’.

As has been argued, the idea of immortality through writing can be said to link two player-writer personalities as distinct as Isabella Andreini and William Shakespeare (Pallotti 2003). Indeed, both for Shakespeare and Andreini (but also for Ben Jonson and Christopher Marlowe, as well as for Piermaria Cecchini or Francesco Andreini) gaining a higher reputation implied their (temporary) estrangement from the community of players. Shakespeare may have attended to the publication of his sonnets during what was one of the most prolonged and severe plague epidemics since the beginning of the century probably because he was forcefully kept away from the activity of playing and therefore owing to the fact that for a long time ‘mony [was] not stirring’ (Dekker 1609, B1v). Of Francesco Andreini, in turn,

we know that, after the death of his wife Isabella in 1604, he left his company and gave up playing to devote himself to the publication of his and his wife's works with intent to gain both, as writers, imperishable fame.

Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, his *Lucrece* and his *Sonnets*, no less than Isabella Andreini's works, express the idea that poetry 'redeems' time and treasures fame, and, probably, that it also redeems the players' ill-reputed, volatile, and ephemeral art.

### 7. Conclusion: A Possible 'Meeting'

At the end of the speech in which he introduces the players, Polonius pronounces an enigmatic sentence: 'For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men' (*Hamlet*, 2.2.397-398). Editors have acknowledged that the sentence has never been 'satisfactorily explained' (Jenkins 1982, 260). The current interpretation, however, is that Polonius is comparing plays written according to the classical rules with those written more freely, those that disregard the rules.

But the opposition between 'the law of writ' and 'the liberty' may also mean a distinction between two different ways of producing a text for performance and two different dramaturgies: 'the law of writ' can mean the theatrical activity in which the 'book' is a central element, and 'the liberty' the different way of text-construction, *à la manière de* the Italian *comici*, whose own dramaturgical contribution is unreadable because unwritten, but composed when and where it is delivered. This reading is strengthened by another expression Polonius uses in the same speech: the actors' versatility, he claims, is equal whether they perform 'scene indivisible, or poem unlimited' (2.2.395-396). This sentence, too, is usually interpreted with reference to the unities, 'scene indivisible' alluding to a play that respects them and 'poem unlimited' to one with a not-so-tight plot construction. But the relevant opposition here is that between 'scene' and 'poem', between a text that gives the illusion of being composed on the stage and one that relies on a poet's work for its scenic presentation.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Louise Clubb was the first to deconstruct Polonius' speech in a sense that is similar to mine, noting that *Hamlet* editors have regularly forsaken the possible allusion to Italian drama: 'If the editors of the new Norton Shakespeare ... gave more attention to Italian drama, they would not be satisfied with defining "the law of writ and the liberty" as a reference to "plays where classical rules are either observed or abandoned"'. The contrast is, in fact, between *scripted* five-act plays observing the rules (the "writ") and *improvised* three-act performances from a *canevaccio* or *scenario* ("the liberty"), also obeying some of the rules, sometimes' (2007, 15). Robert Henke, too, interprets Polonius' speech as alluding to 'the contrast between scripted five-act plays (the law of writ) and improvised performances (the liberty)' (2007, 69).

Furthermore, the company of players visiting Elsinore is, from the point of view of their material organization, nearer to those of the Italian *comici* than to that of the English players. They travel 'di loco in loco' in search of work, carrying the paraphernalia of their trade and stopping at court or, presumably, in other places where their performances are requested; they do not perform in regular theatres but in the halls of princes; they are ready to quasi-improvise by learning, for the following day, 'a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines' (2.2.535) to insert in *The Murder of Gonzago*, a play they have in repertory; in short, the authorship of their whole trade seems to be their sole responsibility. And should we really take for granted, as all editors do, that Hamlet's 'young lady and mistress' (2.2.421) is the boy actor who played the female parts?

But also *Hamlet* 3.2 may have other things to reveal in terms of reciprocal knowledge. In fact, certain passages from Cecchini's *Discorso sopra l'arte comica con il modo di ben recitare*, probably written in 1608 after a Paris *tournee* of the 'Accesi' (Marotti in Marotti and Romei, eds, 1994, 65), show striking resemblances to Hamlet's advice to the players.<sup>26</sup> In Paris, the company's performances were probably attended by Lord Herbert of Cherbury (Lea 1934, I, 179), who was a close friend of Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, as well as the cousin of Shakespeare's protector, the Earl of Pembroke. Did Herbert of Cherbury bring to Paris a copy of *Hamlet* as a present to someone who might be interested in reading a play that in 1608 was still the crucial cultural event in the *ancien régime* of Elizabethan theatre? If further explored, the hypothesis of such an ideal meeting may prove to constitute the only proof of a direct textual loan at the very top of the two theatrical enterprises I have tried to describe.

But this is matter for further research and reflection.

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<sup>26</sup> Cecchini's *Discorso* was kept as a manuscript in a Turin Library that was destroyed by a fire in 1904. Modern editions reproduce a handwritten copy made by Luigi Rasi in the early years of the twentieth century. For one of these resemblances, although not the most striking, see note 22.

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## ‘mere prattle without practice’: Authorship in Performance

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### *Abstract*

Over the last ten years there has been a struggle within Shakespeare studies between the vast majority of scholars who have remained committed to the orthodox view on Shakespeare’s authorship of the plays that bear his name and a much smaller group of scholars, working with profoundly different levels of rigour, who have sought to question this position. Recently there has been a degree of agreement that it is more productive to approach the issue in terms of acknowledging the collaborative nature of early modern play writing. It is noticeable, however, that for the literary critics and historians involved in this debate collaboration seems to end at the playhouse’s door. There is an assumption that the collaborators who produced early modern drama were all writers and not the other people involved in the production of Tudor and Stuart plays. This is profoundly problematic. In this article, Thomas Betteridge and Greg Thompson propose a non-textual approach to the authorship question through the use of performance as a research technique. The first part of the article will map out the current ground of Shakespeare authorship studies while the second part is an account of a performance as research workshop carried out by Betteridge and Thompson with students from Brunel University, London.

*Keywords:* Authorship, Performance, Reading, Shakespeare, Workshop

Why to the Hermit letters should be sent,  
To post Skinke to the court incontinent:  
Is there no tricke in this? Ha let me see?  
Or doe they know already I am he?  
(Anonymous, *Look About You*, 1.1.49-52)

### 1. *Introduction*

Authorship as a concept is designed to produce coherence and certainty. This is the argument of Michel Foucault’s ‘What is an Author?’ which concludes by suggesting that an author is



... a certain functional principle by which in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short, by which one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and recomposition of fiction. In fact, if we are accustomed to presenting the author as a genius, as a perpetual surging of invention, it is because, in reality, we make him function in exactly the opposite fashion. (1986, 119)

Foucault's description of the authorial function as a point of closure or restriction and his coupling of it with the fantasy of individual genius seems almost parodic in its relevance to current discussions of early modern dramatic authorship. Indeed, there is clearly a sense in which the 'Shakespeare authorship' debate is oxymoronic. To debate the status of an author, as opposed to a writer, seems inherently problematic. If authorship implies certainty and coherence then to introduce uncertainty and dissonance is to attack the very basis of the concept of authorship. This is because authorship relates not to pragmatic questions about who wrote a particular piece of text or literary work but to much more fundamental questions concerning the relationship between language, being and meaning. There has always been a link between claims of authorship and legal discourses of ownership and it is no surprise that a significant number of the few occasions where Shakespeare appears in the historical record are related to court cases. To claim authorship, either for oneself or for another, is to participate in the discourses of the oath. Giorgio Agamben writes: '... the oath expresses the demand, decisive in every sense for the speaking animal, to put its nature at stake in language and to bind together in an ethical and political connection words, things and actions' (2010, 69). To be an author, or to embrace this role as, for example, Ben Jonson did, is to function as a point of coherence and meaning and to embrace the rewards and risks associated with authorship. The stakes are high for authors, writers risk less and make much more limited claims; they are simpler people who happen to earn a living by producing texts to be read, watched and consumed.

The violence that attends so much of the debate over Shakespeare's authorship, the entirely disproportionate responses by serious academics to legitimate scholarly questions, but equally the fantasies and conspiracy theories that no one but their proponents can take seriously, reflect a desire to protect Shakespeare as a point of coherence, stability and fixity; as an author, not a writer. The debate over Shakespeare's authorship consistently veers into hyperbole and polemic because at its heart is an endless, impossible to fulfil desire, much like Othello's to 'see' Desdemona's virtue, to grasp or fix the truth of who wrote Shakespeare's plays; to 'see' beyond doubt Shakespeare the author.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is of course a tautological statement but it is precisely the kind of statement that one ends up making when discussing these questions. Indeed, as we shall go on to suggest, the Shakespeare authorship debate functions precisely to generate these kinds of statements.

## 2. Part I: 'Give me ocular proof'

The sterility of much of the debate over the authorship of Shakespeare's plays is a product of precisely the tension that Foucault suggests is fundamental to the authorial function. This is equally true of the serious academic work on attribution and collaboration as it is to the far less important efforts of some scholars to deny that Shakespeare wrote the plays that now bear his name. The desire to replace one genius as a point of textual stability, 'Shakespeare', with another, 'Oxford', 'Bacon', or 'Queen Elizabeth' is not simply pointless because it is often based on clearly tendentious arguments, the most notorious being that Shakespeare was not learned enough to have written the plays that bear his name, it is far more fundamentally flawed due to the fantasies of inspired authorship that seem to shape it. It is, however, important to note, as we have already suggested, that even within the far more rigorous world of academic attribution studies there also appear to be a number of under-interrogated assumptions and unspoken desires. In particular, there is a sense in even the most rigorous attribution studies, developing the most up-to-date computer analysis, that what is being engaged in is a process of purgation or alchemy whose end result, which is in practice predicated throughout, is to produce real or unalloyed Shakespeare; to produce what the critic already knows is true.

We are not experts in the field of Shakespeare authorship and this article offers itself as a tentative and uncertain contribution to the debate. Our approach is informed by practice as research methodology and, from this perspective, a degree of scepticism concerning the purpose of not only general questions of Shakespearean authorship but more specifically the use of statistics to determine which plays, and which parts of plays, were written by Shakespeare. Brian Vickers has recently suggested that 'Against the Romantic notion of individual inspiration, free of any financial considerations, we need to conceive of an artefact produced by a work-sharing process, in which certain elements of the composition are delegated to other hands under the supervision of the master craftsman' (2007, 312).

Our experience of working in the contemporary theatre, which one could legitimately suggest is irrelevant due to the massive historical and cultural changes that have taken place over the last five hundred years, leads us to strongly support Vickers' notion that early modern plays were written through a 'work-sharing process'. One of the most problematic aspects of much of the current work on Shakespearean authorship is that it is based on a quaintly donnish understanding of how plays are and probably were produced. We do not know to what extent the 'writing' of an Elizabethan play was the product of specific writers or if the actors and producers who had to make a play work on stage did not have an important role in its composition. We can draw up data-banks of a writer's lexicon, idiosyncratic uses of words and linguistic structures, but there is no way of knowing if what appears to be the presence of a particular

authorial hand in a text simply reflects the influence of an actor who happens to have shared our chosen writer's linguistic habits. Tiffany Stern's recent study, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (2009) demonstrates with precision the perspicacity of Vickers' 'work-sharing' suggestion in relation to the production of early modern theatrical texts. Stern points out that, for example, 'prologues and epilogues were regularly written by someone other than the playwright' (110). Stern also details the complex relationship between plot writers and play composers and points out that these were often different people. Early modern theatrical texts were produced through a process that required specialization and efficient use of resources. In this context it made sense for the labour of producing a play to be split up so that individual aspects of the production process were undertaken by those whose skills were best fitted for the specific task that needed to be completed; plotting, dialogue or prologue writer. In this context the obvious deficiencies in the existing data – we do not have a verbatim written account of a plot discussion or a rehearsal – render any statistical approach to early modern theatrical authorship irredeemably flawed.

This article is a contribution to the debate over Shakespearean authorship. The first part discusses the nature of current debates over this authorship. The second part is an attempt to introduce a different performance-based methodology to research into Shakespeare and authorship. This is a relatively limited article largely because we were restricted in terms of resources to conduct only one performance-based workshop. This article is, however, prompted by a desire to start to develop a new theatrical performance-based language for research into the authorship of early modern plays. We would hope in the future to be able to conduct far more extensive performance-based workshops and experiments on a range of early modern play texts and dramas.

In 3.3 of *Othello* the eponymous hero makes an impossible demand of Iago:

*Othello*. Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore.  
 Be sure of it. Give me ocular proof,  
 Or, by the worth of man's eternal soul,  
 Thou hadst been better have been born a dog  
 Than answer my waked wrath. (3.3.364-368)<sup>2</sup>

Iago knows that what Othello is demanding here is an impossibility. As he later tells Othello, 'Her [Desdemona's] honour is an essence that's not seen' (4.1.16). The truth that Othello tragically forgets is that there are some things that cannot be seen. Or at least are beyond instrumental standards of proof. It is impossible for Iago to satisfy Othello's desire for ocular proof of Desdemona's honour. This is partly because for Othello, like a number of Shakespeare's

<sup>2</sup> Shakespeare quotations are from Wells and Taylor (1986).

other male leads, King Lear and Leontes being the obvious examples, there is a disturbing misogynistic side to the desire to see Desdemona's honour – as if only a pornographic image of Desdemona's body fully open to the male gaze would satisfy him. But the truth is that even this would not be enough for Othello. His desire for ocular proof of Desdemona's honour reflects his fears, his inability to escape the real world where no one can fully know anything. Or rather, and more accurately, it is Othello's refusal of the logic of Hamlet's 'To be or not to be' speech that existence requires an acceptance of the provisional and performative. As Stanley Cavell points out with reference to Hamlet's words, 'To exist is to take your existence upon you, to enact it, as if the basis of human existence is theatre, even melodrama. To refuse this burden is to condemn yourself to scepticism – to a denial of the existence, hence of the value, of the world' (2003, 187).

Othello cannot tolerate the theatrical, enacted nature of human existence. He carves fixity and order to protect him from the terror of having to enact his own existence. Desdemona for Othello has to be fully fixed in the role of honourable, truthful wife, a wife free of the taint of performance of the requirement to enact. Any cracks in this artifice, which he has created, any doubt and Othello's whole world starts to spin out of control; perhaps Desdemona is not who he thought she was at all. And therefore Othello is not who he thought he was either.

Iago's seduction of Othello is so subtle but at the same time effective because it exploits Othello's existing weakness or unspoken desire for a sense of certainty beyond speech or language. Iago simply has to introduce uncertainty into Othello's world to produce a violent disproportionate reaction.

*Iago.* Ha, I like not that.

*Othello.* What does thou say?

*Iago.* Nothing, my lord, or if, I know not what.

*Othello.* Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?

*Iago.* Cassio, my lord? No, sure, I cannot think it,  
That he would steal away so guilty-like,  
Seeing your coming. (3.3.33-39)

Later Iago simply repeats Othello's words to further encourage his fears and provoke his suspicions. Othello kills Desdemona to stop what he believes erroneously is, to use again Foucault's words, her 'free circulation, free manipulation, free composition and recomposition'. Othello kills the thing he loves in order to make her more properly worthy of being the object of his love.

Brian Vickers has recently suggested that the aim of authorship studies, and in particular the careful discussion of attribution and collaboration is to get a better understanding of the real Shakespeare. Vickers writes: 'identifying his co-authors does not diminish Shakespeare's achievement: on the contrary, it

helps us to define that achievement more clearly, and to distinguish it from his collaborators'. Vickers goes on to paraphrase Matthew Arnold and to conclude his piece by suggesting: 'our task is to see him steadily and see him whole' (2007, 352). This, however, seems a problematic suggestion. In his article 'Incomplete Shakespeare: Or, Denying Coauthorship in *1 Henry VI*' (2007), Vickers builds on the arguments he first articulated in *Shakespeare, Co-Author* (2002) to argue that a number of Shakespeare's plays were co-authored. The evidence that Vickers provides, which is entirely persuasive, is based on incongruences and inconsistencies, linguistic and stylistic, that exist between passages in a number of the plays that have been traditionally attributed to Shakespeare. In effect, what Vickers proposes, and indeed what he enacts, in his 2007 article and, to a far greater degree, in *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, is a breaking down of 'Shakespeare' or at least the Shakespearean text into small abstract entities that at one level seem profoundly un- or even anti-Shakespearean. Slavoj Žižek comments, in relation to courtly love: 'external hindrances that thwart our access to the object are there precisely to create the illusion that without them, the object would be directly accessible – what such hindrances thereby conceal is the inherent impossibility of attaining the object' (1994, 94).

As Othello gets more and more desperate for proof of Desdemona's infidelity, Iago simply produces more and more uncertainty. Ultimately what Othello wants to see, to know, is beyond Iago's gift. The complex graphs and tables that fill the works of scholars in the Shakespeare authorship debate conceal the inherent impossibility of what they are seeking to attain. As Vickers breaks Shakespeare down into smaller and smaller linguistic units, he seems further and further away from seeing him 'steadily and whole'; Shakespeare the author seems more and more inaccessible. Indeed it is perhaps only stretching the point slightly to see the patterns formed by Vickers' graphs and tables in his work as akin to the mystical markings that cover the handkerchief that Othello gave Desdemona and which he elevates to the status of thing which can prove, and embody, Desdemona's virtue. Neither will ultimately give Vickers or Othello what they want. In fact both graphs and stains are in practice hindrances that conceal the impossibility of what they desire. It is difficult to imagine any real certainty in relation to Shakespeare's authorship which is not ultimately based on an act of aesthetic judgment. But aesthetic judgment is now wizened and has to keep out of sight. There is something rather dispiriting and even alienating in reading articles on Shakespeare full of statistics and graphs since they seem a world apart from the nature of his drama and its art.

### 3. Part II: *'I am not what I am'*

We want to pause here and reflect back on what we have so far written. There

is something not quite right. What we have written fails. And it fails, we would argue, because it adopts a purely textual approach to the discussion of an issue that could be better investigated through performance. The following is a brief sketch of a method for investigating questions of Shakespearean authorship and attribution based on theatrical practice. Play texts are read but they are also performed and heard.

For the actor, theatre texts, for the most part, begin with the eyes. The actor prepares for audition with a text in a printed book, or occasionally even now, an extract on a sheet of paper but, more likely, a text seen on a smart phone or tablet. Extra-textual signifiers: the punctuation; the capital letters; the line ending; perhaps an editor's notes; even the name of the author; all serve to help the reader find meaning and a journey through the text. The first few days of rehearsal are most often spent around a table with a book, smart phone or tablet in hand. Even today with the advent of electronic script and instant theatre techniques most rehearsals still require the actor to be connected to a printed text before giving flight in later stages of rehearsal.

Audiences for the most part do not bring copies of the text to performances. They receive the text not through their eyes but through their ears. Of course some performances are of well-loved plays that have been seen before and the advent of foreign language productions and surtitles provide exceptions, but for the most part audiences hear a text as it is spoken, a text that they may never have seen on the page. It is often remarked that it takes an audience a few minutes to tune into a performance of an early modern text and as those texts are most often, nearly always, Shakespeare we say it takes a few minutes to tune into Shakespeare, the unmistakable sound of the Bard. The question we sought to test through the rehearsal process was whether the genius of Shakespeare can be discerned by the ear. In even the early works, those written before 1599, can the distinctive Shakespearean voice be known most certain?

To establish a methodology we went back to an exercise that Gregory Thompson first encountered in a workshop for young directors at the National Theatre Studio given by Peter Gill in 1998. Peter Gill is a Welsh theatre director, playwright and actor. He directed his first production at the Royal Court Theatre in 1965, was Artistic Director of the Riverside Studios and was an Associate Director of the National Theatre from 1980 to 1997. Gill founded the National Theatre Studio in 1984. His work has a precise beauty and depth born out of a deep examination of the text and the world of the play. Gill is fastidious in his attitude to text: there may be many ways to play a text, a speech, or a word but it only means one thing.

At that rehearsal in 1998 Gill gave out sheets of A4 and instructed the company to keep them face down. Then one person was asked to turn over and read and the rest were asked to listen and if they heard a better way to say the lines to stop the speaker by saying: 'No'. The person who stopped the speaker was then invited to turn over their paper and read the text as they understood

it. On the paper was a string of words typed out all in capitals.

UP FROM MY CABIN MY SEA-GOWN SCARFED ABOUT ME IN THE  
DARK GROPE I TO FIND OUT THEM HAD MY DESIRE FINGERED  
THEIR PACKET AND IN FINE WITHDREW TO MINE OWN ROOM  
AGAIN MAKING SO BOLD MY FEARS FORGETTING MANNERS TO  
UNSEAL THEIR GRAND COMMISSION WHERE I FOUND HORATIO O  
ROYAL KNAVERY AN EXACT COMMAND LARDED WITH MANY SORTS  
OF REASONS IMPORTING DENMARK'S HEALTH AND ENGLAND'S  
TOO WITH HO SUCH BUGS AND GOBLINS IN MY LIFE THAT ON THE  
SUPERVISE NO LEISURE BATED NO NOT TO STAY THE GRINDING OF  
THE AXE MY HEAD SHOULD BE STRUCK OFF

It took several attempts before the text began to flow and a certain competitiveness developed among the actors and directors in the circle. What this process produced was an engagement with the text that was collective and performative. The group worked together to build up a version of the speech that made sense without relying on extra-textual clues and signposts. Of course, some of the actors and directors, like many of the academics who are reading this, perhaps even yourself now, recognize the words Hamlet uses to tell Horatio what he did when bound for England (5.2.12-25). Shakespeare is accorded special status in the theatre. Even in productions that shine less bright there is a faith that the audience will hear 'his powerful sound within an organ weak'. We decided to test this assumption and question what it is that the audience hears.

We adapted the Gill technique to explore a methodology for an investigation into the sound of Shakespeare in comparison to other early modern writers. Our method was tested at Brunel University London, in February 2015 with eight theatre students.<sup>3</sup> We sat in a circle with eight texts: four from a Shakespeare play, *King John*, and four from an anonymous Elizabethan play, *Look About You*. Both plays feature characters from the same period of English history. To select a text at random, to start with the participants were asked to choose a number from 1 to 8. The papers with the chosen text were handed around, one for each participant and kept face down, like an exam. The paper contained only one speech.

There was a preamble to our exercise: 'This is an exercise about what you hear. It's not about the quality of your reading or the reading of anyone else in the group. Similarly it's not about the quality of your acting; this is more like a rehearsal exercise for discovery than performance practice. The exercise is about your listening and understanding and the listening and understanding

<sup>3</sup> The students involved were Julia Canavan, Zoe Wood, Seb James, Jenny Campbell-Williams, Normae Nundall, Freya Wilson, Sam Parker and Matt Patterson.

of the group: we will build it up together. It would be remarkable if one person were able to sail through without hearing the contributions of others. In a moment one person will turn over the paper and without hesitation begin to read aloud. They will resist the urge to scan the text and just begin reading aloud from the top. They will continue to read until someone says, 'Thank you'. And then the speaker will turn the paper over immediately. Please resist the temptation to rescan the text with your eyes. This is an exercise for the ears. You have to turn the paper over straight away because the eyes are very quick. I would like you to say, 'Thank you' as soon as you no longer follow the text or understand what is being said or if you can hear a better way through the text or even if you become aware that your mind has wandered. Just say, 'Thank you'. This is not an exercise in politeness but in your listening so, please, rather than allowing them to keep going, respond to incomprehension by stopping the speaker with thanks'.

Spring 2015. A rehearsal studio on the edge of London. Eight students, two professors, a theatre director, and eight early modern speeches. The texts are face down. One participant turns the paper over and begins to read straight away. The exercise, however, is not about the speaker but about what is heard. Does it make sense? Can you hear a different way through? If the text makes no sense to a listener they say 'Thank you' and the speaker stops and turns the paper back over. It is important that the eyes are not engaged except in the act of reading. Each repetition begins from the top of the paper. Sometimes the text is stopped after a few words. Sometimes it runs along. Often hesitant. Sometimes sure. As the ears of the participants tune into early modern English and familiarity builds, a pattern emerges, a story through the passage discovered and the text becomes clear.

Some word strings are easier than others, found in the first, second or third repetition. Some become a point of contention when there seems to be two opposing ways to meaning. The quality of listening in the room changes as the exercise progresses. We are all engaged in the same process of discovery. Sometimes it helps, as meaning emerges, to read with an attitude, to act as it were. For the most part the words are delivered simply and clearly with a desire to uncover the meaning of the text.

Of course it is hard to fully communicate our processes in writing as the exercise is experiential. It aims to bypass the usual way we understand texts by reading them and talking about them and to put us as scholars into the position of the audience: receiving the text through our ears. The exercise repeats the experience of the audience: hearing the text with attention rapt. No time is spent breaking the text down or talking about the text.

Here are the eight texts we used in the first experiment to establish a methodology. Try reading them aloud. Resist the temptation to work it out and simply listen to the stream of words. If it makes no sense, stop and cover

the text. Then begin again from the top. Allow your listening to find the story of the text.

1. is it not wrong think you when all the world troubled with rumour of a captive queen imprisoned by her husband in a realm where her own son doth wear a diadem is like an head of people mutinous still murmuring at the shame done her and us is it not more wrong when her mother zeal sounded through Europe Afric Asia tells in the hollow of news-thirsting ears queen Elinor lives in a dungeon for pity and affection to her son but when the true cause Clifford's daughter's death shall be exposed to stranger nations what volumes will be writ what libels spread and in each line our state dishonoured

2. his highness doth tells you it is a shame for such wild youth to smother any impiety with shew to chastise loose adultery say Rosamond was Henry's Concubine had never King a Concubine but he did Rosamond begin the fires in France made she the northern borders reek with flames unpeopled she the towns of Picardy left she the wives of England husbandless oh no she sinn'd I grant so do we all she fell herself, desiring none should fall but Elinor whom you so much commend hath been the bellows of seditious fire either through jealous rage or mad desire is't not a shame to think that she hath arm'd four sons right hands against their father's head and not the children of a low-priz'd wretch but one whom God on earth hath deified see where he sits with sorrow in his eyes three of his sons and hers tutor'd by her smiles whilst he weeps and with a proud disdain embrace blithe mirth while his sad heart complain

3. will this content you I that have sat still amaz'd to see my sons devoid of shame to hear my subjects with rebellious tongues wound the kind bosom of their sovereign can no more bear but from a bleeding heart deliver all my love for all your hate will this content thee cruel Elinor your savage mother my uncivil queen the tigress that hath drunk the purple blood of three times twenty thousand valiant men washing her red chaps in the weeping tears of widows virgins nurses sucking babes and lastly sorted with her damn'd consorts enter'd a labyrinth to murder love will this content you she shall be releas'd that she may next seize me she most envies

4. be pleased king puppet have I stood for thee even in the mouth of death open'd my arms to circle in sedition's ugly shape shook hands with duty bad adieu to virtue profan'd all majesty in heaven and earth writ in black characters on my white brow the name of rebel John against his father for thee for thee thou o'tomy of honour thou worm of Majesty thou froth thou bubble and must I now be pleas'd in peace to stand while statutes make thee owner of my land

5. Philip of France in right and true behalf of thy deceased brother Geoffrey's son Arthur Plantagenet lays most lawful claim to this fair island and the territories to Ireland Poitou Anjou Touraine Maine desiring thee to lay aside the sword which sways usurpingly these several titles and put the same into young Arthur's hand thy nephew and right royal sovereign

6. what now my son have I not ever said how that ambitious Constance would not

cease till she had kindled France and all the world upon the right and party of her son this might have been prevented and made whole with very easy arguments of love which now the manage of two kingdoms must with fearful-bloody issue arbitrate

7. sirrah your brother is legitimate your father's wife did after wedlock bear him and if she did play false the fault was hers which fault lies on the hazards of all husbands that marry wives tell me how if my brother who as you say took pains to get this son had of your father claimed this son for his in sooth good friend your father might have kept this calf bred from his cow from all the world in sooth he might then if he were my brother's my brother might not claim him nor your father being none of his refuse him this concludes my mother's son did get your father's heir your father's heir must have your father's land

8. madam an if my brother had my shape and I had his sir Robert's his like him and if my legs were two such riding-rods my arms such eel-skins stuffed my face so thin that in mine ear I durst not stick a rose lest men should say look where three-farthings goes and to his shape were heir to all this land would I might never stir from off this place I would give it every foot to have this face it would not be Sir Nob in any case

Many readers of this article will recognize these texts but for those who did not – could you tell which is Shakespeare? And which is not? Which texts carry the unmistakable sound of the bard? Which of these texts are most certain Shakespeare? We urge you to go back and read aloud the unpunctuated texts until you hear the story in each of them. Would it help to have the punctuation?

1. is it not wrong, think you, when all the world troubled with rumour of a captive queen, imprisoned by her husband in a realm, where her own son doth wear a diadem? Is like an head of people mutinous, still murmuring at the shame done her and us? Is't not more wrong, when her mother zeal, sounded through Europe, Afric, Asia, tells in the hollow of news-thirsting ears, Queen Elinor lives in a dungeon, for pity and affection to her son? But when the true cause, Clifford's daughter's death, shall be exposed to stranger nations, what volumes will be writ, what libels spread, and in each line our state dishonoured!

Would it help to have the line-endings?

1. is it not wrong think you when all the world  
troubled with rumour of a captive queen  
imprisoned by her husband in a realm  
where her own son doth wear a diadem  
is like an head of people mutinous  
still murmuring at the shame done her and us  
is't not more wrong when her mother zeal  
sounded through Europe Afric Asia  
tells in the hollow of news-thirsting ears  
queen Elinor lives in a dungeon  
for pity and affection to her son

but when the true cause, Clifford's daughter's death  
 shall be exposed to stranger nations  
 what volumes will be writ what libels spread  
 and in each line our state dishonoured  
 Or both – line endings and punctuation.

1. Is it not wrong, think you, when all the world  
 Troubled with rumour of a captive queen,  
 Imprisoned by her husband in a realm,  
 Where her own son doth wear a diadem?  
 Is like an head of people mutinous,  
 Still murmuring at the shame done her and us?  
 Is it not more wrong, when her mother zeal,  
 Sounded through Europe, Afric, Asia,  
 Tells in the hollow of news-thirsting ears,  
 Queen Elinor lives in a dungeon,  
 For pity and affection to her son?  
 But when the true cause Clifford's daughter's death,  
 Shall be exposed to stranger nations,  
 What volumes will be writ, what libels spread,  
 And in each line our state dishonoured!

Would it be a clue to authorship to know the names of the characters?

1. LEICESTER.
2. LANCASTER.
3. OLD KING.
4. JOHN.
5. CHATILLION.
6. ELEANOR.
7. KING JOHN.
8. BASTARD

Once we had read all the passages through we asked the participants to judge whether a passage was Shakespeare or not and why. Please go back to the unpunctuated texts above and rate them: Shakespeare, Not Shakespeare.

You may have recognized the last four texts: they're all from *King John* (1.1). However the first four texts are all from *Look About You* (1.2), an anonymous play printed in 1600 and possibly written sometime earlier in the 1590s when there was something of a vogue for disguise plays. More often than not our participants – both students and professors – judged passages from *Look About You* to be Shakespeare while rejecting those from *King John* as Not Shakespeare. The reasons given included the sound, the rhythm, the vocabulary, the imagery, the names of the characters. Interestingly, one participant said if it sounded good it was Shakespeare, if not it wasn't.

So perhaps all we showed by trying to adapt rehearsal techniques to investigate Shakespeare's authorship reveals nothing more than the ideas we hold about what Shakespeare is. There is an argument that as Shakespeare is, for most people, the only early modern playwright, so that he has come to own everything in the Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre: that which is common to the time and that which is his. It might be said that our workshop produced nothing more than the tentative and uncertain conclusions of existing attribution methods. Our limited workshop was less useful in academic terms than the statistical analysis undertaken by such scholars as Brian Vickers or Jonathan Hope. We would argue, however, that we demonstrated that there is scope for applying practice as research techniques to the study of early modern drama: that it reveals both how a text is heard and some of the assumptions we have about Shakespeare. And that using performance within the context of discussions of Shakespearean authorship is useful, if only in order to complicate assumptions about the primacy of the written word. We would also suggest that turning to performance research methodologies will, at the least, turn Shakespeare authorship studies back towards the plays themselves and how they sound on stage.

#### 4. Conclusion

We think the de-capitalized, unpunctuated, line-ending stripped exercise has the potential to investigate authorship and our ideas around it by revealing what an audience hears and what that says about our assumptions of Shakespeare and early modern texts. We would like to run a series of workshops with theatre professionals, academics, theatregoers and drama students to establish a methodology for analysing the responses to the exercise. Whether it reveals an authorship test of any validity or a series of assumptions about Shakespeare is to be discovered.

Traditional Shakespeare authorship studies are predicated on a denied or hidden 'temporal loop'. Like all narratives, they silently presuppose as already given what they purport to produce.<sup>4</sup> Iago's 'evidence' of Desdemona's guilt produces simply what Othello already thinks he knows. Shakespeare as an author exists as the object, a centre of coherence, consistency and value, which authorship studies simultaneously critique and presuppose. Vickers, in a recent review article, discusses with his usual lucidity two recent works that address the attribution of a number of early modern plays. Reflecting upon the similarities between two passages, from *The Spanish Tragedy* and *2 Henry VI*, Vickers comments that 'The closeness of the parallel, in both words and thought, and the

<sup>4</sup> This is a paraphrase of Žižek's comment that 'The price one pays for narrative resolution is the *petitio principii* of the temporal loop – the narrative silently presupposes as already given what it purports to reproduce ...' (1997, 11).

similarity in the dramatic context – a man in authority rebuking a wrongdoer – rules out any other explanation, such as plagiarism or imitation: both passages come from Shakespeare’s verbal memory (2011, 109).

Vickers’ argument is entirely sound but it does presuppose a person called Shakespeare whose verbal memory can be accessed through textual comparison. John Burrows has recently responded to Vickers’ critique of his work, and that of other scholars, by suggesting that Vickers’ critique amounts ‘to an exercise in self-exposure’ (2012, 355). This is undoubtedly the case, but we are not sure that this is an entirely legitimate complaint. Vickers has consistently argued that ultimately questions of authorship come down to academic and scholarly judgment. Unlike Othello, Vickers knows, as is reflected in, for example, his reference to Shakespeare’s verbal memory, that authorship cannot be proved by statistics and graphs – in the final analysis it is necessary to awaken one’s faith.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> As William Leahy points out, the evidence that exists for Shakespeare (and some of the other alternatives) as the author is enough to build a belief upon but it is not enough to build knowledge upon. As far as Shakespeare is concerned, there is simply too much uncertainty (2010, 119).

# *Attribution Studies*



# Between Authorship and Oral Transmission: Negotiating the Attribution of Authorial, Oral and Collective Style Markers in Early Modern Playtexts

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## *Abstract*

The production of playtexts in early modern England falls between two categories of artistic provenance: textual production in quill and print and oral transmission of the text committed to paper. Both categories are rightly speaking processes, and may be repeated several times over within the lifespan of a play. The former is the domain of authors, scribes and printers, the latter the responsibility of actors using their memories to verbally transmit the play in performance. An early modern playtext may thus be (co)written, probably performed and potentially printed, and possibly rewritten, reformed and reprinted in almost any given combination. It is only to be expected that a number of stylistic ‘complications’ will ensue. The question remains how to determine which stylistic markers characterise which creative domain. This paper returns to the cross-roads between authorship attribution and the quantification of other (oral, collective) style markers in an attempt to offer discussion and a better overview of appropriate methodologies for determining which features may feasibly be attributed to which source(s).

*Keywords:* Authorship Attribution, Computational Linguistics, Early Modern Text Studies

## 1. *Introduction*

*The play's the thing, wherein...*

The following essay draws on the work of Walter Ong, Milman Parry and Albert Lord, John Miles Foley, and Thomas Pettitt on oral-formulaic theory. It also draws on advances in attribution studies based on computational stylistic analysis of linguistic features. This field is thankfully still honing its methods through the dedicated efforts of scholars like e.g. Brian Vickers, John Burrows, David Hoover and Hugh Craig, many of whom are currently



embracing the perspectives opened up by cognitive and neurolinguistic research. Within Shakespeare studies, Ian Lancashire remains an important advocate for understanding the mechanisms of language production behind the early modern playtexts and the application of cognitive linguistic theory to corpus-based attribution studies. His articles on the role of the working, or verbal short-term, memory, its relation to long-term lexical storage and the production and retention of words not as single items but as *chunks*<sup>1</sup> deserve credit for highlighting the significance of neural mechanisms also in determining authors' idiolects.<sup>2</sup> Hoover (2003), Craig and Kinney (2009), Burrows (2012), Vickers (2011a, 2011b, 2012), and Craig (2014) have all, in turn, published studies that apply this particular approach to Shakespearean attribution studies albeit from different vantage points.

The chunks Lancashire started quantifying back in the late 1990s<sup>3</sup> are variously also known as prefabricated units, strings, multi-word units, N-grams, fixed phrases, verbal sequences, phrasal repetends, formulas, and/or collocations. In a longer version of this contribution, I have taken the opportunity to argue at some length for a stricter definition of the phenomenon of the multi-word unit, focussing in particular on collocation.<sup>4</sup> The longer essay argues that there are limits to the *unmediated* application of collocation theory/collocation extraction in Shakespearean attribution studies, but also identifies promising uses of collocation extraction if we narrow the

<sup>1</sup> For an explanation of the function of the verbal short-term memory (the so-called phonological loop) and its connection to long-term memory and the learning of verbal sequences, see Burgess and Hitch 2006, 627-652.

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. Lancashire 1996, 1997, 171-185; 1999. In his 2004 contribution to *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, Lancashire elaborates on the phenomenon of 'convergence zones', the ostensibly unique 2-second long combinatorial *composita* of single speakers/authors: 'These combinations appear in repeated phrases or unfixed collocations that are not more than 5-9 units in length. This follows if, as scientists suspect, working memory constraints are associated with a deeper limitation existing at the level of neural networks. Indeed, one use of computer text analysis is to help determine the size and complexity of long-term-memory networks, how many things can converge on a convergence zone' (Lancashire 2004). I expect that this phenomenon will be more fully discussed and its applicability to attribution studies further investigated in future publications.

<sup>3</sup> In 10 early Shakespeare plays, totaling 197,000 words, Lancashire counted '12,600 different word forms which combine to form about 32,300 *fixed phrases*' (emphasis mine). Lancashire subsequently deduced that '[Shakespeare's] phrasal lexicon must exhibit traces of [his] networked associational memory and thus of his idiolect' (1999, 744). Also quoted in Vickers 2012, 27.

<sup>4</sup> The full paper is available upon request. The sections exploring the nature and general applicability of multi-word units in early modern attribution studies form part of a forthcoming research project with Marcus Dahl and Darren Freebury-Jones.

definition and acknowledge the special linguistic properties of the extant sample material. The following section summarises the longer discussion.

According to Ellis (1997, 128), chunks subdivide into collocations. As such, collocations are expressions of the way the brain habitually computes language through the rehearsal and repetition of words in the short-term memory in association with long-term-memory lexical storage.<sup>5</sup> J.R. Firth and John Sinclair (who elaborated on Firth's initial theory) both apply a contextual/lexical (though not semantic) perspective, and notably define collocation as *words that co-occur habitually, by mutual expectancy, and more frequently than would be expected by chance*. Hence, the Firth-Sinclair approach is sometimes also described as frequency-based (Firth 1957; Halliday and Robins 1966; Sinclair 1966, 1996; Hoey 1991). But another, so-called phraseological, approach to the collocation phenomenon also exists, represented by e.g. Mel'čuk (1998), Cowie (1978, 1981) and Gitsaki (1999). This to me more compelling definition combines the semantic and structural properties of language and states that the *meaning* and *function* of a collocation matter at least as much as frequent co-occurrence. Unfortunately, we have yet to arrive at a single precise or non-controversial definition of the concept of collocation. Nor has it been ascertained which of the above approaches best serves the purposes of attribution studies. Only very few scholars (and only one attribution scholar that I know of) seem willing to discuss the problems involved in making a still so loosely defined concept the basis of corpus-driven stylistic research (Seretan and Wehrli 2006, 2011; Burrows 2012, 380). Surely, if the aim is to (re)allocate authorship and perhaps even reorganise canons, we can expect the linguistic markers used to do so to be more scrupulously described?

Extraction of collocations in early modern sample texts, as exemplified below, is clearly no longer much of a problem, while describing the processes that underpin the multi-word units clearly is. One place to start would be to consider some questions pertinent to the multi-word unit as a style marker with specific reference to Shakespeare studies: firstly, what is the relation of collocations to phraseology, to individual phraseogony<sup>6</sup> – and ultimately to idiolect? How is the concept best applied in the present *local* context of Shakespearean authorship studies where the sample material consists of

<sup>5</sup> See further Pawley and Syder: 'In the store of familiar collocations there are expressions for a wide range of familiar concepts and speech acts, and the speaker is able to retrieve these as wholes or as automatic chains from the long-term memory; by doing this he minimises the amount of clause-internal encoding work to be done and frees himself to attend to other tasks in talk-exchange, including the planning of larger units of discourse' (1983, 192).

<sup>6</sup> The term phraseogony, meaning individual phraseology, was coined by John Sinclair (1991, 92).

playtexts written under some time pressure by professional playwrights for live, oral rendition? What *do* and *don't* we know about the connection between collocations and the verbal short-term memory, and between collocation and the syntactically binding combinatorial neuronal assemblies recently explored by neurolinguists like Friedemann Pulvermüller (Pulvermüller and Shtyrov 2003, Pulvermüller and Knoblauch 2009, Pulvermüller 2010)? How do collocations relate to lexical priming within a discourse community ('the early modern stage' being one such community) and to the functional 'verbal formulas' identified by oral composition scholars Lord and Parry and their followers; stock phrases which probably involve the long-term memory? And finally, is a multi-word unit significant simply because it is frequent enough to be statistically significant within a given text sample (words co-occur more frequently than by chance) or is it significant because of what it *is* or *does* in that text (e.g. a lexical vs. a grammatical collocation)?<sup>7</sup> If in future attribution studies we aim to look for the author through the identification of idiosyncratic multi-word units in surviving playtexts, I believe we need to know much more about what those units are and which functions they perform in those texts. This essay offers to at least begin this discussion.

## 2. *Local Definitions for Local Texts: Using Multi-word Units in Shakespearean Attribution Studies*

In attribution studies we have to assume that at least some linguistic markers are individual and unique to one author - be that Shakespeare, Kyd, or any other candidate under investigation. Based on the review of theories provided in the longer unpublished essay quoted above (cf. note 4), I believe we can - and should - include certain multi-word units/collocations among these markers. But one thing is extracting and quantifying those units, another is to determine which units are distinct and likely to be of individual origin, and which are distinctive of a collective speech community rather than an individual. In Hoey's view, collocations can denote anything from incompetence in the writer to a writer striving after unusual effect (2009, 45), while Burrows (2012, 381) argues that some identifiably multi-word units may be little else than quasi-phrases or gibberish. Brian Vickers' acceptance of N-grams that are not *topical*, i.e. not linked to contextual semantics (Vickers

<sup>7</sup> A reviewer of this essay kindly supplied this example: in *A Funerall Elegie* (1612) we find 'Reason's golden meane' where the searchable texts in EEBO with {golden meane near.5 reason(s)} produce only 3/17348 returns before 1652. This is definitely a collocation yet it is not frequent. In *Love's Labour's Lost*, 'O, these barren tasks, too hard to keepe, / Not to see Ladies, study, fast, not sleepe' reveals after a search of EEBO with {tasks near.20 ladies} only 3/34874 returns before 1690. This is also a collocation but again it is not frequent. Both instances are notably examples of rare lexical collocation.

2011b) follows early Firthian anti-structural notions of collocation (Firth 1957, 196), but at the same time is not easily reconciled with recent cognitive theories of syntactical binding (Pulvermüller and Shtyrov 2003, Pulvermüller and Knoblauch 2009, Pulvermüller 2010).<sup>8</sup> Somewhere in between these poles lies the rather low-practical possibility that some collocations perform useful dramaturgical functions in the playtexts, enforced by collective priming, performance tradition and oral-memorial transmission (Pettitt 1988, 2001; Petersen 2010). To impose some sort of qualitative order on the quantification of multi-word units, I propose to follow Seretan (2009, 94; 2011; Seretan and Wehrli 2006), who suggests that structural or *syntactic* information is crucial for accurately detecting true collocations in corpora. This stance favours meaning and syntactical soundness of the units as well as frequency. Burrows (2012, 381) may not have been quite so specific when he advises against ‘lumping together’ several kinds of multi-word unit, but a remedy against lumping the evidence would certainly be achieved by categorising the kind(s) of multi-word unit or collocation we identify. Simultaneously, more knowledge about the stylistic features that *do* in fact indicate authorship would be made available. One way to enable such categorisation is to consistently apply syntactically-annotated corpora when extracting multi-word units. Another is the systematic description of the units identified in terms of their contextual *and* phraseological qualities.

A number of very good purpose-made resources for extracting collocations/multi-word units already exist.<sup>9</sup> I would highlight Martin Mueller’s ‘WordHoard’ (a deeply tagged information-rich corpus and search

<sup>8</sup> For Vickers an N-gram is a string of N consecutive words whether grammatically meaningful or not, and so in this definition an N-gram is not necessarily committed to memory (retained) and verbally uttered (produced). I am inclined to discourage using this definition of a style marker *if* our aim is to attach modern neurolinguistic theory to practical text-mining techniques. That said, I am not ruling out that non-topical (longer) matching strings may work for yet other reasons; phonoaesthetics and phonology being prime areas for further investigation. See Firth (1968, 18), and Vickers (2011b): ‘Unique matches of three [or more, sic.] consecutive words in *The Troublesome Reign* with comparable strings in other plays by Peele’ in *The Troublesome Reign of John, King of England*, ed. by C.R. Forker (2011), Appendix 2, 335-336.

<sup>9</sup> The list is growing, and presently includes a range of KWIC (Key Word in Context) applications (also used by EEBO), the TACT program developed by Lancashire; Mueller’s MONK tools; WordSmithTools; Seretan and Wherli’s FipsCoWeb (2011); Mike Scot’s WordCopyFind; Pl@giarism, etc. Using these and similar resources, identification and extraction of collocations can certainly be automated and replicated, and subsequently optimised if subjected to further conceptual checks and ‘manual’ analysis.

application);<sup>10</sup> ‘KEMPE’ (a POS-tagged corpus and search resource),<sup>11</sup> and Seretan and Wehrli’s ‘FipsCoWeb’ (a retrieval resource for own uploaded files).<sup>12</sup> Other programs for textual analysis include Pl@giarism, WordCopyFind, WordSmith Tools and Concordance (all downloadable online, although not all free). Lancashire’s TACT and Mueller’s MONK tools for use in restricted corpus environments are equally effective, I am sure. Beyond these resources, a growing number of text editing applications for handling very large files, such as ‘InfoRapid Search & Replace’ or ‘Dreamweaver’, have proved extremely useful in both pre and post-editing of corpus studies.

To test some of the above theoretical considerations, along with the currently available software, and to add to already relevant research, I have chosen to do something very practical and review the collocations identified by Brian Vickers (2012) as evidence for Shakespeare’s hand in the *additions to The Spanish Tragedy*.

<sup>10</sup> WordHoard (Mueller 2004-2013) is downloadable from <<http://goo.gl/xYWSBy>>. This stand-alone application allows searches in various corpora, incl. Homer, Spenser and Shakespeare. ‘WordHoard Shakespeare’ is a joint project of the Perseus Project at Tufts University, Northwestern University Library, and Northwestern University Academic Technologies. Texts are sourced from *The Globe Shakespeare*; the one-volume Cambridge Shakespeare, edited by W. G. Clark, J. Glover, and W.A. Wright (1891-1893), while *Internet Shakespeare Editions* of the quartos and folios, ed. by Michael Best, have been consulted ‘to create a modern text that observes as closely as possible the morphological and prosodic practices of the earliest editions’. The corpus uses standardised spelling, and all text is fully lemmatised and morphosyntactically tagged. Mueller and others have further developed a set of text-mining tools, MONK or ‘Metadata Offer New Knowledge’, which may be used with the corpora in the WordHoard. Unfortunately, neither the MONK tools nor the enhanced *SHC Corpus* (50 million words, containing about 500 texts from 1533 to 1625 from the Text Creation Partnership [TCP], including plays and major Shakespearean sources) is freely available to scholars. Mueller’s own corpus-based attribution studies have yielded promising results for multi-word units: ‘plays by the same author are likely to share more dislegomena [i.e. 2-word collocations]. ... If we look more closely at shared dislegomena by same-author play pairs, we discover that on average plays by the same author share five dislegomena, and the median is four. Roughly speaking, plays by the same author are likely to share twice as many dislegomena as plays by different authors. Clearly some author effect is at work, and there is some virtue in adding some precision to this intuitively plausible conclusion’. See Mueller 2014a.

<sup>11</sup> KEMPE: *Corpus of Early Modern Playtexts in English* contains approx. 9 million words of syntactically annotated early modern playtexts and masques. It is fully POS-tagged, and allows both plain-text searches and syntactical/POS/wildcard-based searches through corpus query tools. The resource readily facilitates both collocation and colligation extraction along with concordance data for all search types. The syntactically annotated version of KEMPE was prepared for online publication by Petersen (2004).

<sup>12</sup> FipsCoWeb was developed by Violeta Seretan *et al.* as an online application for extraction of collocations in own uploaded texts (Seretan and Wehrli 2011). It is freely accessible through: <<http://goo.gl/f7b6XM>>, and its rationale is explained in Seretan and Wehrli 2010.

In his study, Vickers, in collaboration with Marcus Dahl, uses a combination of Pl@giarism and InfoRapid Search & Replace to locate 116 instances of multi-word units in the *additions*. Those units are then matched by units in a number of other early modern canons, predominantly in Shakespearean plays, and as such presented as evidence for Shakespearean authorship. For the purposes of the study, Vickers and Dahl looked at plays produced between 1586-1642 (Vickers 2012, 35), using the database of plays underlying the KEMPE corpus (compiled by Petersen and Dahl 2001-2003 as part of joint PhD research).<sup>13</sup> I observe the same chronological constraints, using, however, the POS-tagged information-rich version of KEMPE (Petersen 2004). While particular emphasis is granted to plays preceding the publication of the *additions* in 1602, the time span I apply matches the remainder of corpus searches in this essay, where an expansive scope (1561-1652)<sup>14</sup> is favoured in order to gauge the units' general prevalence in early modern drama over time and across canons. The dating of playtexts is checked against *Annals of English Drama* in Wagonheim's revised edition (1989; Vickers and Dahl use Wiggins 2011).

Using the KEMPE corpus and search tools, which allow both normal searches and POS queries, I have checked the 116 multi-word matches compiled by Vickers,<sup>15</sup> and will venture my commentary below. It will soon become evident that I comment only on those instances that I find unlikely to be *authorial* collocations. Hence the commentary starts with item 2 from Vickers' list.<sup>16</sup> As a guiding principle, I apply a phraseological definition of collocation that stipulates a *syntactically sound expression* that is statistically significant, regardless of its morphological qualities. I.e., there may be distance between the headword and its collocates, but any units that cut across sentence boundaries are not accepted as collocations, *pace* Seretan (2013, 94-99) and Seretan *et al.* (2004, 1871): 'The involved words occur together more often than by chance, thus the collocation is restricted with respect to the collocate substitutability. Both grammatical and lexical collocations are considered (Benson *et al.* 1986), e.g., *abstain from*, *pay attention*, without limitation on the distance between

<sup>13</sup> See Petersen 2004.

<sup>14</sup> The earliest playtext in the KEMPE corpus is *Gorboduc* (1561/1562) and the latest is Brome's *A Jovial Crew, or the Merry Beggars*, performed 1641, printed 1652. Dating of plays follow *Annals of English Drama*, ed. by Wagonheim 1990.

<sup>15</sup> John Burrows has indicated that Vickers' phraseological evidence for Shakespeare's *Additions to The Spanish Tragedy* is 'merely a variant of the 'parallel passages' studied by scholars down the centuries' (2012, 357). There is nothing wrong as such with parallel phrases. The *typology* of the phrases simply needs to be examined in greater detail, and it needs to be considered which linguistic agent (author, actor or tradition) is likely to be 'responsible' for the item in question.

<sup>16</sup> All items from Vickers' list (2012) are given in bold type. Where applicable, a hyperlinked KEMPE search augments the commentary.

words in text (*apart from the sentence boundaries*)' (Seretan *et al.* 2004, 1871; emphasis mine). In a number of instances I suggest that the multi-word unit in question is likely to derive from oral transmission / dramaturgical tradition rather than individual composition. Section 3 below elaborates upon this aspect.

2) **'...of it. | Besides'** It is questionable whether this 'co-occurrence' is much more than that. It may qualify as an unfixed collocation by Sinclair's definition (1991, 121), but it is neither a grammatical nor a lexical collocation (Benson *et al.*, 1986: ix ff.). This, in turn, makes it difficult to determine which is the headword and which are the collocates,<sup>17</sup> and complicates its relation to language production theories involving both the short-term memory loop and long-term lexical storage. The unit consists of two function words (a preposition and a pronoun) and one conjunction (some would say three function words) belonging to two structurally separate syntagmata. Finally, it traverses a sentence border, which further disqualifies a likely neuronal connection between the constituents (Pulvermüller 2010). It is not a phrase, either. *If* we accept 'besides' as a node, it collocates upward (Sinclair 1991, 121) with the two very frequent function words 'of' and 'it'. The unit is indeed rare, as a search in KEMPE quickly confirms. This *may* of course be an authorship marker. However, it may just as easily be an entirely random combination. In the KEMPE corpus, 'besides' (besides being preceded by commas, full stops and colons) produces the following left-context vectors 'a' (26 times), 'to' (23), 'of' (22), 'and' (19), 'in' (23), 'all' and 'have' (10), ... 'many', 'me', and 'her' before it collocates with 'it' (3 times in total).

4) **'Run(ne) to'** This grammatical collocation may possibly qualify as a situational dramaturgical formula (see Pettitt 1988, 184-185, and section 3 below). If so, it is probably not a strong indicator of individual, authorial style.

5) **'presently | and bid'** See 2). This example traverses two clauses if not two sentences. A search in KEMPE confirms that this is a rare co-occurrence, yet the matching phrasal repetitions listed by Vickers indicate formulaicity, and follow an apparently common Verb + to + Noun + presently structure present in many other playtexts. The example defies categorisation as lexical or grammatical collocation.

<sup>17</sup> According to Burgess and Hitch, 'item nodes for familiar stimuli such as letters, digits or words are assumed to have strong pre-experimental connections to the nodes representing their constituent phonemes. When each item in a sequence is presented, an item node is selected by competitive queuing and language storing is accomplished by strengthening connections between *simultaneously active nodes in adjacent layers*' (2006, 629; emphasis mine).

7) **'Do(e) you hear me'** This clause is probably a dramaturgical formula (see below).

**"Do you hear me sir"**, by the way, is also found in *Two Angry Women of Abingdon* from 1598 (not in Vickers' list).

20) **'A thing of nothing'** This collocation is also an idiom or commonplace, and is also found in e.g. *A Knack to Know a Knave*, *Two Angry Women of Abingdon*, *The Pedlar's Prophecy*, and *The Cobbler's Prophecy*; all 1590s plays but not included in Vickers' list. While this is certainly a lexical collocation, such phenomena should probably be disqualified as authorship markers.

28) **'a sonne. | For...'** (see 2). This is another syntactically disrupted, unfixed collocation in the *additions*. In Vickers' list, however, it is compared to two fully grammatical (and syntactically sound) collocations from *3Henry VI* and *King Lear*. If we accept that the short-term memory phonological loop deals in unfixed collocations, we need to investigate further the likelihood of such unfixed collocations working across sentence boundaries, which Seretan (2011) dismisses. That said, the (lexical) matches produced are all from Shakespeare's accepted canon.<sup>18</sup>

43) **'See where x comes/stands etc.'**<sup>19</sup> is the best example of an 'oral formula'/evidence of formulaic dramaturgy in this list.<sup>20</sup> A grammatical clause such as this serves the communicative purposes of authors and actors alike, and therefore should be excepted from any study purporting to quantify evidence of only individual authorship. See further section 3 below.

51) **'No, no, you ...'** A search in KEMPE reveals that the phrase (if not collocation) is a common one across early modern dramatic canons, with pre-1600 examples of **no, no, you (verb)**<sup>21</sup> in e.g. *The Famous Victories*, *Orlando Furioso*, *Englishmen for My Money*, including an abundance of other occurrences. The phrase is governed by 'incremental repetition', an oral composition principle perpetuated by repeated performance and subsequently included in printed versions, as defined by Andersen *et al.* (1982).

<sup>18</sup> A further KEMPE check for [word="a" %c] [lex="child" | lex="daughter" | lex="son"] [word="for" %c] [pos="PRON" %c] yields further hits in (Rowley's) *When you See me* (1604), Field's *A Woman is a Weathercock* (first performed 1609-1610/publ. 1612) and Brome's *Weeding of the Covent Garden* (performed 1633/publ. 1641), all post-1600.

<sup>19</sup> This unit is strictly singular. More variants exist, including Look where x +VERB.

<sup>20</sup> See e.g. Pettitt's (1988) illustration of 'formulaic dramaturgy' in Marlowe's A and B texts of *Doctor Faustus*.

<sup>21</sup> Search string in KEMPE: [word="no" %c] [word="."?" %c] [word="no" %c] [word=".\*" %c] [word="you" %c] [pos="V"%c].

52) **'You are deceiu/v'd'** This is a phrase or a clause, not a collocation. It yields a number of matches in pre-1600 plays besides those listed by Vickers (e.g. in *The Warres of Cyrus, Fair Em, A Knack to Know a Knave, Clyamon and Clamydes, Englishmen for My Money, Soliman and Perseda*, etc.).

59) **'I am not mad'** This is a clause. The repeated instances in *King John* may likewise be examples of internal incremental repetition (as explained above). As such, the phrase probably should be disqualified as a reliable authorial style marker.

61) **'I know thee (to be)'** / **'I know thee'** in *Titus Andronicus* may be another example of internal incremental repetition, and so potentially an oral style marker. Moreover, a KEMPE search yields plentiful examples of this clause structure elsewhere, which suggests that it could be a dramaturgical formula of collective origins. **'I know [pronoun] to be'** is found in at least 24 other pre- and post-1600 playtexts.

97) **'Well(,) sir(,) then'** The unfixed collocation 'Well sir' may likely be of oral/formulaic origin, and is very common indeed across the canons. The added **then** does, however, make this unfixed collocation less frequent, and as such the phrase could have authorship determination value. The item regrettably defies easy categorisation as lexical or grammatical.

105) **'Nay(,) then I'** Neither a lexical nor a grammatical collocation, but arguably an unfixed one, this structure is found in a great number of plays, as the hyperlink will testify, including many pre-1600. I would argue that it should be disqualified as an authorial marker.

110) **'Do, do, (do)...'** Some simple verbal incremental repetition is probably at work here. Both *2 Henry IV* and *Troilus and Cressida's* textual and performative provenance is complex enough for us to expect a presence of oral-formulaic style markers such as those explored by e.g. Maguire (1996) or Petersen (2010). That this should be an authorial style marker is not very likely.

111) **'Not so () | You...'** (see 2 above).

If the goal of attribution studies is to analyse the language of written compositions and assign authorship, and to do so on the basis of a sound theory of language, I agree: we need a strong theoretical rationale for our practical work (Vickers 2011a, 116). If part of our rationale rests on quantifying multi-word units such as those compiled by Vickers, Craig, Burrows, and Hoover, then we need to examine what they contain. As we have already established, collocations can be lexical or grammatical. A majority of the items I have

selected for review above are lexical, while a few are grammatical. Others defy categorisation. With the involvement of lexical neural assemblies and the long-term memory, at least some of the above units will probably have served aptly as mnemonic aids (i.e. situational formulas, or verbal expressions of formulaic dramaturgy, aiding the immediate language production that takes place on stage in the short-term verbal memories of actors. The fact that a collocation is lexical (containing a lexical headword plus collocates) does not then *in itself* vouch for individual, authorial origin. Other units could be construed as simple incremental patterning – a progressive oral composition mechanism, which may involve long-term memory storage of earlier ‘lexical increments’ too, and which may potentially be introduced through the course of transmitting a play on stage and in print several times (Andersen *et al.* 1982). Yet other items above could be random co-occurrences. Most importantly, most of the collocations, clause structures, and repetitious phrases listed above are *unlikely* to indicate *individual* authorship. Be that by Shakespeare or any other individual candidate. The remainder of Vickers’ 116 multi-word units, now filtered for what I call oral or collective formulas, may very likely prove highly effective determinants of individual authorial style. The following section will discuss further the range and contents of those oral / collective formulas.

### 3. *The Oral Roots of Staged Verbalisation*

While the culture that Shakespeare and his contemporaries inhabited was not oral, the sub-culture or theatrical industry in which they worked was not fully textual either. One might say that they worked under residually oral conditions. At the very least, they belonged to a discourse community heavily reliant on memorial reconstruction. The texts that survive from the early modern stage certainly do so in various formats, versions and qualities quite unlike what we today would call stable text formats. Most of them were written for oral performance. Milman Parry once said that when someone transcribes an oral song into a text, it remains oral. Have we indeed sufficiently understood the provenance of the texts we work with? Print makes for more tightly closed verbal art forms (Ong 1982, 130), but the early modern stage dealt in several ‘open’ handwritten formats relevant at different stages in a play’s lifespan; different printed versions of playtexts were circulating, and often several hands were involved in playwrighting at composition or revision stage. Acting troupes went touring with alternate versions of plays, etc. In other words, we are back where we started with the written/rewritten, performed/reperformed and printed/reprinted sample material.<sup>22</sup> It seems to me appropriate, therefore, to try to link

<sup>22</sup> Scholarly resources like *The Lost Plays Database* (curated by Knutson and McInnis 2009-2015), the REED archives (ongoing since 2003), incl. the *Early Modern London Theatres*

the theories of language production introduced earlier with theories from the study of oral transmission of folk material – and in particular Milman Parry and Albert Lord's concept of the 'formula'.<sup>23</sup> The use of formulas in oral composition was probably the most revolutionary concept introduced in Lord and Parry's research on Homeric poetry and traditional folksong. In Parry's definition, a formula is 'a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea'. Like the functional information they express, 'the standard formulas belong not to one singer, but to tradition' (1971, 80). In Lord's understanding, formulas are 'the phrases and clauses and sentences' of the poet's specialised poetic grammar, which he learns 'by hearing them in other singers' songs', where the process of memorisation is 'unconscious and follows the same principles as the learning of language itself' (2000, 36).

Such formulas are unquestionably linked to the chunks or multi-word units already discussed above. What makes Parry and Lord's perspective different is the centrality of *memory* and *tradition*. By placing the use of formulas firmly in the spoken language as expressions of functional verbal economy, the formulas come remarkably close to the 'permanent sets of associative connections in long-term memory..., which underlie the attainment of automaticity and fluency in language' (Miller 1956 in Ellis 2001, 38-39). 'Chunking', in this context, however, is seen not as a language mechanism, but as the main principle of human cognition: 'A chunk is a unit of memory organisation, formed by bringing together a set of already formed chunks in memory and welding them together into a larger unit. Chunking implies the ability to build up such structures recursively, thus leading to a hierarchical organisation of memory. Chunking appears to be a ubiquitous feature of human memory' (Newell 1990, 3-4).

That formulas occur more frequently in spoken language than in writing has subsequently been confirmed by corpus-based comparisons of written and spoken corpora (e.g. Brazil 1995; Biber *et al.* 1999; Leech 2000). This supposedly means that memory functions differently in oral composition than in writing (which is rightly speaking a form of artificial memory). Parry, Lord, and later Foley, were acutely aware of this aspect, but perhaps we may add some recent insights to theirs.

According to Chafe (1994), modern English utterances 'are constructed as intonation units that usually have a modal length of four words and that are often highly predictable in terms of their lexical concordance (Hopper

project (ed. by MacLean 2011), and the *Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project* (Ioppolo 2005-2016) all serve as timely reminders of the unstable composition environment that constitutes the early modern stage(s). The text repository EEBO, in comparison, offers less such 'messy' meta data.

<sup>23</sup> The term 'formula' covers a vast number of technical terms in circulation for 'repetitions', or 'recurrent phrases', 'stock epithets', 'epic clichés', 'stereotyped phrases', 'bound phraseology' to name just a few (Lord 2000, 30).

1998)<sup>24</sup> Assuming that early modern English will have had a similar span, we can apply this constraint to actors' oral language production, too, only bearing in mind that on-stage verbalisation is constructed in real time, and so will have imposed even greater working-memory demands on the individual compared with writing. Consequently, we can expect an even greater reliance on fixed collocations in performance, whose lexical content link them with the long-term memory. It is, as Ellis, Simpson-Vlach and Maynard (2008, 376) state, simply 'easier for us [language users] to look something up from long-term memory than to compute it (Bresnan, 1999; Kuiper, 1996)', and even easier, perhaps, if those fixed collocations come in 3-4-gram 'natural' intonation units.

Optimal 'on stage' economy of expression, then, relies on knowing exactly which patterns to *infer/use* in which situation. If actors were *not* familiar with a stock of frequently used word associations, they would presumably struggle to complete their workday both in live, on-stage speech and in learning their parts. For similar reasons, situational formulas are replete in primary oral cultures. Moreover, in folk ritual, ballads and folksong there is a limitation to the form of such formulas (Ong 1982), which in turn allows for easy replication. If we apply this observation to the early modern stage, actors – like traditional oral performers – are likely to have 'found and kept expressions which could be used in a variety of scenes and situations, either as they stood or with slight modifications'. Foley calls this the 'compositional idiom' (1991, 23), suggesting an enhanced definition of the 'formula' as 'an expression regularly used under the same metrical conditions to express an essential idea, but where 'formula types or systems [can] replace one another, allowing for a high degree of economy of expression/ mnemonic economy' (25).

Whether or not Shakespeare and his colleagues wrote to produce literary drama (Erne 2003) or deliberately created texts out of other texts, borrowing and adapting already popular plots, the vast majority of the material they produced was intended for stage performance and was feasibly written with oral rendition or actors' memories in mind (Lancashire 1999, 736). This could mean, then, that authors like Shakespeare were doubly subject to collocation use, in the sense that they are *non-consciously* producing language according to a general 'idiom principle' but also *consciously* writing to accommodate actors' so-called *prehension*<sup>25</sup> on stage (cf. Foley's 'compositional idiom'). We ought thus perhaps to expect playtexts, like other oral genres, to contain an 'additive oral style' or 'high oral residue' (Ong 1982, 36-37):

<sup>24</sup> Chafe and Hopper are quoted in Ellis *et al.* 2008, 376.

<sup>25</sup> According to Firth, 'the collocation of a word or a "piece" is not to be regarded as mere juxtaposition; it is an order or mutual expectancy. The words are *mutually expectant* and mutually *prehended*' (1957, 196; emphasis mine). Both Lancashire and Vickers refer to the concept of *prehension*, e.g. 'the wide use that natural language makes of such "embedding" produces a kind of *expectation* in the hearer that the rest of the associated "word-material" will soon appear' (Vickers 2012, 136).

The elements of orally-based thought and expression tend to be not so much simple integers as clusters of integers, such as *parallel terms or phrases or clauses, antithetical terms or phrases or clauses, epithets*. ... In oral performance of folksongs, the performer prefers e.g. not the soldier, but the brave soldier; not the princess, but the beautiful princess; not the oak, but the sturdy oak. (Ong 1982, 38)<sup>26</sup>

Another advantage for the on-stage speaker would be to 'say the same thing, or equivalently the same thing, two or three times' when performing in front of a large audience. If the playgoers miss the 'not only...', they themselves can supply it by inference from the 'but also...' (Ong 1982, 40).

If the author-playwrights were in fact accomplices in this mechanism, the result may have been near-optimal performance conditions for the oral performers of the written scripts. It means that authors, (scribes) and actors could and would deliberately choose to deploy *similar* functional formulas (such as 'Look where he/she/it comes/goes/is') rather than different expressions for a given (entry) scene. Likewise, audiences would know what phraseology to expect in a number of similar situations. Such a collective stylistic contract is of course speculative. What we *do* know is that multi-word units are central in language production and reception, and so the use of formulas would have come natural to authors and actors (and audience members) alike. We also know that lexical chunks and collocations stored in the mental lexicon enable quick retrieval and both speed and ease communication. To this we can add recent research on priming, which suggests language users' sensitivity to the *frequencies* of occurrence of a wide range of different linguistic elements used within a specific field or domain. In such 'discourse communities', verbal knowledge is shared between speakers who can recognise the chunks used by each other. The shared knowledge enables the interlocutors to process language in a similar way, each 'member' sharing the knowledge of the whole field, industry, or domain. The fact that lexical priming is both a *reciprocal* mechanism and *reinforceable* by a speech community highlights, I believe, the importance of addressing both 'tradition' and 'collectivity' when analysing early modern playtexts. Ellis, applying a usage-based approach (1996, 2002a, 2002b), e.g. provides clear evidence of the influence of each 'usage event' of a given formula and the processing of its component constructions on speakers' language systems. If we grant the early modern stage status of a discourse community, it is likely to have been predicated on a degree of mutual interpretation where collective activities involving the members' interpretation of the vocabulary used take place. Fellow actors and authors' use of similar phraseology will then have primed subsequent usage, perhaps even to the extent that a collective store of phraseology or a

<sup>26</sup> Ong of course does not argue that this mechanism is not present in literary composition, only that it is more prevalent in oral composition. See also Ong 1982, 188-212.

‘commulect’ develops. This is not so far from Firth’s notion of ‘meaning by collocation’, where familiarity with frequently used word associations arouses ‘expectancies’ in fellow language users (Firth 1957, 195-196).

At the very least, priming would serve some very functional, workaday purposes for the authors and actors in the industry. Similarly, the stakeholders of this community would of course have been highly familiar with cueing systems (see Palfrey and Stern 2007), and so might oddly enough have been more aware of the practical conditions of the human working memory and the brain’s language-producing mechanisms than ‘normal’ language users. Actors and authors, both attuned to systematised cueing, may thus have been exceptionally well-suited to utilising these mechanisms quasi-consciously.

Usage-based theories of language are clearly of great value to understanding both early modern authors’ and actors’ use of formulas and the degree to which seeing/hearing the beginning of a formula will have primed recognition of its final word(s), collocates or constituents. It would certainly be interesting to look further into how frequency and repetition affect – and ultimately bring about – form in language and expression in the early modern playtexts,<sup>27</sup> and how this knowledge corresponds with general language production (Bybee and Hopper 2001; Ellis 2002a, 2002b, 2008a; Bod, Hay and Jannedy 2003; Hoey 2005, 2009; Robinson and Ellis 2008; Pulvermüller and Knoblauch 2009; Pulvermüller, Cappelle and Shtyrov 2013). Such an undertaking will have to wait, however; and instead the following pages provide some token examples of how we can readily use corpus resources to extract and analyse multi-word units of a potentially ‘oral’ or ‘collective’ formulaic nature. By learning more about these formulas, we can hopefully gain a better understanding of the patterns and collocations that characterise the vocabulary of the early modern stage as a whole, and, by implication, an understanding of what individual authors’ idiolects are less likely to contain.

The following is a sample of commonly-occurring situational dramatic formulas extracted using the KEMPE corpus and search tools.<sup>28</sup> Using wildcard searches one can locate bigrams, 3-grams or 4-grams, or combinations where words colligate with specific POS in adjacent sentence slots. After this, the researcher is faced with a rather old-fashioned process of manually checking the semantic and syntactic properties of the formulas. Further post-processing includes checks for left or right-context collocates. In the examples below, simple occurrence frequencies are given in brackets. Looking beyond raw frequency

<sup>27</sup> See further Petersen 2008, 2010, and Pettitt 2001, 2005).

<sup>28</sup> The searches are carried out in KEMPE, and were chosen on the basis of searches for both lexical and grammatical multi-word units led by e.g. VERB, PRON (pronouns, interrogative), ADV (adverb, time), PREP (prepositions; time/space). The results were then manually checked for formulaicity.

(and hence statistical significance) across the 9 million words in KEMPE, I treat the formulas as collocations following the phraseological approach (Cowie 1978, 1981; Mel'čuk 1998; Gitsaki 1999); that is, I am as interested in what the units *do* as in how many times they occur:

And so away	(7)
Away, away	(152)
Away, away, away	(9)
Away, away, away, away	(2) <sup>29</sup>
Come away (most frequent right-context collocates: quickly, with, I)	(216)
Come, come / come [noun] (most frequent right-context collocates: 'you', 'my')	(116)
Do you hear	(444)
Do you hear +pronoun (me/my/him/this...)	(67)
Do you hear me	(27) <sup>30</sup>
Far(e)well (,) far(e)well	(42)
Go to (go to) (both a direction and an expletive)	(1448)
Go(e) your ways	(180)
Hear me	(897)
Hear me speak	(104)
Hear me speak	(104)
Hear(e) me (most frequent right-context collocates: 'but', 'sir', 'lady')	897
How now	(1834)
How now + noun (mainly proper nouns)	(752)
Leave me alone	(10)
Let's away /let us away	(139) <sup>31</sup>
Look to (most frequent right-context collocates: your, the, him, my, it)	(570)
Look to + pronoun (it/her, etc.)	(334) <sup>32</sup>
Look where	(81) <sup>33</sup>
Now will I + verb akin to 'leave'	(14) <sup>34</sup>
Now, let me/us	(64)
Now, Sir/sirs/sirra/sirra	(503)
Run(ne) to	(99)
Saddle my/your horse	(10)
See where (he/she/it/pronoun comes/goes/is/verb)	(286) <sup>35</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Both instances are in *The Puritan Widow*, 1606/1607.

<sup>30</sup> In 7 instances the adjacent right-edge collocate (NOUN colligation) is a proper name or title.

<sup>31</sup> This formula is related to/a variant of 'come let's away to ...'.

<sup>32</sup> Expressed as [word="look" %c] [word="to" %c][pos="PRON" %c].

<sup>33</sup> Expressed as [word="look.\*" %c] [word="where" %c] [word="\*" %c] [word="\*" %c] [word="\*" %c].

<sup>34</sup> Expressed as [word="now" %c] [word="will" %c] [word="I" %c] [lex="hence" | lex="away.\*" | lex="go" | lex="lea.\*"].

<sup>35</sup> Expressed as [word="see" %c] [word="where" %c] [word="\*" %c] [word="\*" %c] [word="\*" %c].

We [verb] away (to) <sup>36</sup>	
Well met	(166) <sup>37</sup>
What new(e)s	(558)
What new(e)s from	(31)
Why how now +noun	(170)
Why(,) how now	(261)
Within this hour	(71)

Consider the ‘Well met’ formula as an example. Using the KEMPE search tools, we can locate the most frequent right-context items after ‘met’ (both collocations and colligations may be quantified here). Most frequent are the function words ‘my’, ‘at’, ‘in’ and ‘if’. Of content words we find ‘gentlemen’, ‘maister’ and ‘sir’; the most frequent adjectival collocates include ‘fair’ and ‘good’. Looking at the collocates teaches us something of the process-oriented, stage-related mechanisms behind the formulas. These combinations are easily assembled/*prehended* by actors’ working short-term memory aided by long-term lexical storage, and may thus be present in the texts at the instigation of both authors and actors. Other formulaic units include simple or incremental internal repetition (Andersen *et al.* 1982), e.g.:

Alack (alack) the day	(30)
ay, ay (I, I)	(at least 25)
How, how	(at least 88)
I [Verb] I	(1604) <sup>38</sup>
O, o – / Oh, Oh ...	(at least 163)

Moving from vast data sets to single playtexts, we can use the corpus and collocation extraction algorithm of another resource, namely Mueller’s WordHoard,<sup>39</sup> to catalogue multi-word units in the multi-textual and co-authored play *Titus Andronicus*.<sup>40</sup> For *Titus*, a total of 2,786 multi-word units pass all the program’s filters. Because of the authorship question, *Titus* remains a prime test

<sup>36</sup> A case in point: the fact that ‘we will away to’ only appears is in *The Troublesome Reign of King John* and the F and Q versions of *The Merchant of Venice* is interesting, but does not sway me that we are talking about an *authorial* ‘4-gram’ match.

<sup>37</sup> The most frequent immediately adjacent right-edge collocates of ‘well met’, as identified by the sort function in KEMPE, are: ‘by’ followed by ‘at’, ‘in’, and ‘my’.

<sup>38</sup> Expressed as [word=”I” %c] [pos=”V” %c] [word=”I” %c].

<sup>39</sup> I use the publically available Shakespeare corpus in WordHoard (texts sourced from *The Globe Shakespeare*). Mueller’s larger *Shakespeare His Contemporaries* corpus, where texts are sourced from the TCP and enhanced with dense meta-data search potential, is still a closed environment. I, for one, look forward to the time when a ‘user-friendly version of it will be up and running in an open access environment that will cut down on the tedium of some older forms of exploration and enable new forms of exploration that previously were impracticable’ (Mueller 2014b).

<sup>40</sup> Mueller’s version of *Titus Andronicus* is assumed to be a Folio version, checked against Q variants, as per *The Globe Shakespeare*.

bed for new(er) methodologies of authorship attribution, including, of course, tests for multi-word units. Below follows a sub-sample from amongst the extracted bi-grams and 3-grams, which I would characterise as examples of verbal repetition or simple commonplaces (these can be oral or authorial in kind). Where a unit looks potentially formulaic, I have used the KEMPE search tools, including POS queries, to check for the prevalence of such phrases across the entire corpus. In the same way as above, I have not limited these searches in date since the aim is to find formulaic phrases promulgated by dramatic transmission over time and across canons. Locating a 'formula' in both early and late plays probably testifies to its usefulness; it may also mean that the formula was written for *prehension*. Alternatively, actors' transmission of a text may have caused oral formulas to become embedded in surviving printed editions (Petersen 2008, 2010). Either way, such formulas very probably belong to both authors *and* actors:<sup>41</sup>

<b>An/d if it please...</b>	>100
<b>Away with</b>	>50
<b>Come let us go/e &amp; Come let(?)s go/e</b>	>50
<b>Get you (ye) gone (gon)</b>	>100
<b>Go your ways</b>	180
<b>Ha, ha</b>	<100
<b>I'll go fetch</b>	>100
<b>Let me alone</b>	>300
<b>Let me see</b>	>500
<b>Let us/let's go/e</b>	>300
<b>Nay, nay / nay nay</b>	>50
<b>Now will I (+transitive verb)<sup>42</sup></b>	>100
<b>Well I wote</b>	>100
<b>What's the news ...</b>	>100

For the similarly textually challenging case of *Hamlet*,<sup>43</sup> a total of 4,173 multiword units pass all the WordHoard filters. Of these I have selected a number of potentially oral or collective formulas, which have then been checked for commonality across the early modern canons using KEMPE:

<sup>41</sup> Frequencies are expressed as 'greater than' (>100) / 'less than' (<100) approximations, allowing for matches *not* located by the KEMPE search algorithms.

<sup>42</sup> 'Now will I hence' occurs 4 times across the early modern canons contained in KEMPE. The search string applied locates units like 'now will I haste', 'Now will I away ...', 'Now will I leave ...', 'Now will I high me...' / '...turn and run', etc. A majority of the immediate right-edge colligates of 'Now will I' are nouns, i.e. objects.

<sup>43</sup> Text from *The Globe Shakespeare*. See notes 10 and 39.

<b>How now</b>	>1800
<b>How now + noun</b> <sup>44</sup>	>750
<b>How now what / How now, what</b>	>250
<b>I have new(e)s to tell you</b>	<50
<b>Look you now</b>	<50
<b>Look(e) where</b>	>50
<b>Now my lord</b>	>100
<b>To a nunnery go</b> <sup>45</sup>	

Using Seretan's FipsCoWeb,<sup>46</sup> I looked for similar instances of formulaic multi-word units in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (*A* and *B* texts), where both texts are assumed to have been exposed to transmission, and possibly also co-authorship (Maguire 1996; Pettitt 1988; Vickers 2012. Vickers asserts that the play is undoubtedly co-authored, 2012, 134). The units identified were once again submitted to checks for cross-canon prevalence using KEMPE. Asterisks mark instances where formulas reoccur internally in the texts and/or across the entire corpus:

<i>Faustus A-text</i>	<i>Faustus B-text</i>	<i>B-text continued:</i>
2* <u>here; come</u>	4 <u>thine;;eye;</u>	2 <u>have;;grape;;</u>
3 <u>thy;;head;;</u>	2 <u>highly;;solemnize;</u>	2 <u>Pope;;have;;</u>
2* <u>see;;Pope;;</u>	4* <u>great;;Lucifer;;</u>	2 <u>world;;see;;</u>
2 <u>make;;world;</u>	2* <u>gentleman;;farewell;;</u>	2 <u>thy;;head;;</u>
2* <u>mighty;;Lucifer;;</u>	3 <u>doctor;;have;;</u>	2 <u>thy;;body;;</u>
3* <u>great;;Lucifer;;</u>	3* <u>see;;Pope;;</u>	2 <u>beauteous;;paramour;;</u>
2* <u>great;;thing;;</u>	2* <u>here;;take;;</u>	2* <u>enter;;angel;;</u>
2 <u>not;;tell;</u>	2* <u>but;;tell;;</u>	2 <u>high;;firmament;;</u>
2 <u>dead;;time;;</u>	2* <u>sweet;;friend;;</u>	2 <u>lake;of;mud;;</u>
2 <u>raise;;spirit;</u>	2* <u>now;;tell;;</u>	2* <u>mighty;;Lucifer;;</u>
2 <u>shoulder;of;mutton;</u>	2 <u>make;;world;;</u>	2* <u>plague;;take;;</u>
	2 <u>have;;leg;;</u>	2 <u>ripe;;grape;;</u>
	2 <u>thy;;life;;</u>	2 <u>take;;guilder;;</u>
		2 <u>world;;admire;;</u>
		2* <u>nay;;stay;;</u>
		2* <u>then;;wilt;;</u>
		2 <u>as;;chary;;</u>
		2 <u>in any case;;ride;;</u>

<sup>44</sup> The wild-card search string [word='how' %c] [word='now' %c] [pos='N' %c] [] [word='what' %c] [word='new.\*' %c] neatly extracts a 'How now, NN, what news' formula.

<sup>45</sup> There are 5 instances of the unit in F1 *Hamlet* but 8 'to a nunnery goe' in Q1; a text we may assume has been much transmitted (see e.g. Maguire 1996; Petersen 2010). I have elsewhere classified this as a remarkable example of internal incremental repetition and a relatively sure sign that this text holds evidence of transmission-induced oral-memorial style markers (Petersen 2010). Incidentally, 'To a nunnery/nunnerie' also appears in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* (twice) and in Dekker's *The Welsh Ambassador*.

<sup>46</sup> This user-friendly resource may be accessed at Seretan and Wehrli 2011.

In *The Massacre at Paris* and *Edward II*, also from the Marlowe canon, we are similarly faced with plays with a complicated textual provenance, and where co-authorship of at least one of the texts (*Edward II*) is likely. Again asterisks mark elements that qualify as formulaic in the KEMPE corpus:

<i>The Massacre at Paris</i>	<i>Edward II</i>	
11 <u>enter;;king;</u>	3 <u>stay;;while;</u>	2 <u>long;;king;</u>
2 <u>defend;;right;</u>	2 <u>will;;lordship;</u>	2 <u>thy;;sight;</u>
4* <u>come;;lord;</u>	2 <u>legate;of;Pope;</u>	3* <u>see;;king;</u>
2 <u>gather;;power;</u>	2 <u>close;;eye;</u>	2 <u>other;;king;</u>
2 <u>good;;morrow;</u>	2 <u>country;;cause;</u>	2 <u>not;;see;</u>
2 <u>country;;good;</u>	2 <u>commit;to;tower;</u>	2 <u>king;;good;</u>
2 <u>noble;;man;</u>	2 <u>noble;;gentleman;</u>	2 <u>thy;;father;</u>
2 <u>be;;good;</u>	2 <u>rend;;hart;</u>	2 <u>thy;;sword;</u>
3* <u>come;;let;</u>	7 <u>enter;;king;</u>	3 <u>not;;be;</u>
6 <u>enter;;guise;</u>	2 <u>accursed;;head;</u>	3 <u>thy;;life;</u>
2 <u>enter;;messenger;</u>	2 <u>enter;;bishop;</u>	2 <u>thy;;hart;</u>
2 <u>thy;;hand;</u>	2 <u>noble;;birth;</u>	2 <u>thy;;brother;</u>
3 <u>thy;;death;</u>	4 <u>lord;;king;</u>	2 <u>thy;;word;</u>
2 <u>power;of;man;</u>	2 <u>so;;passionate;</u>	2 <u>not;;come;</u>
2 <u>thy;;life;</u>	2 <u>therefore;;trust;</u>	3 <u>thy;;friend;</u>
2* <u>but;;come;</u>	2* <u>come;;let;</u>	2 <u>thy;;head;</u>
2 <u>so;;be;</u>	2* <u>but;;tell;</u>	4 <u>thy;;king;</u>
2 <u>thy;;brother;</u>	2 <u>friend;;do;</u>	2 <u>be;;king;</u>
2* <u>then;;come;</u>	2 <u>enter;;noble;</u>	2 <u>good;;sir;</u>
2 <u>body;of;king;</u>	2* <u>here;;come;</u>	2 <u>flying;;fish;</u>
2 <u>guise;;come;</u>	2 <u>honour;of;name;</u>	2 <u>hang;about;neck;</u>
2 <u>make;;king;</u>	2 <u>man;of;birth;</u>	2 <u>subscribe;;name;</u>
2 <u>English;;agent;</u>	2 <u>enter;;baron;</u>	2 <u>thy;;message;</u>
2 <u>French;;king;</u>	2 <u>king;;die;</u>	2; <u>troublesome;;death;</u>
2 <u>tell;;king;</u>	2* <u>now;;let;</u>	2 <u>wanton;;humour;</u>
2 <u>reading;of;letter;</u>	2* <u>come;;prince;</u>	2 <u>kill;;good;</u>
2 <u>rebellious;;king;</u>	2 <u>thy;;face;</u>	2 <u>not;;suffer;</u>
2 <u>humbly;;thank;</u>	2 <u>not;;trust;</u>	2* <u>away;;base;</u>

2	<u>exit::king;</u>	2	<u>noble::man;</u>	2	<u>hand::traitor;</u>
2	<u>and so::will;</u>	2	<u>thy::land;</u>	2	<u>for::till;</u>
2	<u>do::deed;</u>				

The very noticeable ‘come lord/s’, ‘come let/s’, ‘but then’, and ‘then come’ formulas in *Massacre*, like the high number of other repeating units, offer likely evidence that the play has been much transmitted in performance. According to Lord, ‘fixed expressions of this sort and of other sorts can be found occasionally in print, indeed can be “looked up” in books of sayings, but in oral cultures they are not occasional. They are incessant’ (2000, 34-35). The high degree of formulaicity of *Edward II* likewise suggests that a communicative economy principle is at work in this text. Whether introduced by authors, co-authors, or actors, these units are found amongst the collocations extracted by the FipsCo application (and would be by similar software). It takes manual analysis to exclude/disqualify the collocations as authorial markers.

Not enough has been written about exactly this kind of *functional* multi-word unit nor of these units’ relation to the composition practices of the early modern stage. As Pettitt noted some 15 years ago,

We are accustomed to seeking reassurance in the strength and capacity of the memory in oral cultures, which the Elizabethan still partly was, but it is by no means certain that the oral memory is inevitably geared to the *verbatim reproduction* of texts. Nor is it certain, given the *ambiguous status of the playwright* in this particular phase of theatre history, that the *verbatim reproduction of his text*, as opposed to keeping going and keeping the audience satisfied, *was a decisive consideration* with the players. (2001, 414; emphasis mine)

I would like to think that Shakespeare and his colleagues were fully aware of these conditions. Like Ian Lancashire (1999, 736), I would also like to think that Shakespeare, being an actor himself and so accustomed to memorising sound, wrote particularly for the stage (or in a particular way for the stage). But we cannot know this. Judging by the data just compiled there is reason to assume, however, that early modern authors writing for performance at least to some degree made use of collective dramaturgical formulas, and as such were *writing for prehension*.<sup>47</sup> In the case of authors like Shakespeare, who are close to the theatre, the influence on texts of prior and ongoing performance tradition seems inescapable. Perhaps when considering Shakespeare and his contemporaries’ composition habits we should assume, then, a ‘strong’ variant of Parry and Lord’s oral-formulaic theory, in which performative transmission effectively partakes of the ‘literary’ composition function, and composition in pen or quill partakes of the transmission function?

<sup>47</sup> See also Pettitt 1988, 168-169.

With regard to the exact ways in which formulaicity is introduced into the sample material, folkloristics may be no better equipped than orthodox philology at determining authors' writing habits, at detecting theatrical revision, or mapping the routines of ostensible memorial reporters. What a folkloristic approach *can* help diagnose – according to Pettitt – is the

*type* of change introduced by the performers while they are the bearers of the living verbal tradition, consciously or more likely unconsciously, under the pressure of reconstructing a text from memory in the stress and confusion of live performance before an audience who are under no obligation to remain respectful or attentive. This is what happens—if more slowly and over a longer period—to folktales and ballads. The impact of these processes is not haphazard and leaves quite distinct symptoms. In the case of folk ballads, such symptoms can be convincingly identified, and when the same symptoms occur in the text of a play, it is reasonable to conclude that it has been subjected to similar processes. Common sense, anecdotal evidence, and strict theorizing can, in ballad studies as in Shakespearean philology, suggest what is likely to happen to orally transmitted texts: omissions, garblings, anticipations, and improvisations. But to prove anything we need to compare two texts, one of which is known to be an oral derivative (at one or more removes) of the other. The differences, particularly if repeated in analogous experiments with other text-pairs, are the result, and so symptoms, of transmission. (2005, 216)

As an illustration of the above conditions, we can look at a transmitted broadside ballad, previously used by Pettitt to exemplify the accumulative use of formulas in oral-memorial transmission. Other examples may be consulted in Petersen (2010, 59-61). In this example, we see a broadside ballad composed by a 'ballad hack' and printed in 1828 (within a year of the events described in the song). It is flanked by a derivative version recorded from oral tradition by Cecil Sharp almost three quarters of a century later:<sup>48</sup>

**1828** Verses 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12

...

If you'll meet me at **the Red Barn**  
As sure as I have life  
I will take you to Ipswich town  
And there make you my wife

**1911** Verses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

...

If you'll meet me at **the Red Barn Floor**  
As sure as you're alive  
I'll take you down to Ipswich Town  
And make you my dear bride

<sup>48</sup> The broadside version was first printed by James Catnach in 1828 and sold 1,116,000 copies. The derivative was sung by a certain Robert Feast at Ely. The example is quoted by Pettitt in Andersen *et al.* 1982, 77-83, and in 'The Living Text' (Pettitt 2001, appendix 1). Another oral version, collected from Joseph Taylor of Lincolnshire in 1908, retains only verses 1, 2, 7.

I then went home and fetched my gun my pickaxe and my spade I went unto the <b>Red Barn</b> And I dug her grave	He straight went home and fetched his gun His pickaxe and his spade, He went unto <b>the Red Barn Floor</b> and he dug poor Maria's grave
With her heart so light she thought no harm To meet me she did go I murdered her <b>all in the barn</b> And laid her body down	This poor girl she thought no harm But to meet him she did go She went unto <b>the Red Barn Floor</b> And he laid her body low
...	...
Her mother's mind being sore disturbed She dreamed a dream she saw Her <b>daughter she lay murdered</b> Beneath the Red Barn floor	Her mother dreamed three dreams one night She ne'er could get no rest She dreamed she saw her <b>daughter dear</b> <b>Lay</b> bleeding at the breast
She sent the father to the Barn Where he the ground did thrust And <b>there he found his daughter</b> <b>Lay</b> mingling with the dust	Her father went into the barn And up the boards he took There he saw his <b>daughter dear</b> <b>Lay</b> mingled in the dust.

Clearly, we are looking at multi-word units/collocations (in bold) in the above parallel texts of original and derivative ballad versions. They do not belong to an author, though, or indeed one singer/performer, but to a collective tradition, and the units are, presumably, transmission-induced.

In collaboration with Pettitt, and elsewhere (Petersen 2008, 2010), I have exemplified the accumulation of similar incremental patterns in the course of transmission of early modern plays. But such an *accumulation mechanism* is very easy to miss or disregard when studying multi-word units *per se* in the early modern canons. In the first quarto of *Hamlet*, for example, the accumulated multi-word units range from a substantial number of simple verbal repetitions (we could call them bi-grams) to large-scale repetition (3 and 4-grams), now verbally homogenised in the Q1 version. None of these units are present in the - presumably earlier - *Folio* text (Bate 2007). A full catalogue of examples can be consulted in Petersen (2010), but a few instances of the 'new' 3-grams and 4-grams in Q1 *Hamlet* may serve as examples here:<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Also in Petersen 2010, 96.

F1	Q1
1.4.68 Ham. 'It waues me forth againe; <b>Ile follow it</b> .'	459 Ham. 'Still I am called, go on, <b>ile follow thee</b> .'
1.4.79 Ham. 'It wafts me still; goe on, <b>Ile follow thee</b> .'	465 Ham. 'Go on, <b>ile follow thee</b> '
1.4.86 Ham. 'I say away, goe on, <b>Ile follow thee</b> .'	471 Ham. 'Away I say, go on, <b>ile follow thee</b> '
1.5.186 Ham. '... <b>Let us goe in together</b> .'	643 Ham. ' <b>Nay come lett's go together</b> .'
1.5.190 Ham. ' <b>Nay, come lett's goe together</b> .'	647 Ham. ' <b>Nay come lett's go together</b> .'
4.3.12 'Where <b>the dead body</b> is bestow'd my Lord, / We cannot get from him.'	1626 '...we can by no means know of him where the body is.'
4.3.16 'Now Hamlet, where's Polonius?'	1627 '...where is this dead body?'
4.3.32 'Where is Polonius?'	1640 '...where is this body?'
5.2.283 '... <b>Here's</b> to thy health.'	2155 'Here Hamlet, the King doth drink a health to thee'
5.2.288 ' <b>Here's</b> a Napkin, rub thy browes.'	2156 'Here Hamlet, take my napkin, wipe thy face'
5.2.289 'The Queene carowses to thy fortune, Hamlet.'	2160 'Here Hamlet, thy mother drinckes to thee.'

As Pettitt (1988, 184-185) explains, the replacement of non-formulaic expressions with formulas can sometimes be detected in those instances where we are lucky enough to have variant texts of a single ballad. Evidently, such a mechanism is at work in the multiple texts of *Hamlet*. But similar features can also be found in a number of other, supposedly unproblematic, playtexts in the early modern canons. Both corpus design and data extraction methods should be more attuned to these essentially contextual conditions.

#### 4. *Epilogue*

Few of the collaborative plays analysed in recent authorship attribution studies conform to any easy definition of authorial composition (Maguire 1996, Vickers 2002, Erne 2003, Petersen 2010). Collaborative practises involve a number of stakeholders – author, actors, and theatrical scribes, for a start. If the play is successful, it almost always involves textual change (spoken, and sometimes recorded) over time, and it involves tradition, as both players and playwrights could resort to dramatic formulas and verbal borrowing from other plays on similar topics. It may not always be the case that these features are recorded in the playtexts under scrutiny, but they potentially might be, like some of the examples from Vickers' study of the *Additions to The Spanish Tragedy* (2012). This means that otherwise sound stylistic attribution testing may be 'blurred' by oral or collective features. I have argued that it is necessary to further consider this cross-cutting verbal formulaicity if stylistic investigation into early modern authorship is to be successful.

The approaches of recent years somehow fall short of establishing entirely certain stylistic evidence for the author vs. the actors – and it has been difficult to determine how to proceed and which methodologies to apply. In a discourse

community like the early modern stage, which is very much characterised by tradition (because of its medieval, popular roots and because of the pressures on dramatic authors), it is very likely that a stock of verbal and dramatic formulas are operative in written composition as well as re- and de-composition in performance. As I hope to have illustrated, the multi-word formula appears to be as useful to an author under pressure as to an actor under pressure. The *prehension* of word material thus potentially becomes an operating principle rather than something secondary to stylistic investigation. There are, as I see it, three types of potential contributors to the shape of a surviving early modern playtext: the author (always), the actors (sporadically – in the *surviving* texts), and tradition (almost always); tradition being the entire vocabulary of all the plays written before the given text under scrutiny, within the same cultural system, and which will directly or indirectly influence authors' (scribes'), and actors' choice of words.

The language written for and spoken on the early modern stages evidently deals as much in *probable* language as it does in *possible* language. Among the many multi-word units (lexical and grammatical) in use in the plays, some are bound to stem from individual authors' idiolects. Quite possibly it will be the *rare* (i.e. possible) *lexical* collocations that we should turn to as appropriate authorial style markers (cf. note 7 and Vickers 2011a). The grammatical collocations of the type 'look where he/she/it comes/goes/is', by contrast, are highly probable choices and as such much more likely to qualify as collective or oral in origin. Other unfixed, non-syntactical units should perhaps be discarded altogether as evidence for authorship until such strings can be linked more closely to the known neurolinguistic processes in the human brain. All other things being equal, more controls and more description is needed of the multi-word unit as style marker. It may yet hold the key to the success of future attribution studies. Meanwhile, I remain convinced that attribution scholars, whose only available sample material remains the deceptively neat digital editions of the once 'live' playtexts of the early modern stage, 'need to better understand how they came about' and more fully 'engage with the manifold questions surrounding their production and transmission' (Craig 2014, 15). *The play*, in other words, *is still the thing, wherein ...*

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# Non-Traditional Authorship Attribution Studies of William Shakespeare's Canon: Some Caveats

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## *Abstract*

The paper looks at the problems in conducting non-traditional authorship attribution studies on the canon of William Shakespeare. After a short introduction, the case is put forth that these studies are 'scientific' and must adhere to the tenets of the scientific method. By showing that a complete and valid experimental plan is necessary and pointing out the many and varied pitfalls (e.g., the text, the control groups, the treatment of errors), it becomes clear what a valid study of Shakespearean non-traditional authorship attribution demands. I then come to the conclusion that such a valid study is not attainable with the limits of present-day knowledge.

*Keywords:* Attribution, Authorship, Shakespeare, Statistics, Stylistics

It is not possible, in the compass of a single essay, to deal with very many – let alone all – of the tests by which investigators in their wisdom or folly have sought to prove authorship by style. (Schoenbaum 1966, 197)

## 1. *Introduction*

There are a few 'givens' framing this paper:

- 1) William Shakespeare was an actor and playwright – exactly who he was is not relevant here.
- 2) The First Folio constitutes the basis of what has come down to us as Shakespeare's canon.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Non-traditional authorship attribution studies are those that make use of stylistics, statistics, and the computer. For a short history and overview of the field, see Rudman 1998, 2006, 2011, 2012. It is a tenet of non-traditional authorship attribution that the printed input texts (post-performance) used should be the closest to the author's final holograph (pre-performance) – ideally the practitioner should have both in hand. However, there is a large and unknown time gap between the final holograph of a play and that play printed in the First Folio, a potentially fatal flaw. Other plays such as *Pericles*



- 3) The non-dramatic works only will be dealt with peripherally.
- 4) No non-traditional authorship attribution study should be undertaken until an exhaustive traditional study is finished.
- 5) Non-traditional studies will return probabilities, not certainties.
- 6) Most of the points made below will not be explicated in depth (that awaits a forthcoming monograph).<sup>2</sup>
- 7) The bibliography ("Works Cited") is representative, not exhaustive.

This (obviously) is not the first paper to put forth caveats to authorship attribution on the Shakespeare canon. Samuel Schoenbaum gave his famous seven principles for the attribution of Elizabethan plays – and he said these do not exhaust the possibilities (1966, 191-197). Ward Elliott and Robert Valenza gave five 'Cautions and Caveats' (1996). Harold Love gave some caveats and an overview of the 'Shakespeare problem' in Chapter II of his book (2002a, 194-208). There are many other papers that survey the field and give caveats – none of these surveys are complete and no list of caveats is complete or even adequate. For example, Michael Oakes, in his book published in 2014, does not mention Thomas Horton, Sir Brian Vickers, or Marcus Dahl, among others, nor does he mention the pitfalls in textual selection (99-147). Gary Taylor (1987a, 1987b), Ian Lancashire (2002), Brian Vickers (2011), John Burrows (2012), MacDonald P. Jackson (2014), and Hugh Craig and Brett Hirsch (2014) – all leading practitioners in the field – have written surveys and critiques that are must-reads for anyone who wants to understand the field of non-traditional authorship attribution of Shakespeare's canon.

But Hope's methods are so flawed that all of his results are called into question ... Hope's insistence that his methods are 'more reliable' than 'other current approaches to authorship' (xv) is rather curious. (Rasmussen 1997, 111-112)

Although such teething troubles [problems with Morton's work] make it impossible to place any reliance upon current [1987] stylometric studies, they do not justify wholesale dismissal of the potential validity of such analysis. (Taylor 1987b, 80)

Almost all of the practitioners in the field are upbeat about the advances and successes in Shakespearean attribution studies. However, these studies are fraught with conflicts – conflicts over methodology and results. For example, Lancashire (2002) lists:

that did not appear in the First Folio but were added later to the canon are treated in my upcoming monograph.

<sup>2</sup> The monograph also contains in-depth critiques of most of the extant non-traditional authorship studies of the Shakespeare canon.

- 1) Merriam, Mathews, and Ledger vs. M.W.A. Smith
- 2) Foster and Abrams vs. Wells and Vickers
- 3) Charles Heiatt and Kent Heiatt vs. Foster

In addition there are:

- 1) Vickers (2011) vs. Craig and Kinney (2009)
- 2) Burrows (2012) vs. Vickers (2011)
- 3) Vickers and Dahl (2012) vs. Maguire and Smith (2012)
- 4) Rasmussen (1997) vs. Hope (1994)
- 5) Taylor (2016) vs. Stern (2004)
- 6) Craig vs. Vickers and Jackson (Craig and Hirsch 2014)
- 7) Taylor vs. Waugaman (Reisz 2014)

And this does not exhaust the controversies.

Gray Scott points out that Donald Foster takes Ward Elliott and Robert Valenza to task for inconsistent editing, failure to control for chronology, giving insufficient information for replicability, and miscounting (2006, paragraph 2). When readers who are outside of the community of practitioners read these back-and-forth articles (some of which cross over into ad hominem attacks), they get an overview of a discipline in disarray. What are non-experts expected to believe? Should they simply ignore everything and wait for some kind of consensus on methodology, or look at each study, each result, and form an educated opinion on the results? These are not intellectual lightweights trading criticisms that cast real doubt on each other's work – Vickers, Jackson, Burrows, and Craig, among many others, are at the top of their disciplines. They criticize each other's work but do not do so with enough detail to make the arguments clear and closing. There is not enough agreement on the basics behind the disputes, such as the final input texts and the statistical methodology, to convince each other, let alone the less sophisticated reader.

What follows throughout this paper hopefully will give readers some points of reference with which to judge the validity of the non-traditional authorship attribution studies of the Shakespeare canon.

## *2. Science and the Scientific Method*

Uncertainty about whether stylometry is a science or not is further compounded by differences over what constitutes a science ... One view is that stylistics becomes scientific when it argues by means of numbers; but this is to take a very restricted view of science which leaves out experimental method, means of confirming hypotheses, repeatability of results, the capacity to induce universal laws from particular data, and, most importantly, the power to generate explanations. (Love 2002, 157)

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the possibilities of using a scientific and statistical approach to solve a Shakespearean attribution question. (Horton 1987, 1)

The history of attribution studies ... showed that, when properly executed, studies using internal evidence were empirically sound, based on the careful collection and evaluation of data and using computer processes that could be replicated by other researchers – all attributes of a scientific methodology. (Vickers 2004, 106)

Despite Kinney's confidence in his method, computational stylistics once more gives the illusion of scientific procedure but yields no useful results. (Vickers 2011, 127)

If quantitative methodology can be shown to have improved, there are still humanities scholars who are wary of what they see as misplaced scientism in the importation of scientific methodology to literary studies. (Hope and Whitmore 2014, 2)

We may rightly be troubled when scientific ideas suffer uncertain translation into popular discourse, where long after being discarded by scientists, they seem to have an independent life with undeserved authority derived from their scientific origins. An example is provided by some work in computational stylistics, where antiquated notions of experimentation have hardened into doctrine (Rudman 1998; contra Burrows 2008). (McCarty 2011, 274)<sup>3</sup>

I would argue that attributional stylometry, as it now exists, is not a science in the sense claimed for it by a large party of its practitioners. (Love 2002, 161)

What stylometry offers, then, is not a science but a mathematisation of stylistics – a new way of discriminating between forms of language behaviour that is of great potential value but not as yet a way of accounting for them. (Love 2002, 160-161)

This paper is predicated on the premise that every non-traditional authorship attribution study is an experiment, a 'scientific' experiment. However, there is no universal agreement on which scientific principles (if any) should be invoked. The above quotations give a little glimpse of this. When practitioners use stylistics, statistics, and artificial intelligence techniques, they venture into the realm of science – albeit somewhat of a mutant science but nonetheless one demanding certain elements of the scientific method. Two of these elements are:

- 1) Reproducibility
- 2) An experimental plan

<sup>3</sup> There was a pertinent and lively discussion of the topic of scientific method in literary studies started by Willard McCarty on the Humanist Discussion Group that began on 20 February 2015 and continued for some days. You can find this discussion at <dhhumanist.org>, accessed 28 February 2016.

## 2.1 *Reproducibility*

The joint use of these two procedures [giving the exact text that was used as input data and the computer programs used] fulfills one of the requirements of proper scientific method, namely the replicability of experiments. (Vickers 2011, 140)

Reproducibility is the backbone of any non-traditional authorship study. I have yet to see an argument against the concept. However, most practitioners do not give enough information so that another practitioner can re-run the experiment – exactly. In fact, I have not read one study of the Shakespeare canon that gives complete information, information that would allow me to replicate the study. Craig does this better than most in his publications and seems to become more complete in successive studies. But even Craig does not list the information for each play used in his studies; e.g., he says they are ‘from early printed editions’, that his electronic texts are from ‘online sources such as Literature on Line [LION] whenever possible,’ and that others were ‘keyboarded’ (Craig, Moscato and Rosso 2009, 918). On the other hand (except in the case of Donald Foster and his SHAXICON<sup>4</sup>), I have always been able to get unpublished details that would be needed for replication; e.g., Hope answered my email query about which Shakespeare texts he used.

This is not a concept that I alone have espoused over the years. Lancashire (2002) wrote about how one Shakespearean scholar should be able to reproduce the results of another scholar using the same style markers and same statistical tests.

There is another concept to be considered: duplicating an experiment. For this paper, *replication* means to follow the experimental plan of the original study in every detail without the slightest deviation; *duplication* means to reproduce the results using a different experimental plan, such as different style markers, different statistical tests, different control groups. Both are valuable, both are necessary. Only with replication and duplication of valid experiments that continually give the same results should a questioned play be admitted into the Shakespeare canon.

## 2.2 *Experimental Plan*<sup>5</sup>

Perform the following steps when designing an experiment:

- 1) Define the problem and the question to be addressed
- 2) Define the population of interest
- 3) Determine the need for sampling
- 4) Define the experimental design. (SAS 2005, 2)

<sup>4</sup> SHAXICON is a lexical database that indexes all the words that appear in the [Shakespeare] canonical plays 12 times or less. <<http://goo.gl/qinxN9>>, accessed 28 February 2016.

<sup>5</sup> See Rudman 1998 for a treatment of this concept that includes some references to experimental plans in linguistics.

An *experiment* is a process or study that results in the collection of data. (SAS 2005, 1; emphasis in original)

*Experimental design* is the process of planning a study to meet specific objectives. (SAS 2005, 1) (Emphasis in original)

The subsets of the experimental plan are:

- a) Input data (the texts)
- b) Controls
- c) Eliminate or control the variables not being tested
- d) Choice of style markers
- e) Other choices
- f) Statistical tests
- g) Sample selection and size
- h) Treatment of errors
- i) Analyze and interpret results

### 2.2.1 *The Texts*

No extant play excluded from the [First] Folio has ever been convincingly attributed in its entirety to Shakespeare; no play included in the collection has ever been convincingly attributed in its entirety to someone else. (Taylor 1987a, 36)

In order to carry out a valid non-traditional attribution study on the canon of William Shakespeare, you must have a body of ‘known’ Shakespearean texts and ‘known’ control texts, the latter being dependent on the particular study. What this means is that every word – every word – in the known Shakespeare be by Shakespeare! For the purposes of this paper, I will posit that the 1623 First Folio (third form)<sup>6</sup> contains no non-Shakespearean play (collaborative and interpolative aspects of the First Folio will be treated later).<sup>7</sup> One of the best discussions of text selection for Shakespeare studies (including non-Shakespearean control texts) is still Horton’s thesis (1987, 23-24).

A bug-free text of Shakespeare is a logical impossibility, since there is now general agreement that the texts are ineluctably multiple, and that in many cruces there can be no final ‘accurate’ version. (Best 2007, 155)

In their efforts to reproduce the words of a manuscript, compositors can commit any of the errors to which all copyists are liable: misreading, eye skip, dittography,

<sup>6</sup> There is no *Troilus and Cressida* in the first form and no ‘Preface’ to *Troilus and Cressida* in the second form; see Blaney 1991, 14.

<sup>7</sup> By using the First Folio, the practitioner can mitigate the need to unedit, de-edit, and edit. And, as will be shown later, there is a need to do parts of this process. For a more complete discussion, see Rudman 2005, 2012.

haplography, transposition, sophistication, substitution, simple omission, simple interpolation. But they add to these errors others specific to the medium of print. (Taylor 1987a, 43)

The concerns with the First Folio containing what Shakespeare actually wrote (known Shakespeare) do not end here. There is the matter of the transmission of his first manuscript through to the copy of the First Folio to the electronic (digitized) copy used by the attribution practitioner. For a good overview of most of the transmission processes and problems with ‘fowle papers’, ‘fayre copies’, and manuscripts in general, see Ioppolo (2006). Taylor gives a good introduction to the ‘problem’ of the Shakespearean texts and talks about the ‘permutations of dramatic manuscripts to print’ (1987a, 31). The following is a list of some of the transmission and ‘authorship’ problems that face the non-traditional attribution practitioner:

1) The many differences within the First Folio:

Charlton Hinman’s introduction to his 1963 *The Printing and Proof-Reading of the First Folio of Shakespeare* gives a good explanation of the many ways that the Shakespeare we have in the First Folio was changed from Shakespeare’s original manuscript. And it is not a consistent or constant change across all of the plays, in that every play [in the First Folio] presents its own unique problems’ (5).<sup>8</sup> Hinman gives examples of press corrections made during the printing: ‘sining → sighing → singing’ (18); ‘botk → both, flelow → fellow’ (230); ‘evens → events, who → why, thy → try, namelesse → nameless, followes → follow, take → talk’ (253-254). Hinman states: ‘There are hundreds of variants ... such changes as it did produce tended rather to corrupt than to recover and preserve what Shakespeare wrote’ (I, 227). Horton, among others, points out that compositors varied spellings to justify lines.

Linguistic: Variant but different verbal forms: *ye* instead of *you*, *has* instead of *hath*, *between* instead of *betwixt*, contractions of pronouns and auxiliary verbs (*you’ll*, *I’m*), and so forth ... cannot be explained away as the result of deliberate – or even unconscious – imitation ... One weakness of such evidence is its occasional susceptibility to sophistication by certain scribes. (Taylor 1987b, 80)

Taylor states: ‘Shakespeare wrote, at a conservative estimate, at least 90 percent of the words included in the Folio’ (Taylor 1978b, 73). This appears to refer to the major collaborative parts and not word for word.

<sup>8</sup> To make the problem even more complicated, the printing process on the First Folio was started ‘not later than August 1621 and was interrupted for more than a year’ (Hinman 1963, I, 16).

Oakes discusses the fact that there is not universal agreement that Shakespeare wrote all of the First Folio (2014, 100). It may seem nit-picking to worry about every word, but words, for the most part, make up the bulk of the style markers. Another caveat to practitioners is to make very clear what they mean by a ‘word’ – this is not the simple concept it might seem.<sup>9</sup>

## 2) The collaborative and interpolative parts in the First Folio:<sup>10</sup>

All plays ... are in a sense collaborations, shaped from conception to performance by the author’s awareness of the resources of actors and theatre, the wishes of the impresario or shareholders, and the tastes and capacities of the audience. (Schoenbaum 1966, 188)

There is no doubt that the principle of imitation took precedence over the idea of originality in early-modern compositional practice. (Kositsky and Stritmatter 2013, 141)

Furthermore, the collaborative project in the theatre was predicated on erasing the perception of any differences that might have existed, for whatever reasons. (Masten 1997, 17)

One message for attributionists is that any attempt to establish a database of assured ‘Shakespearean’ usage and parallels has to involve careful assessment of the originality of the passages tested. (Love 2002, 197)

Above all, this picture of the plays as Frankenstein’s monsters put together from different authorial parts denies the possibility of a Shakespearean voice, and in so doing robs the plays of what is, for most of us, their main interest. (Love 2002, 208)

Collaboration is ... a dispersal of author/ity, rather than a simple doubling of it; to revise the aphorism, two heads are different than one. (Masten 1997, 19)

Barry Clarke, in his Ph.D. dissertation (2013), makes a strong case that Francis Bacon ‘contributed’ small but significant interpolations to three of the plays in the First Folio: *The Comedy of Errors*, *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, and *The Tempest*. To have a valid study, this and all like interpolations must be removed from the input texts or a systematic error calculated; this calculation is almost impossible because we do not have sufficient examples.

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of this, see Rudman 2005. After finishing this paper it will become clear that studies of Shakespeare’s vocabulary are, for the most part, meaningless. Bradley Efron and Ronald Thisted’s well-known estimated number of words that Shakespeare knew but did not use (35,000) has no validity (Efron and Thisted 1976).

<sup>10</sup> The treatment of collaboration in this paper is, by necessity, shortened. Vickers has done much excellent work on collaboration that is treated fully in the monograph; see Vickers 2002 and 2007, as well as Jackson 2003, another excellent work that will receive its due.

Rewriting and collaboration are much bigger problems, ones that may be insurmountable. Of the 36 First Folio plays, at least 16 have been cited by reputable scholars as being collaborations or at least having significant interpolations: 5 of 14 comedies, 7 of 10 histories, 4 of 12 tragedies. There are so many different kinds of collaboration that we will never be able to delete them out of the Shakespeare plays.<sup>11</sup>

3) The changes made to the original text by actors, directors, scribes, and censors:

It should also be clear that critics need to account for the relentless change texts are subjected to as they pass through various theatrical and textual networks. (Farmer 2002, 173)

Posthumous adaptations may have occurred occasionally; censorship did occur systematically. (Taylor 1987a, 15)

It is crucial that we eliminate all of these changes before finalizing the input text. But we cannot. This is because we cannot identify the vast majority of them. We cannot subtract out this background noise. Therefore, we cannot know if we have a 'pure' sample – a potentially fatal flaw.

4) Quotations, languages other than English, and miscellany.

There is an overall substantial amount of text in the First Folio that is not in English. This should all be deleted before a non-traditional study is undertaken. For example, there are more than 200 words in French in *Henry V*, 3.4, and even more French interspersed throughout. There is also Latin in the plays. See for example *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 4.1 where there is the *hic, haec, hoc, horum, harum, horum, qui, quae, quod* back and forth.<sup>12</sup> Any identifiable quotations should also be deleted, as well as anomalies such as Dr. Caius' dialogue in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*: 'By gar, de Herring is no dead so as I vill kill him' (2.3.12-13)<sup>13</sup>. This is a slippery slope and every decision to delete must be documented so the study can be replicated. The linguistic principles governing this kind of dialogue are quite different from standard English. If these Type Two style markers are not deleted (the total

<sup>11</sup> Example: Author A alternates the composition of scenes or acts with author B; Authors A and B sit and write together; Author A writes, using a rough draft from author B.

<sup>12</sup> Quotations, foreign languages, and the like are Type Two style markers and are not to be used in a statistical analysis of an author's style. See Rudman 2005 for a discussion of Type One and Type Two style markers.

<sup>13</sup> Reference is from the Folger Library 1623 Folio.

number of words contained in these is substantial) or if a systematic error is not calculated, the attribution study will have a serious, if not fatal, flaw.

5) Other items to be removed.

Shakespeare, of course lifted plots and passages from Chapman's *Homer*, North's *Plutarch*, Golding's *Ovid*, Holinshed's *Chronicles*, and a host of other sources. (Groom 2003, 79)

Some sources have disappeared (e.g., the Jew-play mentioned by Stephen Gosson). (Bullough 1957, ix)

There is no doubt that Shakespeare used sources for his plays – many and varied. In his general conclusion, Geoffrey Bullough emphasizes the multiple possible sources for the various Shakespeare plays and stresses that we do not know which ones Shakespeare used (1975, 341-405). Kenneth Muir tells us that 'Shakespeare picked up "moldwarp", "dragon", and "lion" from Holinshed' (1978, 92). And a constituent problem is the question of at what point do translated words or paraphrases become borrowed words?

Bullough tells us that *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* (1598 Anon.) was a source for Shakespeare's *1 and 2 Henry IV* and *Henry V* (1962, 155ff, 249ff, 347ff) and goes on to point out that the phrase, 'God knowes my sonne' is copied over by Shakespeare as, 'God knows, my son' (256, 318). Joseph Satin points out the famous line, 'a horse, a horse, a fresh horse' (1966, 2). The fact that Shakespeare uses sources does not, of course, denigrate his work; I have not seen one instance where the Shakespeare rework is not markedly better than the source. My point is that if you are doing a study of Shakespeare's style, these borrowings are Type Two style markers and should not be used. I realize this point is moot.

I have not seen a comprehensive study where a list of 'borrowed' words is produced. We do not know what effect the deletion of these words would have. There might not be a right or wrong way to treat this problem, but the practitioner must tell us exactly how each of the identifiable borrowed words and phrases are treated so the study can be replicated and critiqued.

Another item to be removed from the input text is the music. There is no real doubt that all of the music appearing in the First Folio should be eliminated before a stylistic analysis is undertaken. Not only is music a different genre, most of the music is either formulaic (e.g., fanfares) or of questionable authorship.<sup>14</sup> Taylor questions, 'Did Shakespeare write the songs in *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth*, or were they interpolated for a

<sup>14</sup> I am not going to discuss the need to delete all of the stage directions and character names here. As far as I can tell almost all of the practitioners already do it.

posthumous revival?’ (1987b, 73). Noritaka Tomimura (2009) has a good analysis of the types of music in Shakespeare.

Surely the young Shakespeare did not start writing with the polish, expertise, and genius that is exhibited in his mature drama.<sup>15</sup> Surely he had to pass through an apprentice phase where he learned to hone his craft. Surely he had to pass through a stage where he re-wrote and polished, where he collaborated as a junior partner. What is important is that we do not know the length, the years, or the output of these phases. If this were a court of law, the evidence (First Folio) would be inadmissible as the chain of custody was broken (shattered!) and the potential for contamination too great. Continuing in this vein and looking at the First Folio from a forensic linguist’s point of view, we must consider if the preponderance of evidence tells us that the First Folio is a pure enough sample of Shakespeare’s writing to allow a valid authorship study. I believe it is not.

Then, when you start narrowing down the number of plays because of genre and chronological constraints – and a further narrowing down because of the amount of text in each play to be eliminated due to collaboration, interpolation, and Type Two style markers – there is not enough text left to perform a valid study.<sup>16</sup> However, the First Folio is the best we have. Each practitioner must decide whether or not it is sufficient. I think not, but feel that the vast majority (if not all) of the practitioners working with Shakespeare disagree. And remember that this text problem is only one of the caveats.

### 2.2.2 *Controls*

Since many plays were published anonymously, it is often exceptionally difficult to work out which playwright or playwrights wrote which script. (Bate 2013, 16)

There are various types of control that should be mentioned. The first is the concept of making sure it can be shown that there are no other playwrights in England at that same time (e.g., +/- five years) who have the same characteristics that were determined to be Shakespeare markers. Sara El Manar El Bouanani and Ismail Kassou (2014) add age, nationality, and gender as other factors to be controlled.

The way that this type of control should be carried out to obtain a valid non-Shakespeare control corpus and perform the necessary steps is: 1) hold out

<sup>15</sup> This is a common theme in many articles and books on Shakespeare.

<sup>16</sup> For example, if the unknown play being studied for authorship is a history play, we drop from ten plays to three simply by eliminating the seven ‘collaborations’ from the known Shakespeare.

a random sample of the known Shakespeare to be tested in step six; 2) construct a random and sufficient group of plays from all of the other dramatists of the limited time frame and limited by all of the other constraints dictated by Shakespeare (e.g., tight limits on the genre and sub-genres);<sup>17</sup> 3) perform all of the same steps that were done to obtain the Shakespeare sample; 4) determine if the selected style-markers actually differentiate between the known Shakespeare and the sample of other writers; 5) test the unknown sample; and 6) test the held-out sample of known Shakespeare. This necessary scenario is fraught with even more problems than obtaining a pure Shakespeare sample because, for instance, there were so many plays lost to time that we cannot get a random sample of all the plays written that fit the criteria.

Another type of control is the training set and cross validation methodology. There must be sufficient Shakespeare text after culling to employ these techniques – and I feel that there is not.

### *2.2.3 Eliminate or Control for the Variables Not being Tested*

It is a basic principle in authorship attribution studies that the practitioner compare like to like. (Vickers 2011, 122)

One of the most important variables to be tested is genre. The genre of concern in this paper is drama; the sub-genre is drama written to be performed (vs. closet drama). Working down the sub-genre tree gives us the categories of comedy, tragedy, and history plays (there are others in this sub-genre but they will not be treated here). These three are how the First Folio is divided. What this means is that only the Shakespearean comedies should be used when testing if an unknown comedy should be placed in the Shakespeare canon. Now, taking only comedies and working further down the sub-genre tree, we come to prose vs. verse, rhymed verse vs. unrhymed, monologue vs. dialogue, plus there are the songs to be considered. Craig, Moscato and Rosso discuss the consequences of ‘single voice’ works and ‘dialogue’ (2009, 920). By only using rhymed verse as the known Shakespeare, for example, the demand for a tight genre approaches a *reductio ad absurdum*. But if practitioners go higher up the genre tree, they must show that their choice of style markers shows a consistent usage pattern across the lower sub-genres.

It has been shown in many studies that genre trumps authorship – there is a greater stylistic difference between one author in different genres than between two authors writing in the same genre. These studies were not on Shakespeare and may not generalize over to him, but the practitioners working on the Shakespeare canon must take the caveat seriously.

<sup>17</sup> See Eder 2010 for a discussion of sample size.

There is no universal agreement on the chronology of the [Shakespeare] plays. (Hope and Whitmore 2014, 22)

The commonplace editorial concerns over a play's 'date of composition' which assumes a relatively limited amount of time during which a text was fully composed and after which it was merely transmitted and corrupted, is obviously problematic in this broader understanding of collaboration. (Masten 1997, 15)

In some cases we acknowledge that similarity in topic rather than authorship may be the best explanation for a close relationship between texts. (Arefin *et al.* 2014, 1)

Chronology is another important variable to be controlled. There can be no doubt that for the majority of authors, style changes over time. Hope and Whitmore speak of dividing the dramas into 'chronological periods', but even this larger division is not certain – they list 'one of several' possibilities (2014, 22). Rosso, Craig, and Moscato's study shows chronological separation between 1) early and middle comedies and two tragedies, and 2) history plays and mostly later comedies and tragedies (2009, 922). Jacqueline Mullender also talks about the linguistic differences in the later plays; she 'finds substantial evidence of increased syntactic complexity, and identifies significant linguistic differences between members of the wider groups of later plays' (2010, iii).<sup>18</sup> Vickers talks about the problems for his tests caused by chronology: '[The tests are] quite reliable for ... third and fourth periods ... less successful, however, for the chronology of plays dated between 1595 and 1599' (2004, 106–107). A valid study of how Shakespeare's style changes over time is a *sine qua non* for setting time constraints on input texts – and such a study does not exist.

Outlier[s] may be explained by different genre, chronology may also be a controlling factor ... The poorest attribution [of Jonson's work is] a romantic comedy vs. his usual satire. (Budden *et al.* 2013, 10)

The point I would like to again emphasize is that these variables should be controlled for before the texts are determined.

#### 2.2.4 Choice of Style Markers

Elizabethan drama is a genre in which authors are not immediately visible: they speak through their characters, who are individualized according to gender, age,

<sup>18</sup> I am aware that I am on the horns of a dilemma. I argue that we do not know exactly what words Shakespeare wrote in the plays and yet I cite authors who assume that the writing is by Shakespeare. The point is that, even if Shakespeare wrote enough of the words to wash out any statistical significance of those words he did not write, there are enough other problems to keep the practitioner from doing attribution studies on Shakespeare's canon.

social class, and dramatic function. A simple computation of function words, however elaborately sifted by statistical procedures, may tell you something about the characters but cannot reliably indicate authorship. (Vickers 2009, 42)

Non-traditional authorship attribution study has turned its back on rare words, since their infrequency makes them useless for statistical purposes ... practitioners failed to realize that writers could and did borrow new and rare words from each other. (Vickers 2011, 123)

The punctuation in printed texts in most cases probably owes little to what Shakespeare wrote and is repeatedly misleading to the modern eye. (Jowett 1999, 72)

They [enclitic and proclitic microphrases developed by Marina Tarlinskaja 1987] are slow, manual, complex, require judgment, and are not easy to learn, replicate, or even describe completely. But, properly done, they are replicable enough and distinguishing enough to be one of the most powerful tools. (Elliott and Valenza 2004, 125)

The number of style markers in non-traditional authorship attribution moved from the thousands to the millions with the introduction of DocuScope, a text analysis program developed by David Kaufer's group at Carnegie Mellon University that introduced rhetoric strings as style markers (Butler *et al.* 2004). Hope and Whitmore use these strings as style markers and point out some of their shortcomings. The newest style marker is from Clarke (2013): Rare Collocation Profiling, or RCP. He identifies rare phrases and finds authors who share their use. Almost every practitioner's choice of style markers has met with negative criticism. It is only with a choice of as many different and statistically independent markers that can be shown to be consistent and constant across the selected sample of Shakespeare work and also be shown to exhibit different patterns in the authors of the control group can the selected markers be deemed valid.

### 2.2.5 *Other Choices*

Without going into great detail, there are many other choices facing the non-traditional practitioner working on Shakespeare, such as lemmatization, regularizing the spelling and grammar, disambiguating homographs, fixing 'obvious' printing mistakes, filling in lacunae. Elliott and Valenza say, in speaking about Jackson's work, 'He counted not just the word itself, but also some of its roots and kin' (2004, 120). Horton has a good discussion of the pros and cons of modernizing the text, such as spelling, hyphens, and contracted forms, and goes on to say, 'Nothing is to be gained from a hodge-podge of ancient and modern' (1987, 31). Horton stands alone in taking pains to explain everything he does in his study. He also stands alone in testing

alternative approaches, effectively doubling the work, such as the effect of lemmatizing on his non-lemmatized results.

Markup should also be considered. One of the reasons for using markup (e.g., the Text Encoding Initiative, or TEI) is that style markers such as the ratio of nouns to adjectives can be brought into the mixture. Craig and Hirsch discuss encoding e-texts and the need to update the encoding as the platforms evolve. They also discuss the TEI (2014, 17).

There are difficulties of course. An author can limit his style, vary it, imitate someone else to pose as that person, or write a parody so dependent on the original and so different from his own style ... [that it] is more difficult to discern. (Craig and Kinney 2009, 9)

### 2.2.6 *Statistical Tests*

The Morton-Merriam method identified *Edmund Ironside* as the work of Robert Greene, not Shakespeare, at odds announced as 890 million million to 1. This calculation impressed many readers, including at least one stylometrist (D.F. Foster). But even Dr. Smith has denounced such investigators as 'mesmerized by their arithmetic at the expense of their critical faculties' ... Not only do Morton and Smith contradict each another, they are both contradicted by other stylometrists [sic] such as Brainerd and Slater, each of whom inferred from his own separate statistical system that *Ironside* was in fact Shakespeare-compatible. (Love 2002, 155, quoting Sams 1994, 471-472)

All statistical work, however sophisticated, however crude, is inevitably hedged around with caveats and disclaimers, and this is both reasonable and necessary. But we must make sure ... that the sum of the qualifiers is not greater than the usefulness of the statistics. (Eliot 2002, 286)

The most important concept for non-statisticians to grasp is the fact that statistical tests most often come with assumptions. The most common assumptions are randomness and independence, yet Shakespeare's words are neither random nor independent. Budden, Craig, Marsden and Moscato consider 'language and the potential of words as an abstract chaotic system', but they go on to say that 'authors are required to adhere to the grammatical and structural rules dictated by a written language' (Budden *et al.* 2013, 1). Vickers discusses a few problems with Principal Component Analysis (PCA) in non-traditional authorship attribution as pointed out by Maciej Eder in a private communication with Vickers and also by Patrick Juola in his 2006 article, 'Authorship Attribution' (Vickers 2011). Burrows defends the technique.

Another concept to worry about is cherry picking – trying various input texts or sample sizes or trying various tests and selecting the ones that work.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> For a discussion of this, see Rudman 2003.

Oakes critiques several statistical techniques used by practitioners working on the Shakespeare canon.

Three of the Craig collaborations exhibit some of the most sophisticated statistics used in Shakespeare attribution studies and just the titles give the statistically naïve readers pause:

- 1) 'An Information Theoretic Clustering Approach for Unveiling Authorship Affinities in Shakespeare Era Plays and Poems' (Arefin *et al.* 2014)
- 2) 'Language Individuation and Marker Words: Shakespeare and His Maxwell's Demon' (Budden *et al.* 2013)<sup>20</sup>
- 3) 'Shakespeare and Other English Renaissance Authors as Characterized by Information Theory Complexity Quantifiers' (Craig, Moscato and Rosso 2009)

But keep in mind that statistics do not override the need for all of the other text-controlled variables. In talking about Morton's methodology, Taylor states: 'Whatever the theoretical usefulness of such traits in distinguishing authors, statistical analysis proves nothing when based upon masses of unreliable data ("garbage in, garbage out"). (1987b, 80)

There are very few statisticians working on the Shakespeare canon; Valenza is one. This causes many potential problems with practitioners adopting (and usually not adapting) statistical tests that were developed for different applications.

### 2.2.7 *Sample Selection and Size*

Various studies have clearly shown that the result of an authorship attribution method can be affected by parameters such as training corpus size, test corpus size, lengths of the texts (certain methods work effectively in the case of long texts but not well on short or very short texts), number of candidate authors, and distribution of the training corpus over the authors. (El Manar El Bouanani and Kassou 2014, 26)

There are different times in an attribution study when the practitioner is faced with sample selection and size. I spoke above about the random selection of non-Shakespearean writers for a control group. Unfortunately no practitioner does this. When they do use a control group they use a sample of convenience – whatever is at hand and easily used electronically. This, of course, invalidates 'randomness'.

Another sample selection is the size of the text blocks used in the analysis programs; for example, is the number of 'and' per 500-word block more meaningful than the number of 'and' in a 1,000-word block? Practitioner,

<sup>20</sup> For what it is worth: Maxwell's Demon is an imaginary creature created by the mathematician James Maxwell to contradict the second law of thermodynamics.

beware of experimental bias!<sup>21</sup> There are other decisions to be made on sample size, such as 1) how large a sample of known Shakespeare do we need to do a valid study, and 2) how many words must the unknown work have in order to do a valid study? The answers to these are not easily determined.

### 2.2.8 *Treatment of Errors*

There are different kinds of errors: mistakes, data errors, statistical errors, and systematic errors. Every practitioner should be aware of all of the types of errors and how to handle them. A good starting point to understand errors is Yardley Beers' book (1958). Eder's paper on systematic errors in non-traditional authorship attribution is also a must-read (2012). Lancashire discusses the fact that probabilistic methods predict errors (2002). The data errors in e-texts are constantly being corrected. This makes the date that a practitioner accesses the text important. And we can only hope that the repository keeps such correction information on file. I have not seen one paper on the authorship of the Shakespeare canon that has an adequate treatment of errors.

### 2.2.9 *Analyze and Interpret Results*

One of the final steps of any study is to analyze and interpret the results. Again, do not be guided by experimental bias, as in 'my analysis does not give the right answer maybe because of some variable I failed to control'. It is dangerous for a non-statistician to try to explain and interpret statistical results, to try to explain the probabilities as probabilities and not percentages.

## 3. *Conclusion*

Whatever the future may bring, at the present time, the discipline [non-traditional authorship attribution] remains in flux. (Vickers 2011, 115)

I have studied, admired, and enjoyed the critical editions of Shakespeare's dramatic works through high school, college, graduate school, and in my professional and social life. The medium of drama does not demand a single author who penned every word. I believe we will never be able to know exactly which of the words in the dramas were written by William Shakespeare.

Non-traditional authorship attribution practitioners working on the canon of William Shakespeare are faced with serious – even fatal – problems

<sup>21</sup> Do not go into a study to prove that Shakespeare wrote a newly uncovered work. Rather test to see who wrote the work and use Shakespeare as one of the candidates. The temptation is great because fame awaits.

to try to overcome. The most serious is that, in my opinion, we do not have sufficient texts to do a study. I feel that I have shown above that after the practitioner corrects for genre, chronology, collaboration, interpolation, and revision (to name the most important points) there are insufficient texts of what we are sure were written by Shakespeare and only Shakespeare.

Alternatively, one may accept the canon as a whole, hoping that its content of works by other authors is small enough not to affect broad results. (Love 2002, 197)

While pointing out some of the many problems and conflicts between the various non-traditional practitioners of Shakespearean authorship, I had the uneasy feeling that I might have finally united the field against a common enemy!

A little Learning is a dang'rous Thing;  
 Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian Spring:  
 There shallow Draughts intoxicate the Brain,  
 And drinking largely sobers us again. (Pope 1711, 14)

Is this meant as a warning to the Shakespeare scholars who venture into the realm of non-traditional authorship attribution studies – or something I should heed venturing onto their turf? I think there is enough caution to go around. I also feel there cannot be a valid non-traditional authorship attribution study of the Shakespeare canon using the present day state of the science.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> When I was asked to write this paper I hesitated – it seemed like a no-win situation. I realized that the points to be made could not be supported with enough facts and examples from extant studies to make the points as well as I wanted and still fit within the editorial constraints. Hopefully, the monograph will make the case clearer and stronger.

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# Hand D and Shakespeare's Unorthodox Literary Paper Trail

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## *Abstract*

The biography of William Shakespeare exerts an influence on various areas of research related to Shakespeare, including textual, bibliographical, and attribution studies. A case in point is the theory that Shakespeare wrote the Hand D Additions in the *Sir Thomas More* manuscript. That theory is now part of received scholarship, even though many of the assumptions and arguments first published in 1923 have been challenged. The original palaeographic argument can be reappraised with reference to the criteria and procedures of the forensic document examiner. Recent scholarship relevant to an investigation of the case that the Hand D Additions are Shakespeare's 'foul papers', including Paul Werstine's *Early Modern Playhouse Manuscripts and the Editing of Shakespeare*, provides the foundation for a brief reconsideration of that topic. Supporting arguments for the Hand D attribution, in particular those based on orthography, prove vulnerable to challenge.

*Keywords:* Forensic, 'Foul Papers', Hand D, Handwriting Shakespeare, *Sir Thomas More*

## 1. Introduction

The play entitled *The Book of Sir Thomas More* survives in manuscript. It is written out in hands that have been designated as Hands A, B, C, D, E, S, and that of the Master of the Revels Edmund Tylney. It is Hand D that is of interest since many, perhaps most, biographers and editors today accept it as Shakespeare's. This claim has never been front page news. Instead, it has been gradually advanced since 1923, threading its way into the fabric of Shakespearean biography, editions, and studies.

Without the three pages written by Hand D, Shakespeare's biographical documentation does not include any literary paper trails; that is, he left behind no hard evidence during his lifetime that could support the statement that his occupation was writing. In an exchange concerning his review of my *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography* (2001), Prof. Stanley Wells acknowledges



that the first piece of evidence identifying the man from Stratford as a writer was indeed posthumous. In other words, Shakespeare is the only alleged writer from the time period for whom one must rely on posthumous evidence to support his professional activities as a writer.

In the early 1920s, Alfred W. Pollard recruited a group of scholars to contribute essays identifying Hand D as Shakespeare's. The collection was published in 1923 under the title *Shakespeare's Hand in the Play of 'Sir Thomas More'*. Sir Edward Maunde Thompson argued on palaeographic grounds; John Dover Wilson argued on bibliographical-orthographical grounds; R.W. Chambers argued on stylistic grounds; and W.W. Greg identified other collaborating hands in the manuscript on palaeographic grounds and prepared the relevant transcripts.

Pollard was attempting to fill the documentary void and put an end to the authorship question. In the early part of the twentieth century, the controversy was gaining momentum. Anti-Stratfordian challenges were coming from J. Thomas Looney and Sir George Greenwood in England, and Mark Twain was popularizing the case in the United States. In his preface, Pollard explained that if it is proved that Shakespeare wrote the Hand D portion of *Sir Thomas More*, then the theories proposing Oxford, Derby, or Bacon as the author come 'crashing to the ground' (1923a, v). There's his agenda, but the subtext is just as significant. If Pollard thought that Hand D could settle the authorship question once and for all, then he was acknowledging that Shakespeare left behind no evidence during his lifetime that proves he was a writer by profession. Otherwise, Pollard would not have needed Hand D to settle the debate.

These authorship-driven pressures continue today. Hugh Craig describes it:

In many respects attribution studies proceed independently of the debate about who wrote 'Shakespeare'. The main tool for the attribution of a disputed passage to Shakespeare is comparison with well-accepted Shakespeare works, and the same procedures would operate whoever is assumed to be actually holding the pen. But in one case there is a convergence. A manuscript 'playbook' of the play *Sir Thomas More* survives. A series of essays in a landmark volume from the 1920s edited by Alfred W. Pollard distinguished various hands at work in the manuscript. One of them, known as 'Hand D', resembles Shakespeare's signature, which is the only known handwriting of his that survives. On a stylistic side, strong evidence from spelling and shared words and phrases links the linguistic content of this part of the play to Shakespeare. If these two bodies of evidence can be sustained, then the Hand D passages provide for once a link between 'Shakespeare' texts and William Shakespeare of Stratford. (2012, 17)

That 'link' is the putative literary paper trail, Shakespeare's handwritten manuscript, that proves he was a writer. As recently as December 2014, Wells was asked by a *Newsweek* reporter what would settle the authorship question

for good, to which he replied ‘I would love to find a contemporary document that said William Shakespeare was the dramatist of Stratford-upon-Avon written during his lifetime’ (Gore-Langton 2014).

Edward Maunde Thompson excuses the absence of papers in Shakespeare’s handwriting by explaining that ‘this is not a singular instance of the practically total disappearance of the papers of even a prolific author’ (1962, 300). It is true that there are no surviving papers for Christopher Marlowe, John Fletcher, Robert Greene, or John Webster, among others. But there *are* surviving papers for Ben Jonson, Thomas Nashe, Thomas Middleton, Michael Drayton, and Thomas Dekker, among others, and those papers include literary manuscripts, letters, and inscriptions, as well as signatures. Thompson is trying to lower his readers’ expectations concerning Shakespeare’s literary remains, the evidence that I refer to as literary paper trails. More recently, Andrew Hadfield attempted to do the same thing in his essay in *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt* (2013, 64–66). There would be no need to apologize for the absence of Shakespeare’s literary paper trails if that deficiency was common to Elizabethan and Jacobean literary biographies. But it is not. The deficiency is unique to Shakespeare’s literary biography. That deficiency brings the traditional attribution into question, which is why, in his own words, Pollard led the charge to establish Hand D as Shakespeare’s.

## 2. *Handwriting*

Since 1923, the claims that the Hand D Additions were composed by Shakespeare and are in his own handwriting have accelerated. The attribution is now accepted in all the major collected works, many critical editions, Shakespearean biographies, and related scholarship. The claim has been repeated so often that many scholars who might have questioned the original arguments, particularly the handwriting case, have instead accepted it as fact.

The primary argument for identifying Hand D as Shakespeare’s is Sir Edward Maunde Thompson’s case based on palaeography. Thompson compares D’s handwriting with the extant samples of Shakespeare’s penmanship, the six signatures. Thompson was the first Director of the British Museum and a preeminent palaeographer of his time. Harmopn and Holman define palaeography as ‘the study of old forms of handwriting, important to textual studies for establishing texts and deciding authorship’ (1992, 340). Other resources describe palaeography as concerned with ‘ancient’ forms of handwriting. The English secretary hand is certainly an ‘old’ form of handwriting no longer in everyday use, although it is not generally characterized as ‘ancient,’ as are hieroglyphics or Tibetan scripts. However, as I explored Thompson’s palaeographic case, I began to learn about a newer discipline: forensic document examination.

The relevance of the forensic document examiner's (FDE's) methods to Thompson's case for Shakespeare's handwriting first becomes apparent in the footnotes of Samuel A. Tannenbaum. Tannenbaum was one of the first to challenge Thompson's palaeographic case, and he cites Albert S. Osborn's *Questioned Documents* as, for one example, the 'authoritative work on the subject' (1925, 135n.; see also 1927, 8n.).

Osborn's criteria include those for establishing a control sample (also termed controls for comparison, exemplars, or standards): 'the best standards of comparison are those of the same general class as the questioned writing and as nearly as possible of the same date. Such standards should, as a rule, include all between certain dates covering a period of time both before and after the date of the writing in dispute' (1910, 18-19; see also Matley 1990, §5, 17). Osborn's 'general class' rule ensures that the writings being compared belong to the same species; that is, signature to signature, dramatic manuscript to dramatic manuscript, and so on. (Unfortunately, Tannenbaum did not always apply Osborn's methods or rules, and his 1925 article on Hand D is predicated on his admittedly qualified acceptance of the six signatures as a suitable control sample for his critique of Thompson's analysis).

Forensic document examination as a discipline began to emerge in the late 1800s. In 1894 William E. Hagan published *Disputed Handwriting*, and in 1901 Persifor Frazer published *Bibliotics or the Study of Documents*. Osborn's 1910 *Questioned Documents* continues to be quoted today as a founding text by FDE resources, both in print and online. By definition, the forensic document examiner is concerned with handwriting from the standpoint of providing testimony and evidence in a court of law, but scientific methods are common to both FDEs and palaeographers, involving, as they do, criteria and procedures that can be tested and replicated by others.<sup>1</sup>

Tannenbaum did not identify himself as a palaeographer. Instead, he adopted Frazer's term of 'bibliotics', considering himself a practitioner of the science of the 'study of documents and the determination of the individual character of handwriting' (1925, 135). The term 'bibliotics' never really caught on; it is not found in the *OED*, although in a posting to the online *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, William Sutton cites both Osborn and Frazer in the entry for 'bibliotics'. The word seems to have served more as a bridging term, overtaken by 'forensic document examinations' and 'examiners' (sometimes termed Questioned Document Examiners or QDEs) whose terms and methods were subsequently adapted to and incorporated into research and analysis in literary, historical, and other disciplines unrelated to legal cases.

The standards set by examiners are conservative because someone's innocence or guilt hangs in the balance. Of course, the possibility that Shakespeare did

<sup>1</sup> On reproducible tests, procedures, and conclusions, see Huber and Headrick 1999, 261.

not himself pen the Hand D Additions raises no ethical or criminal issues. Nevertheless, legal standards of proof are relevant to several scholars with respect to Hand D. In 2013, Douglas Bruster proposed that Shakespeare wrote revisions for the 1601 quarto of *The Spanish Tragedy*. His argument inferring manuscript idiosyncrasies is based on the assumption that Shakespeare wrote the Hand D Additions. In his essay on 'Authorship', Hugh Craig mentions both theories:

There is reason to believe there are two surviving plays to which Shakespeare added passages some time after their original performance: *The Spanish Tragedy*, more speculatively, and *Sir Thomas More*, now beyond reasonable doubt. (2012, 23)

The phrase 'beyond reasonable doubt' implies that the case for Hand D as Shakespeare's could meet the standard of evidence required to obtain a conviction. At some level, Gary Taylor is aware of the weakness of the case, admitting that the case for Hand D as Shakespeare's might not hold up in criminal court (1989, 102). He is preceded by Pollard:

If we think of the use which might be made of Sir E. M. Thompson's arguments in a trial at law it is obvious that they are much more valuable for defence than for attack. Let it be granted that if an estate were being claimed on the evidence adduced to show that the two hands are identical, a jury would probably refuse to award it. (1923b, 13-14)

In modern times, cases involving questioned handwriting are likely to relate to fraud, forgery, and other crimes. High profile cases include the trial of Bruno Hauptmann and the Lindbergh kidnapping ransom notes (Osborn was one of the expert witnesses), the Hitler Diaries hoax, and Clifford Irving's forgery of Howard Hughes' signature on publishing contracts for his 'autobiography'.

However, during the first half of the twentieth century, palaeographic studies began to incorporate the FDE's and 'Questioned Documents' terminology and techniques. An overview of this cross-pollination is provided by Jeffrey Abt:

Although the forensic scientists laid the groundwork for scientific investigations into manuscripts and books and the effective documentation of their findings, general knowledge of this work remained confined to legal circles. The first to synthesize this body of research and, along with studies in other fields, apply it to historical questions raised by library materials was Reginald B. Haselden (b. 1881), then curator of manuscripts at the Huntington Library. In the preface to his seminal *Scientific Aids for the Study of Manuscripts* (1935), Haselden remarks: 'In recent years scientific knowledge has extended its sphere of usefulness to almost all fields of endeavor. The question is whether this knowledge can be utilized and brought to bear on the complex problems encountered by the paleographer and the student of literary and historical manuscripts'. (1987, 29)

Palaeography and bibliotics are two of seven distinct ‘auxiliary sciences’ that Haselden incorporated into his study of manuscripts (Haselden 1935, 1-4).<sup>2</sup>

In the ensuing decades, scholars studying various types of historical manuscripts integrated into their ‘new palaeographic approach’ the basic practices of ‘forensic handwriting analysis and how [they] may be applied outside the courtroom’ (Dalton, *et al.* 2007; see also Stokes 2007-2008). Yet most of the Hand D literature continues to refer only to the early palaeographic case, without comparing Thompson’s methods and standards to those of the FDE.

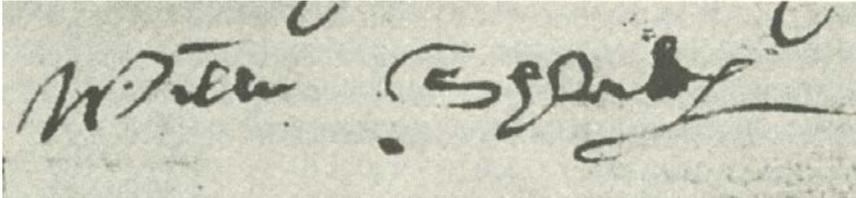


Fig. 1 – Signature n. 1 on the Mountjoy affidavit (1612)

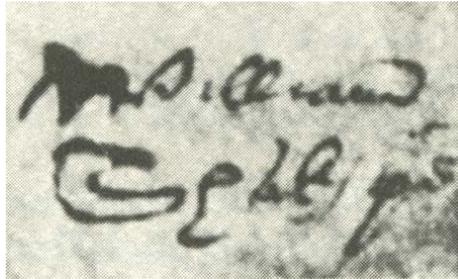


Fig. 2 – Signature n. 2 on the Blackfriars Gatehouse purchase deed (1613)

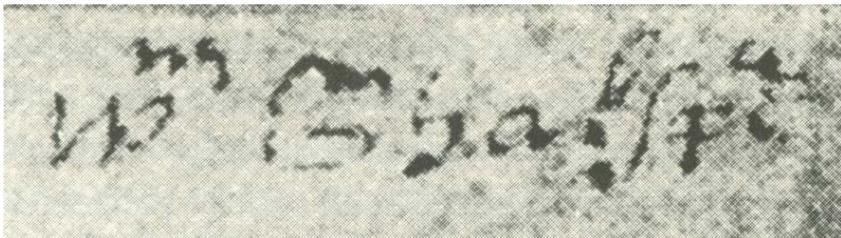


Fig. 3 – Signature n. 3 on the Blackfriars Gatehouse mortgage (1613)

<sup>2</sup> Haselden includes R.B. McKerrow in his acknowledgements (1935, x).

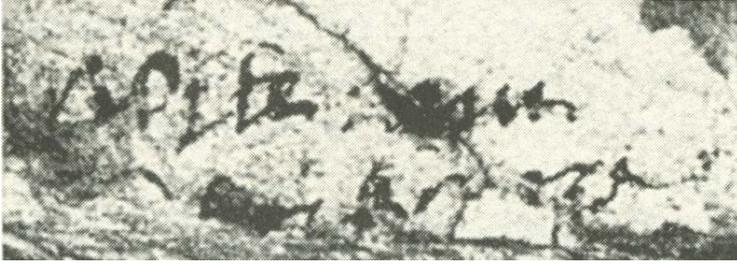


Fig. 4 – Signature n. 4 on page 1 of Shakespeare's Last Will (1616)

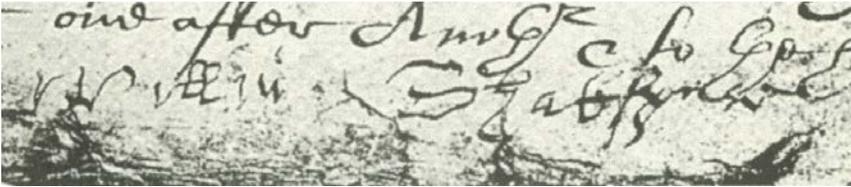


Fig. 5 – Signature n. 5 on page 2 of Shakespeare's Last Will (1616)

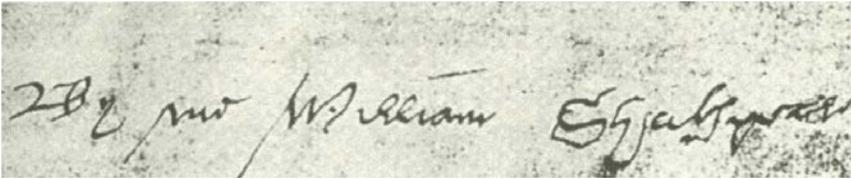


Fig. 6 – Signature n. 6 on page 3 of Shakespeare's Last Will (1616)

At the beginning of his 1923 essay, Thompson identifies some obvious problems in conducting a palaeographic analysis, including the paucity of specimens available for comparison, that is, the control sample; the degrees to which the signatures vary in formations and method of writing; the interval of up to twenty or more years separating the penning of Hand D and the signatures; and the supposed illness of the testator affecting at least three of the signatures (71-72). Thompson references his earlier essay in *Shakespeare's England* in which he further explains why the three signatures on the will comprise unlikely exemplars:

The three subscriptions present great difficulties which are almost beyond explanation. In the first place, they differ from one another to such a degree that it is not going too far to declare that, were they met with on three independent documents, they might not unreasonably be taken, at first sight, for the signatures of three different persons. (1962, 1: 304; see also 1916a, 12)

Signature n. 4 is so degraded as to be useless, so scholars have long relied on George Steevens's facsimile of 1776, despite Thompson's misgivings about other facsimiles 'engraved from drawings by Steevens' (1916a, x). Elimination of n. 4 reduces the control sample to five signatures.

In his book on *Shakespeare's Handwriting*, Thompson further reduces the control sample to fewer than three:

Practically these two signatures [#1 and #2] are the only specimens from among the six which afford sufficient data for forming an opinion on the character of Shakespeare's handwriting. The third signature ... is too formal to serve as a criterion ... The three signatures to the will are likewise of little value for general comparison, with the exception of the first three words [of #6, 'By me William']. (1916a, 28)

Because the words 'By me William' are noticeably better formed than the surname, Greenwood reasonably posits that a scrivener wrote them and that Shakespeare wrote only his last name (1920, 32). According to the author of *Forensic Handwriting Identification*, the specimen writing is defined as 'writing the authorship of which *must be known* if it is to be used by the FDE for comparison purposes' (Morris 2000, 129, original emphasis). The obvious difference in the penmanship of 'By me William' and the surname suggests that there cannot be certainty that the three words are in Shakespeare's handwriting.

In addition, as L.L. Schücking observes, the *B* in the word 'By' is unlike the majuscule *B*s in D's Additions (1925, 41). Thompson excuses the 'malformed' capital *B* as 'owing to [Shakespeare's] infirmity' (1923, 105). To this layperson, it does not necessarily look 'malformed', perhaps just differently formed. Roy A. Huber notes that the letters *h*, *p*, and *s* of the signatures are formed differently in the Additions. He also points out that none of the letters *i* in the signatures are dotted, whereas D consistently dots his *i*'s (1961, 62, 64). These are some of the dissimilarities that make a decisive identification difficult.

At best, all but three capital letters in the alphabet, *W*, *S*, and *B* (the latter of which may have been written by a scribe), are missing from the signature specimens. Thompson notes that the 'majority of capital letters' (actually thirteen) in the alphabet are present in D's Additions and that these letter formations can be used 'to conjecture the character of the letters which are wanting' (1923, 103). Conjecture would seem to be of little use to compensate for missing specimens in a handwriting analysis.

Four of the letters in the signatures (*i*, *l*, *r*, and *y*) are insufficient in Thompson's view to 'afford criteria' for comparison with Hand D (1916a, 57). While this decision is surely a good one (the *y* occurs only in *By*, some letters are replaced with marks of contraction), it has the unfortunate result of further shrinking the control sample. Missing letters would seem to present an impediment to a meaningful comparison, as defined in a FDE textbook:

Many of these discriminating elements [of writing] will involve specific letters or combinations of two or more letters in particular relationships to one another. As a result it is important, if not imperative, that the writing standards with which comparisons will be made consist of similar letters and combinations of letters as will occur in similar words, names, texts, or signatures written under comparable circumstances. (Huber and Headrick 1999, 249)

With few exceptions, such discriminants are not available for comparison with D's Additions. The opportunities available to Thompson for comparing combinations of letters in D's Additions are obviously limited to those found in the signatures, such as the *pe* in n. 1 with *peace* or *speake* in the Additions, and *ha* with *that* or *chartered*. D's words *makst* and *forsaks* allow for a slightly longer string for comparative purposes. However, these limited letter combinations do not inspire confidence in the fulfilment of Huber's and Headrick's injunctions.

Further, the palaeographers in the early 1900s disagreed among themselves as to the spellings in the signatures. With respect to signature n. 1, Thompson spells it *Willm Shakp* (1923, 59; a line over the letter *m* indicates abbreviation); Sidney Lee spells it *Willm Shak'p* (1968, 519); C.W. Wallace (who discovered the signature) spells it *Willm Shaks* (1910, 500); C.J. Sisson spells it *Shak-* with no *s* or *p*, the hyphen indicating abbreviation (1961, 77n1); Tannenbaum cannot be sure whether it is *Wilm* or *Willu* and *Shakper* or *Shaksper* (1925, 157).

These palaeographers are basing their transcriptions on a difficult-to-read script so it is not surprising that they propose different spellings. What undermines a meaningful handwriting comparison is the uncertainty concerning the presence or absence of certain letters since, as we have seen, handwriting analyses include the comparison of *combinations of letters* in both the control and in the questioned document.<sup>3</sup> Uncertain combinations include *ll*, *ks*, *aks*, and *pe*.

If it is not possible to agree on the spelling of a signature and if spellings and letter formations and methods of writing differ from signature to signature, how can any one of those signatures serve as the exemplar? Which one is to be chosen as the standard against which all the others are compared and either accepted or rejected? Or are all of them to be accepted in all their variations by virtue of their presence on the legal documents? In his study of *Shakespeare's Handwriting*, Thompson decided to accept signatures n. 1, n. 2, and 'By me William' in n. 6 as the control, but his decision did not prevent him from comparing letters written by D with letters in the other signatures (e.g., 1923, 92, 94).

Hagan provides a rule-of-thumb for determinations about signatures

<sup>3</sup> On combinations, see Matley 1992, §3.3.2.5, 43.

as controls:

Too much care cannot be exercised in the examination of the signatures produced as standards from which to make the comparison as to their character ... the time at which they purport to have been written as compared with the date of the contested signature; and where there are several standards presented for comparison they should be by analysis determined as the writing of the same person before comparing them with the contested writing. (1894, 83-84)

It is surely legitimate to question the origin of the words *By me William*.

Thompson describes the capital *B* in n. 6 as 'malformed' due to Shakespeare's illness or infirmity (1923, 105). Yet elsewhere he describes the words *By me William* as written firmly and legibly, in contrast with the 'weakness and malformation' of the surname which he attributes 'certainly to the condition of the dying man' (1916, 13; see also Hays 1975a, 245-46), a scenario repeated by biographers (e.g., Schoenbaum 1975, 246). There is no external evidence of Shakespeare's alleged infirmity or 'writer's cramp' as there is, for example, concerning Philip Henslowe's final illness and palsy, which resulted in him probably dictating his declaration as testator; his will is authenticated with the words 'Signu *mdicta* Philip Henslowe' (Rendle 1887, 157; Sisson 1929, 311; Honigmann and Brock 1993, 103-104).

According to FDE Thomas W. Vastrick, 'one's handwriting can change or evolve over long and even short periods of time. Handwriting and signature specimens should be dated as close as possible to the date of the purported writings – ideally, from a few months before to a few months after to offset this phenomenon. *This is particularly important if the purported writer is elderly, ill, or sustained an injury around the date of the writings*' (1992, 3, emphasis added).<sup>4</sup> Thompson's explanation of the contrast between 'By me William' and the surname on n. 6 is called into question by such cautionary guidelines.

The prospects for a meaningful comparison of handwriting in Shakespeare's case are even more fraught with difficulties because

when evidence nears the lower limits for positive conclusions that examiners have arbitrarily set for themselves ... we see divergence occurring in the findings of examiners. As the strength of the evidence diminishes, conclusions such as 'a very strong possibility', 'a strong probability', and so on, are qualified with diminishing degrees of probability. (Huber and Headrick 1999, 262)

One might characterize the evidence for Shakespeare's penmanship as near 'the lower limits'. Thompson himself comments on the handwriting 'being of an ordinary type and presenting few salient features for instantaneous

<sup>4</sup> On age-related disabilities, see Osborn 1910, 24.

recognition' (1916a, 29). Yet these six signatures, representing less than half the letters of the alphabet, comprise Thompson's control sample for comparison with Hand D. And in his opinion, only two of the signatures plus *By me William* are useful as exemplars.

Again, from *Handwriting Identification*:

Handwriting comparisons require samples of writing from those individuals who are considered to be potential authors, that ... are sufficient in number to exhibit normal writing habits in executing the questioned text or parts thereof, and to portray the consistency with which particular habits are executed. (Huber and Headrick 1999, 247)

Are Shakespeare's signatures 'sufficient in number' to 'exhibit normal writing habits'? One authority recommends that 'five or six pages of continuous writing should be adequate for comparison with questioned extended writings, and twenty or more separate signatures should be adequate for comparison with questioned signatures. Others have suggested less, perhaps only half those numbers' (249).<sup>5</sup> Even by the latter measure, six signatures are insufficient in quantity to comprise a control sample that can 'exhibit normal writing habits'.

It was not until Wallace discovered the Mountjoy signature (Fig. n. 1), which he described as 'rapid, abbreviated' (1910, 502), that a signature by Shakespeare exhibited any fluency. Thompson thinks the signature is the best written of the six, as it was 'inscribed with freedom' and 'devoid of [the] hesitation or restraint' found in the other five signatures (1923, 61; 1916a, 1, 9-10). According to Thompson, 'if the later signature alone [n. 2, the Blackfriars purchase] had survived, we should have been inclined to judge Shakespeare's handwriting to have been that of an imperfectly educated man of inferior rank' (1916a, 27), in striking contrast with the fluent handwriting he sees in signature n. 1. Thompson's reaction should have set off his own alarm bells:

Since fluency is so important in the determination of genuineness it must be noted that the signature is the single element of one's writing that is done more automatically, hence more fluently, and with less awareness of the writing process. Even the poorest of writers of other material can have reasonable fluency in their signatures. (Huber and Headrick 1999, 297)

Yet Shakespeare's signatures did not otherwise exhibit fluency.

Natural variations in 'normal writing habits' present another hurdle, since they

<sup>5</sup> See also Osborn 1910, 18-19 and Matley 1990, §6, 19.

may be broad or narrow, depending on the individual and the circumstance. Should they be broad, as occurs in less skillful writings, only greater quantities of standards ... will properly portray its nature and its range. The variables affecting writing have a greater influence on less skillful writing than on skillful writing. (Huber and Headrick 1999, 250)

And so the task of identifying suitable controls becomes yet more difficult, as Shakespeare's signatures are not likely to be described as 'skillful', not even the one exhibiting some fluency.

There is yet another impediment to Thompson's case. Following B.A.P. Van Dam and L.L. Schücking, Gerald E. Downs questions an underlying assumption on which Thompson's case for 'Hand D' is based: that D's Additions are authorial, representing original composition. Downs identifies characteristics in the handwriting, including eyeskip (at lines 127, 130) and mistaken anticipation (the deleted *and* at line 85),<sup>6</sup> both of which are consistent with scribal transcription (2000, 5, 8-9). Hand C, an unnamed playhouse scribe, was transcribing, not composing, and Michael L. Hays reconsiders the possibility that Hands C and D are one and the same (1975b, 69; see also McMillin 1987, 153-154). In addition, if the Hand D Additions are Shakespeare's so-called 'foul papers', they are unique specimens in the *More* manuscript; other portions of the play are fair copy, whether authorial or scribal.

It is not necessary to prove that Hand D was copying his own composition or that of another. If there is a *possibility* that Hand D was copying, rather than composing, then there can be no case for Hand D as Shakespeare's in the throes of composition. As Hays points out, if D's Additions are fair copy, then 'paleographic distinctions reflecting changes in the creative process evaporate' (1975a, 247). In addition, if D's Additions could be scribal copy, then the field of candidates necessarily expands to other mostly unknown hands, Hand C being a possible exception. An argument that D's Additions are in Shakespeare's hand in the act of copying (as proposed by, e.g., Grace Ioppolo 2012, 94) whether his own or somebody else's work, is still dependent on a valid control sample of his handwriting.

Few of the FDE's criteria are met in the palaeographic analysis set forth by Thompson. Obviously, modern day handwriting resources were not available to him or his colleagues. But the work of Albert S. Osborn (1910) was available, and also that of William Hagan (1894) and Persifor Frazer (1901). While neither Thompson nor Greg cites early texts by these specialists, both demonstrate an awareness that the time interval between the composition of Hand D and the penning of the six signatures represents an impediment. The dates of composition of both the original text of and the additions to *Sir Thomas More* remain subjects of disagreement. John Jowett argues for a date of composition of the original Munday-scribed text ca. 1600, while acknowledging that most prior scholarship proposes earlier dates of 1593-1595; he proposes a date of

<sup>6</sup> Line numbers are from Jowett 2011, 404-412.

1603-1604 for the additions and revisions, again despite earlier dates of 1593-1597 from prior scholars (Jowett 2011, 424-425; see also Melchiori 1989, 95; Melchiori and Gabrieli 1990, 27). While Jowett's proposed later dates reduce the time interval between the inscribing of the signatures and the Hand D Additions, they do not reduce it enough.

W.W. Greg dealt with the problem of the time interval by employing a double standard, as his method of identification of Hand E illustrates. Hand E, who wrote some additions to *Sir Thomas More*, has been identified as that of playwright Thomas Dekker. A number of writing samples by Dekker survive, including a 1616 letter addressed to the actor Edward Alleyn (Greg, *et al.* 1925-1932, §IX, §X). Greg placed the date of composition of the Additions somewhere between 1593 and 1597. Therefore, Greg did *not* use Dekker's letter of 1616 as a basis for comparison to the Hand E Additions, because it was written at least nineteen years later, or, in Greg's own words, 'too late for useful comparison' (Greg 1923a, 53; on time intervals, see Osborn 1910, 145). To use it would violate one of the palaeographer's rules. However, the first three words of signature n. 6 on Shakespeare's will, penned in the same year as Dekker's letter, *are* admitted to the control as, evidently, *not* too late for useful comparison. Signatures n. 1 and n. 2 are likewise separated from D's Additions by an interval only three to four years fewer.

To summarize, the handwriting analysis is impeded by a control sample that is insufficient in quantity and quality to exhibit 'normal writing habits' for comparative purposes. The signatures were written 'too late for useful comparison'. Signatures belong to a different species than dramatic manuscripts. Thompson's palaeographic arguments do not fare well when considered alongside the methods and rules imposed by others in his field and those in the then-emerging field of FDEs. Yet the Hand D Additions have been tacitly or explicitly elevated to full status as a literary paper trail, and D's writing is cited to explain *how* Shakespeare wrote.

### 3. *Analysis by an FDE*

In 1961, Roy A. Huber published a paper about Hand D that was first delivered at a Shakespeare Seminar in Canada. He was not a Shakespeare specialist; he was a forensic document examiner who had served in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for twenty years. He went on to serve as the 24th President of the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners and was the 2003 recipient of the Albert S. Osborn Award of Excellence.

The challenge to Huber was to re-examine Thompson's case. Huber qualifies his findings, especially since he did not have an opportunity to examine the original manuscript – a serious drawback. He also gives due deference to the palaeographer's jurisdiction, so to speak, over a case involving the comparison of secretary hands, yet he also hopes that his contribution might 'suggest areas for further consideration and study' (1961, 55). Such further study could revisit not only questions about Hand D but also the case for Thomas Heywood as Hand B and the theory that Hands C and D are the same.

Huber examines the principal points of similarity that Thompson identified between the control sample and the questioned document (such points including the ‘spurred’ *a*, formations of the letters *k*, *s*, and *p*), explains his reasons for downgrading their significance, and concludes that ‘a positive identification’ of Shakespeare as D is not possible (1961, 66). As I read Huber, the different *degrees* of inconsistencies between D’s Additions and the signatures constitute his most significant reason.

Huber’s brief analysis of the palaeographic case prompted two papers by Shakespeare scholars who attempted to build on his findings and presumably reopen the case in the Shakespearean community. The first paper was by Michael L. Hays in 1975, the second by Paul Ramsey in 1976. Hays identifies an important point:

In the past thirty years, reviews of the problem have offered balanced summaries of both paleographic and literary considerations, generally implying that the weaknesses of the one are remedied by the strengths of the other ... This strategy is, however, somewhat disingenuous. First of all, nonpaleographic arguments may reach the same conclusion as paleographic ones, but they cannot strengthen the paleographic arguments themselves. (1975a, 241-242)

Hays is explaining why the ‘full force of cumulative evidence’<sup>7</sup> argument is flawed. Hays also published on watermarks in some leaves of the *More* manuscript, and in his conclusion he touches again on the shortcomings of the handwriting case (1975b, 69).

Hays’ essay concerning Huber’s analysis has been largely ignored. In his critical edition of *Sir Thomas More*, John Jowett does not cite it (or Huber or Ramsay), and he relegates Hays’ ‘Watermarks’ article to a dismissive footnote (2011, 363, n. 2). It is not surprising that Paul Werstine criticizes Jowett’s ‘summary of scholarship on the Shakespeare attribution [as] bent on marginalizing what it demonstrates to be widespread recent scepticism about his authorship of the Hand-D pages’ (2013, 345n29).

The only major collection of essays on *Sir Thomas More* subsequent to Pollard’s was published in 1989 and edited by T.H. Howard-Hill. Following G. Harold Metz’s contribution in that collection, the analysis by Huber and the subsequent papers by Hays and Ramsey have all but disappeared from view. Metz cites the editor of *The Riverside Shakespeare* on the Hand D attribution (1989, 25):

The real strength of the case for Shakespeare’s authorship of these two passages rests, then, not on any single piece or kind of evidence but on the quite remarkable manner in which several independent lines of approach support and reinforce one another pointing to a single conclusion – the ‘hand’ of Shakespeare. (in Evans 1974, 1684)

<sup>7</sup> See Metz 1989, 39, n. 26.

In quoting Evans, Metz is also referencing the ‘full force of cumulative evidence’ argument with literary, palaeographic, and bibliographic arguments strengthening each other. They follow Greg, who argued in 1927 that the case rests on ‘the convergence of a number of independent lines of argument ... and not on any one alone’ (200; see also Jowett 2011, 438-439). Werstine summarizes the fallacy:

Authorship of the work is credited to Hand D, to whom Shakespeare’s works can be assigned only through an argument from ‘cumulative evidence’ – all of which evidence has been dismissed as inconclusive by Shakespeareans themselves. (1999b, 141)

Even if arguments based on style or linguistics turn out to be 100 percent correct and the author of *Hamlet* can be proven to have composed the Hand D Additions (and possibly the 21-line soliloquy in C’s hand), there is no way to identify the penman, whether author or scribe. As Eric Rasmussen points out in connection with the attribution of the manuscript of *The Second Maiden’s Tragedy*, ‘whether or not Middleton’s handwriting appears in the manuscript has no bearing on his authorship of the play’ (1989, 8, n. 24). In other words, the case for Shakespeare’s authorship of the Hand D Additions is independent of the case based on handwriting. Despite the various ‘cumulative’ arguments, only handwriting tests can prove or disprove that Shakespeare inscribed the Hand D Additions, and the only specimens available as controls are inadequate for the purpose.

Metz references the insufficiency of Shakespeare’s handwriting specimens:

The inadequacy of the control [sample] is ineluctable and does in fact constitute a substantial problem to be faced in a palaeographical investigation. This circumstance is the reason Thompson, as Greg noted in his 1927 re-examination, felt constrained to search for minute bits of support and thus overextended some aspects of his argument ... Authenticated Shakespearean handwriting is beyond question small in quantity, but it is not negligible. To deny the identification because of a paucity of control exemplars is a refusal to face the problem. (1989, 16)

One should question the identification of Hand D as Shakespeare *because* of the ‘paucity’ of suitable exemplars.

Metz marginalizes Huber’s analysis as ‘inconclusive’ (17). What Huber actually concludes is that ‘the evidence is not sufficiently strong to justify a positive identification’ of Shakespeare as D (66). In this case, his ‘inconclusive finding’ contradicts Thompson’s attempt at a positive identification (Thompson 1923, 71). Any conclusion finding a degree of probability lower than 100 percent constitutes an ‘inconclusive’ finding, and not in the sense of an inadequate argument.<sup>8</sup> Huber stated up front that a positive identification is ‘of necessity a matter of probability’

<sup>8</sup> On conclusions and probabilities, see Morris 2000, 138, 216-219; see also Matley 1992, §3.1.1, 34.

(1961, 57), and it would have been helpful if he had quantified his opinion. Ironically, Metz acknowledges that for 'a significant minority' of Shakespeareans, there is 'insufficient evidence to arrive at a decision' (1989, 17).

Yet, perhaps Huber should have declined the assignment altogether. According to Osborn, 'many errors in the examination of questioned writing are due to the fact that an adequate amount of standard writing is not obtained before a final decision is given. The competent examiner will decline to give any opinion until a satisfactory basis for such an opinion is available' (1910, 19).

#### 4. 'Foul Papers'

Many biographers of Shakespeare describe the Hand D Additions as simply part of a play in his handwriting, without further specifying the nature of the manuscript. However, in 1931 W.W. Greg categorized the Additions as 'foul papers' (1969, 200).

In his 2013 book-length study of early English playhouse manuscripts, Paul Werstine traces the genesis of Greg's concept of 'foul papers' and its influence on Shakespeare studies. The term is found in at least two Jacobean records. In 1613, the playwright Robert Daborne refers to sending along to Philip Henslowe his 'foule sheet' instead of 'y<sup>e</sup> fayr I was wrighting' (quoted in Chambers 1963, 1:96). In an annotation ca. 1619-1624 concerning John Fletcher's play *Bonduca*, Edward Knight, who copied the play, wrote that 'this hath beene transcrib'd from the fowle papers of the Authors w<sup>h</sup> were found' (quoted in Greg 1925, 152).

Knight's reference to 'fowle papers' led Greg to develop a hypothetical definition of the term. Greg imagined 'foul papers' as ideals, intended to serve as proxies for the lost manuscripts (until such time as any might be discovered) that were submitted as printer's copy for publication. If correctly defined and if any actual 'foul papers' could be found, then the features they would contain could explain problems and corruptions in certain printed texts. Among the important features that Greg inferred from the *Bonduca* transcript were misplaced passages, lacunae, and illegible handwriting (Werstine 2013, 13, 38, 41, 98). However, Greg's original 1927 essay on the topic was rejected by *The Library* and remained uninspected until Grace Ioppolo found it at the Huntington Library and published parts of it in 1990.

In his subsequent works, Greg's discussions about 'foul papers,' while grounded in his unpublished hypothetical definition, regularly made reference to 'rough drafts' (e.g., 1925, 156; 1931, 195-197, 199; 1951, 27, 31). Beginning in the 1930s, most, perhaps all, of the editors and critics employing the term 'foul papers' did so without reference to or knowledge of Greg's unpublished definition. In 1955, Greg again asserted that Hand D's Additions were Shakespeare's 'foul papers' (108-109). He also identified numerous Shakespeare texts as based on hypothetical 'foul papers' serving as printer's copy, such as the 'good' quartos of *Romeo and Juliet*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *King Lear*. In the absence of

any known printer's copy of any description, his claims are speculative. But they have remained largely unchallenged, Werstine's work being a major exception.

Today the term 'foul papers' is usually employed without reference to Greg's original formulation and usually without acknowledgement that there are no extant manuscripts that fit his formulation (Werstine 2013, 34-38). Instead, the editors of, for example, the *Oxford Textual Companion* offer a general definition as 'an author's first complete draft of a play' (Wells *et al.* 1997, 9). They claim that Shakespeare's handwriting in his 'foul papers' is 'implied by errors in printed editions' and with reference to D's handwriting (124, 510; see also Jowett 2007, 99, 101). The Arden editor of *Much Ado About Nothing* identifies in the text Shakespeare's 'characteristic lightness of punctuation' and 'characters designated variously both by function and by given name', among other idiosyncratic elements contained in Shakespeare's 'foul papers' (McEachern 2007, 128-129). Thus an editor may claim that certain features and imperfections can be explained by Shakespeare's 'foul papers' even though nobody knows what they looked like, and the identity of the penman who inscribed the Hand D Additions remains unknown.

Ioppolo's confidence in the number of printed Shakespearean texts 'almost certainly' based on authorial 'foul-papers' – at least seventeen – reflects the widespread acceptance of the term as synonymous with 'rough' or 'working draft' (2012, 93). She is able to refer to 'extant autograph foul papers', plural, because she explicitly replaces Greg's 'constricted definition of foul papers' with 'the working draft by the author(s)' (Ioppolo 2006, 7; 2012, 88). Her definition is even more flexible than the Oxford editors' 'first complete draft' and contains features such as false starts, duplications, and 'confusions in character names and interactions', among others (2012, 91). None of the manuscripts in her discussion of 'foul papers' can be shown to have served as printer's copy, and many characteristics in her definition, including duplication and 'confusions in character names' are also present in other types of manuscripts; e.g., transcripts for playhouse use and, as significantly, the longhand transcription of a shorthand report (Downs 2007-2008, 126; Werstine 2013, 9 and *passim*).

Disagreement concerning definitions is illustrated with reference to Thomas Heywood's manuscript of *The Captives*. Werstine classifies Heywood's manuscript as 'a playhouse [manuscript] used for performance' (2013, 305), but Ioppolo classifies it as 'annotated foul papers' (2006, 95; 2012, 91-92). However, if Heywood's rough draft, his 'foul papers' were sufficiently legible for submission to the playhouse, then by definition, they served as 'fair copy' (Heywood's labour-saving strategy may not necessarily be shared by other dramatists, such as Daborne). McMillin describes this alternative with respect to D's Additions, which could be 'first-draft writing ['foul papers'] which turned out to be usable without copying' (1987, 144). Werstine makes the point that only upon transcription did a dramatist's original draft become his 'foul papers' (2013, 98-99, 100). It would therefore be unlikely that any of the extant

theatrical manuscripts, including the Hand D Additions, are ‘foul papers’ as Greg conceived of them.

Further complicating the designation of Hand D’s Additions as ‘foul papers’ is Ioppolo’s decision to classify them as ‘authorial fair copy’ (2006, 104; 2012, 94). D’s Additions alone cannot decide the question for Shakespeare: Jowett agrees with the palaeographers who describe them ‘as showing a writer in the immediate process of composition’ (2011, 440), that is, ‘foul papers’ (2007, 99); Ioppolo proposes authorial fair copy; Downs suggests a scribal transcript. However, if Ioppolo is correct to classify the Hand D Additions as ‘authorial fair copy’, then either all arguments asserting or implying that D’s Additions represent Shakespeare’s ‘foul papers’ are mistaken, or alternatively, a definition of ‘foul papers’ is a matter of choice. Werstine describes the term as ‘a matter of uncertain interpretation’ (2013, 33), which allows an editor to select features observed in extant manuscripts to be included in a revised definition of ‘foul papers’. These less precise and overly inclusive definitions illustrate the circularity summarized by H.R. Woudhuysen: ‘“foul-paper” texts can be identified by the presence of those features which are characteristic of “foul-paper” texts’ (1998, 320).

No printer’s copy survives. No ‘foul papers’ as conceived by Greg have been discovered, and definitions remain elastic, or in Ioppolo’s word, ‘fluid’ (2012, 87). In his Arden edition of *King Lear*, R.A. Foakes describes his method for attempting to peer through the so-called ‘veil of print’: ‘The only evidence we have for the copy that lies behind the text printed in Q is to be found within it; the nature of the manuscript has to be inferred, and arguments can never be conclusive in the absence of external proof’ (2000, 119).

The Hand D Additions are part of a manuscript intended for use in the playhouse, not in the print shop, and they contain characteristics consistent with a scribal transcript. They do not contain the principal features enumerated by Greg in his hypothetical definition of ‘foul papers’. The penman’s identity cannot be proven on the available evidence. In the meantime, many editors continue to accept D’s Additions to *More* as Shakespeare’s ‘foul papers,’ and many biographers continue to accept them as a literary paper trail in Shakespeare’s handwriting.

### 5. *Orthography*

In the case for Shakespeare as D, a significant part of the ‘force of cumulative evidence’ argument is the demonstration of ‘Shakespearean’ spellings. The case based on orthography was introduced in 1923 by John Dover Wilson. Wilson could barely contain his excitement when he discovered that *Scilens*, a rare spelling for ‘Silence’, appears in both Q 2 *Henry IV* (1600) and in the Hand D manuscript (128-129). The spelling of *Scilens* was clearly, in Wilson’s view, an authorial choice, because *Scilens* is the name of a Shakespearean character, *ergo* a sacrosanct designation, not just an idiosyncratic spelling for a common word. But Q offers Wilson no support that *Scilens* is an authorial choice. The

name of the silly Justice occurs in Q forty times (including in the cancelled leaves). In dialogue, as a speech prefix or in a stage direction, the Justice's name is spelled *Scilens* eighteen times, *Silence* three times, and *Silens* nineteen times (as well as in abbreviated form in the cancelled leaves). The variations mean that a particular preference of spelling cannot be argued, regardless of whose supposed 'preference' it might represent – author's, scribe's, compositor's, or editor's.

In the Hand D Additions, the word *scilens* at line 59 is an interjection, not a proper name, and the word 'silenced' at line 78 is spelled by D as *sylenc't*. Similar but not identical variations are found in the 1611 manuscript of *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, which contains four instances of *silence* and three instances of *scilence*.

The editors of the Revels edition of the play gloss the word as a spelling 'found also eighteen times in *2HIV*, and nowhere else in Elizabethan texts' (Melchiori and Gabrieli 1990, 98, n.; see also Schoenbaum 1966, 105; Jowett 2007, 13; Jowett 2011, 442). It is surely significant, however, that the spelling occurs nowhere else in Shakespearean texts, either. The word 'silence' occurs dozens of times in the Shakespeare corpus, but in no other instance is it spelled *scilens*. Other texts supposedly set from Shakespeare's 'foul papers' and containing the spelling *silence* include Q *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (six instances), Q *Much Ado About Nothing* (two instances) and Q *Merchant of Venice* (five instances). In essence, to identify this 'Shakespearean' spelling, scholars are comparing a rare spelling of a character's name, found multiple times amongst two other spellings of the same word, in a quarto produced by compositors using unknown printer's copy, with a single instance of the rare spelling found in a manuscript penned by a (possibly authorial) scribe.

Further, if a particular preferred spelling of a character's name is a hallmark of Shakespeare's authorship, as Wilson suggests, then Hand D fails as Shakespearean. D usually spells the title character's name as 'moor', but he also spells it 'moore', 'more', and 'moo'. Greg acknowledges that speech prefixes in the Hand D Additions were omitted on the penman's first pass, and that the speech prefixes subsequently added by D are 'perfunctory' in nature (1923b, 229).

Even while identifying possible phonetic error in Q2 *Romeo and Juliet* (2013, 98), Arden editor René Weis' argument goes back to Shakespeare's spelling preferences as found in D's Additions:

As we know from *Sir Thomas More* and other foul papers using words ending in –ce, Shakespeare's spelling practice is to drop the final e, hence 'obedyenc' (6.47), 'obedienc' (at 107 and 129), 'insolenc' (92), 'offyc' (112) and fraunc (143) in *Sir Thomas More*. (100)

However, other spellings in the Hand D Additions of words ending in *ce* (with the final *e*) include *audience* (47), *elevenpence* (2), and *violence* (132). Other texts presumably based on 'foul papers' with final *e* spellings include Q *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (*obediencie; disobedience*), Q1 *Lear* (*France, offence; notice; office*); and Q 2 *Henry IV* (*office, obedience, Prince*).

A similar argument is advanced by an Oxford editor of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

There is more than enough evidence, according to the canons of bibliographical proof, to show that the copy for Q1 was autograph 'foul papers' ... While Elizabethan compositors often varied the spelling of words, a number of the more unusual spellings in Q1 agree with the spellings used by Hand D in the manuscript of the play of *Sir Thomas More*, a handwriting usually held to be Shakespeare's own. In particular Hand D and Q1 share a preference for using 'oo' (in, for instance: prooue, hoord, boorde, shooes, moouie). (Holland 2008, 11, 114)

Q1 *Lear* contains thirteen instances of *prove* or *proves*, none spelled with the 'oo'. Q2 *Romeo* contains seventeen instances of *move* and seven instances of *prove*, none spelled with the 'oo'. Other supposedly 'Shakespearean' spellings such as *deules* (devils) or *Iarman* (German) are as easily disproved.

No one can know how many agents intervened between an author's manuscript and the printed text. Honigmann explains that an editor 'wants to know how many scribes and compositors copied and set the text' since they 'normally changed spelling and punctuation'; even straightforward reprints introduced spelling changes in the printing house (1998, 353). Arguments concerning 'Shakespearean' spellings cannot be sustained when spellings in all texts supposedly based on 'foul papers' are tabulated.

## 6. Conclusions

Shakespeare's handwritten leaves in the *Sir Thomas More* manuscript would fill an evidentiary vacuum: If Hand D *is* a written specimen of Shakespeare's, he not only left behind a literary paper trail, he left one of the highest quality, a manuscript in his handwriting, whether 'foul papers' or authorial fair copy. However, the evidence and the arguments based on handwriting, spellings, and assumptions about 'foul papers' do not support such conclusions.

The handwriting case for Shakespeare as D cannot be made on the available evidence: the control sample is inadequate in quantity and quality, signatures and dramatic compositions belong to different classes or species, and the years between the penning of D's Additions and the signatures render comparisons less useful. The related case that Hand D is an example of 'foul papers' relies on a term that is variously defined without reference to any surviving manuscript that served as printer's copy and without reference to Greg's original conception; the term remains open to interpretation. 'Shakespearean' spellings are based on selective comparisons. With the exception of arguments and data based on stylistics, such as collocations of words and imagery (which are independent of the handwriting analysis), the 'force of cumulative evidence' argument is instead comprised of disproved, unproven, or unprovable assumptions.

In the years since 1923, many scholars, editors, and critics have claimed Hand D as Shakespeare's, and the mere repetition of that claim has bestowed on it a misplaced legitimacy. David Hackett Fischer identifies the logical fallacy as 'proof by repetition' (1970, 302-303). Yet despite deficient evidence and faulty arguments, the case for Hand D not only has survived, as of 2015, it is thriving beyond Pollard's wildest dreams.

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# Fake Shakespeare

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## *Abstract*

The essay examines the relationship between Shakespeare and Fletcher's lost play *The History of Cardenio* and Theobald's 1727 adaptation *Double Falsehood*, and various twentieth-first century attempts (by Greenblatt and Mee, Doran and Álamo, and Gary Taylor), to recover the lost play by adapting *Double Falsehood*. Any such attempt requires the modern adapter to identify which parts of *Double Falsehood* preserve the Jacobean original (and should therefore be retained) and which are the work of a Restoration or eighteenth-century adapter (and should therefore be removed). That task is essentially empirical. But recreation of the lost play also requires sympathetic creativity: in particular, an effort to imitate Shakespeare (and Fletcher).

*Keywords:* Adaptation, Authorship, *Cardenio*, *Double Falsehood*, Imitation

You don't write fake Shakespeare.  
Brean Hammond (2010)<sup>1</sup>

## 1. *Forgery or Adaptation*

Plagiarism is easy. Imitation is hard.

Lewis Theobald's *Double Falsehood* is a Georgian adaptation of a Jacobean play by Fletcher and Shakespeare.<sup>2</sup> It is not a forgery, as Tiffany Stern (2011) contends. Some of Stern's claims were refuted in 'A History of *The History of Cardenio*' (Taylor 2012); some were disproven in other essays (Jackson 2012; Proudfoot 2012) in the same volume (Carnegie and Taylor 2012), and others in independent analysis of data-compression (Pascucci 2012). But all that research was in press before Stern's article was published. Since its publication, further refutation has come in three essays (Nance 2013; Taylor 2013; Taylor and Wagschal 2013) in *The Creation and Re-creation of Cardenio* (Bourus and Taylor, 2013). My involvement in some of these refutations might cast doubt

<sup>1</sup> Hammond's statement is reported in Porter 2011, 353.

<sup>2</sup> Quotations from *Double Falsehood* cite the line-numbering of Hammond 2010, but quote the text of Theobald 1728.



on the objectivity of my assessment of Stern's case. But her argument was also roundly, independently challenged at a conference on the subject of *Double Falsehood/Cardenio*, organized by A.L. Braunmuller and Robert Folkenflik, at UCLA on 31 January and 1 February 2014; this event included devastating rebuttals, from entirely different perspectives, by Robert D. Hume, Robert Folkenflik, Jean Marsden, Deborah Payne, Diana Solomon, James Pennebaker, and Brean Hammond. Among the speakers at the UCLA symposium, only Hammond had also contributed to Carnegie and Taylor 2012, and none had contributed to Bourus and Taylor 2013. The organizers did not ask the invited speakers for their views on *Double Falsehood* in advance, but simply invited specialists on various aspects of Restoration and eighteenth-century drama that were relevant to the topic; none of the speakers endorsed Stern's argument. Their rebuttals were based on many different kinds of evidence, argument, and critical stance. Two papers delivered at the conference have already been published (Hammond 2014, Boyd and Pennebaker 2015); the others are said to be forthcoming by 2016. Certainly forthcoming in 2016 are new essays by Giuliano Pascucci and Marina Tarlinskaja, which from different perspectives provide new evidence for the presence of Shakespeare and Fletcher in *Double Falsehood*. I will therefore assume, in this essay, that the accusation of forgery no longer needs to be addressed.

If *Double Falsehood* is not a forgery, then it must be an adaptation. But what exactly does 'adaptation' mean? M.J. Kidnie argues that all editing is adaptation, and that, in particular, the editing of a play cannot be logically distinguished from its adaptation in performance (2009, 140-164). It's true: the text of *Julius Caesar* in the Royal Shakespeare Company's 2007 *Complete Works*, edited by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, and the 2012 Royal Shakespeare Company production of *Julius Caesar*, directed by Gregory Doran and set in modern Africa, retrospectively interpret and alter the text of the play printed in 1623 among 'Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies'. Both the modern edition and the modern production mediate the past for the present.

They differ, however, in their temporal allegiance. Historicist editing constructs, tests, and models a hypothesis about the past. Like a paleontologist putting together dinosaur fossils, modern scholarly editors attempt to reconstruct the past, undoing the damage done by time and chaos. In contrast, theatrical adaptation is intrinsically presentist. Like translation, or the modernization of spelling and pronunciation, adaptation seeks, with more or less fidelity to the original, to take something from 'another country' (the past) and make it intellectually, emotionally, and aesthetically satisfying for a new target audience.<sup>3</sup> Adaptation imagines what the past writer (or painter, or composer) would have

<sup>3</sup> On modernization and translation, see Taylor 2009. The distinctions between editing and adaptation have been muddled, for Shakespearians, by the editorial practice of modernizing the spelling and punctuation of Shakespeare's works (which began with the posthumous 1623 folio).

done if s/he were alive now, here. Historicist editing instead imagines what a past object looked like, then, there.

But *Cardenio*, or *Double Falsehood*, hurls a wrecking ball at this neat binary. Lewis Theobald's 'Preface by the Editor' identifies him as the editor of *Double Falsehood*, but the title-page of the same book declares that the text has been 'Revised and Adapted to the Stage / By Mr THEOBALD'. Was Theobald the editor or adapter? Tiffany Stern took this ambiguity as evidence that Theobald forged the entire text. But Theobald was, on some occasions, demonstrably and openly an editor, and on other occasions demonstrably and openly an adapter. Theobald's life combined both activities, so he could certainly have combined both here. I know such combinations are possible, because I have also combined both in my own attempt to reconstruct *The History of Cardenio*. But unlike Theobald – because I work in an institutional and discursive environment unimaginable in 1728 – I must carefully distinguish my editing from my adapting.

Lukas Erne describes all Shakespeare's editors as collaborators: modernizing his meanings, punctuating his sentences, re-visualizing the layout of his verse, directing his actors, picking variants from the buffet of his texts, abridging titles, occasionally substituting their words for his (2008). Like other volumes in the Arden Shakespeare series, Brean Hammond's 2010 edition of *Double Falsehood* does all those things, just as Pope and Theobald did in their editions of Shakespeare. Nevertheless, Hammond's Arden *Double Falsehood* fundamentally differs from the theatrical adaptations of *Double Falsehood* by Taffety Punk, Bernard Richards, Classic Stage, Mokita Grit, and the Royal Shakespeare Company. Hammond does not add new lines, speeches, scenes, or dumb-shows; he does not systematically change names, transpose material from one part of the play to another, redistribute speeches to different characters, cut whole speeches or scenes, import material from other documents, or provide stage directions for major new properties.

In the 2016 New Oxford Shakespeare edition of the *Complete Works*, I am editing *Double Falsehood*. My edition is not identical to Hammond's, but it belongs to the same genre of intellectual activity. But in my 2013 recreation of *The History of Cardenio* ('by John Fletcher, William Shakespeare, and Garry Taylor') I engaged in all those activities that Hammond's edition avoids. In that respect my *History of Cardenio* resembles the adaptations by the Taffety Punk *et al.* theatre company. But my adaptation fundamentally differs from all those, because, like an edition, it also 'attempts to reconstruct the past, undoing the damage done by time and' – Theobald. In this essay I will try to distinguish between editing, adaptation, and imitation by focusing on how different authors treat two female characters in *Don Quixote* and in a series of dramatizations of that novel. In *Double Falsehood* one of those women is named Leonora; in *Don Quixote* she is named Lucinda. What should we call her? Who is she? What is her role in the story? What answers we get to those questions are a function of which author we ask.

## 2. *Leonora*

Consider a short speech by Leonora at the end of *Double Falsehood*. These are, in fact, her last words in the play:

*Leon.* The righteous Pow'rs at length have crown'd our Loves.  
Think, *Julio*, from the Storm that's now o'erblown,  
Tho'sour Affliction combat Hope awhile,  
When Lovers swear  
Faith, the list'ning Angels  
Stand on the golden Battlements of Heav'n,  
And waft their Vows to the eternal Throne.  
Such were our Vows, and so are they repaid. (5.2.251-257)

Even without knowing anything about stylometric analysis, I think any reader of this journal would recognize this speech as unShakespearian, and particularly uncharacteristic of Shakespeare's late style. A comprehensive search of digital databases demonstrates that Theobald, not Fletcher or Shakespeare, overwhelmingly dominates the language of these seven lines (Appendix A). Gregory Doran, Artistic Director of the RSC, singled out this speech as containing 'one of my favorite lines' (actually, three of his favorite lines).<sup>4</sup> Which is to say: Doran cannot distinguish Theobald from Shakespeare.

Another speech by the same character in the same scene belongs to an entirely different stylistic register:

For such sad Rites must be perform'd, my Lord,  
E'er I can love again. Maids, that have lov'd,  
If they be worth that noble Testimony,  
Wear their Loves here, my Lord; here, in their Hearts;  
Deep, deep within; not in their Eyes, or Accents;  
Such may be slip'd away; or with two Tears  
Wash'd out of all Remembrance: Mine, no Physick,  
But Time, or Death, can cure. (5.2.94-101)

Anyone who has read and studied all of John Fletcher's work will recognize this as Fletcherian (and scholars have done so for a century). A comprehensive search of digital databases demonstrates that Fletcher, not Theobald or Shakespeare, overwhelmingly dominates the language of this speech (Appendix B). Not only is Fletcher immeasurably more likely than Theobald to have written this speech. He is more likely than any other known seventeenth or eighteenth century playwright to have done so.

<sup>4</sup> Doran 2012, 131 (quoting 'When lovers swear .... eternal throne', comparing the image to El Greco). Doran here treats 'line' as a synonym for 'sentence', a mistake no poet would make.

We can now compare these two Leonora speeches with a third. Because it is shorter than the two I've just quoted, I include the lines by Julio that cue her speech:

—No Impediment  
 Shall bar my Wishes, but such grave Delays  
 As Reason presses Patience with; which blunt not  
 But rather whet our Loves. Be patient, Sweet.  
*Leon.* Patient! What else? My Flames are in the Flint.  
 Haply, to lose a Husband I may weep;  
 Never, to get One: When I cry for Bondage,  
 Let Freedom quit me. (5.2.109-116)

Doesn't this sound very different than the other two passages? A comprehensive search of digital databases demonstrates that Shakespeare, not Theobald or Fletcher, overwhelmingly dominates the language of these lines (Appendix C). A comparison of these lines with Theobald's imitations of Shakespeare demonstrates that he was utterly incapable of imitating Shakespeare with anything remotely resembling this level of concentrated linguistic similarity (Taylor 2013, 157-161). Moreover, no other early modern playwright comes anywhere near the number of unique links between this passage and Shakespeare.

So, *Double Falsehood* contains passages written by Shakespeare, passages written by Fletcher, and passages written by Theobald. It represents an eighteenth-century adaptation of a Jacobean play. As a scholar, I can try to identify passages clearly by one of the two original collaborators, and passages by the man who adapted it more than a century later. No one would dispute that this is a scholarly, indeed a highly technical and specialist form of historical scholarship, and I could easily devote the rest of this essay to describing it.

But what do we do *after* we've distinguished each author from the other two? Once scholarship has identified, and removed, the most obvious specimens of Theobald's writing from the text of *Double Falsehood*, what we are left with is a collection of Jacobean fragments. Any attempt to put Humpty Dumpty back together again requires, not just scholarship, but a combination of scholarship and creativity.

### 3. Greenblatt and Mee, Doran and Álamo

It may be useful at this point to compare Theobald's *Double Falsehood* with two more recent adaptations that also capitalize on the brand name of Shakespeare. The *Cardenio* of Stephen Greenblatt and Charles Mee (2008) belongs to the long history of adaptations of *Don Quixote*, and particularly

of the stand-alone tale of ‘The Curious Impertinent’.<sup>5</sup> But despite the title of their play and of the larger, Mellon-funded ‘Cardenio Project’ that it initiated, their *Cardenio* has almost nothing to do with the Spanish *Cardenio* or the Jacobean *Cardenio*. It restricts its use of *Double Falsehood* to a play-within-the-play, preserving only about sixty-three of the lines published by Theobald in 1728, scattered in Greenblatt and Mee’s play across four different segments of dialogue.<sup>6</sup> The wording has been changed in eleven of those lines (21%), and on seven other occasions regular verse lines are broken into hanging, or awkwardly rejoined, part-lines. Altogether, the adaptation ruins the meter of seventeen lines (27%). Even when presenting what is advertized (in and out of the script) as ‘a lost play by Shakespeare’ (18%), Greenblatt and Mee consider Shakespeare’s verse immaterial to Shakespeare’s style, meaning, or impact. They do not even consider Shakespeare’s achievement as a great prose writer, and do not reproduce any of *Double Falsehood*’s prose – even though Jackson (2012) and Nance (2013) have demonstrated that the prose is much more authentically Jacobean and Shakespearian than the verse.

Although they reproduce less than four percent of *Double Falsehood*, they include phrases (‘let the gay scene’, ‘by proxy’, ‘her charms’, and ‘love is contagious’, for instance) that clearly come from Theobald, not Shakespeare.<sup>7</sup> Most of the lines Greenblatt and Mee preserve come from a single part-scene of *Double Falsehood*, the encounter of Julio [their ‘Cardenio’] and Leonora [their ‘Lucinda’] in the middle of 1.2. However, they skip over the third passage I quote above, the longest uninterrupted stretch of dialogue between these two characters that seems entirely Shakespearian.

Why would Greenblatt and Mee spotlight adjacent baser matter, and at the same time discard such powerful, poetic, Shakespearian writing? Because the lines so conspicuously Shakespearian do not fit the Lucinda they desire. Not surprisingly, the speech Shakespeare wrote for Lucinda yokes together elements of strong women (Kate, Diana, Cordelia, and Cleopatra) with the language of warriors (Henry V, Richard III) and princes (Ferdinand). Lucinda at this point in the play is – as Cardenio complains – impatient, demanding,

<sup>5</sup> Between 1605 and 1616 Beaumont and Fletcher’s *The Coxcomb*, Middleton’s *The Lady’s Tragedy*, and Nathan Field’s *Amends for Ladies* all dramatized the same tale, but Greenblatt and Mee’s *Cardenio* apparently owes nothing to any of those (more interesting) plays.

<sup>6</sup> *Double Falsehood* 1.2.149-153, 156-157, 160-164, 169-177 (Greenblatt and Mee 2008, 47); 1.2.63-66, 68-69, 70-72, 74-82 (66), 1.2.81-88, 116-119, 123-124, 126-127, 129-130, 141 (67-68), 4.1.49-61 (96). This last passage seems to be a mix of Fletcher and Theobald.

<sup>7</sup> Theobald, *The Persian Princess* 2 (‘Let the gaudy scene’); Theobald’s editorial note 41 on *Antony and Cleopatra* 3.8 (‘by proxy’) in his 1733 edition of Shakespeare’s *Works*; in the anachronistic modern sense, ‘her charms’ occurs in Theobald’s *Decius*, *Orpheus*, *Captive*, and *Fatal*; *Perfidious* (‘Grief is grown contagious’), *Persian* 4.1 (‘Sorrow were contagious’).

and intellectually at least his equal, probably his superior. Greenblatt and Mee, like Theobald, want, instead, a soft-focus romantic heroine. After their sampling of uninspiring quotations from *Double Falsehood*, they climax their ‘Shakespearian’ play-within-the-play with nineteen lines of inserted dialogue (69), during which ‘everyone gets quieter and quieter, / more and more attentive’. This versified stage direction insists that their actors must physically assert that this fake-Shakespeare is more dramatic, more affecting, than anything from *Double Falsehood*. Here are the two speeches Greenblatt and Mee supply for their Luscinda:

My gracious Lord, no deity dwells here.  
 The servant to your will affects no flattery...  
 Stay, stay and hide,  
 The blushes of the bride;  
 Stay gentle night, and with thy darkness cover  
 The kisses of my lover. (69)

followed by another versified stage direction

[they kiss and kiss  
 and, finally,  
 they kiss,  
 a long, lingering kiss  
 that is astonishing] (69)

The two blank verse lines come from a Fletcher scene in Fletcher and Massinger’s *Rollo, Duke of Normandy; or, The Bloody Brother*; the lyric rhymes are taken from Beaumont’s ‘Masque’ in the first scene of *The Maid’s Tragedy*.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps they expect specialists to recognize Fletcher here, but if so they equate Fletcher with ‘the Beaumont and Fletcher canon,’ not distinguishing his collaborative work or recognizing the existence of his collaborators. But they treat *Cardenio* as ‘a lost Shakespeare play’, systematically ignoring Fletcher. What Greenblatt and Mee expect audiences to recognize as a Shakespearian woman is a suitably modest ‘servant’ who speaks regular, end-stopped iambic pentameter, then ‘blushes’ and descends into lyric rhyme (capping a romantic scene with a prolonged and ‘astonishing’ kiss). The wonder so often identified as the emotional signature-tone of Shakespeare’s romances comes, here, not from leaps of language – not one simile or metaphor – but from the most conventional of romantic comedy stage directions. That direction affects a verse style that any reader of contemporary Walmart poetry will recognize;

<sup>8</sup> Greenblatt and Mee do not identify these sources; I found them by searching Literature Online. They change ‘her lover’ to ‘my lover’ (69).

it aspires to the excited adolescent banality of Rod McKuen and Jewel (though even McKuen and Jewel would probably have been embarrassed by the comparison). Whether we judge it as poetry, or as theatre, or in terms of its gender politics, Greenblatt and Mee's imitation of Shakespeare is *worse than Theobald*. It assumes that a bricolage of writing by other early modern playwrights is effectively indistinguishable from Shakespeare.

Gregory Doran's adaptation for the Royal Shakespeare Company was both more scholarly and more creative than Greenblatt and Mee's. It retained much more of *Double Falsehood*, and it was based on a better understanding of early modern theatre, Shakespearian and Fletcherian. But what do you remember about Doran's *Cardenio*, if you saw it in the theatre? What I remember is the loud, raunchy, chaotic street festival – and the haunting voice of the flamenco singer Javier Macías, floating high above the stage in the Swan Theatre – and the prolonged *Fight Club* physical battle between Cardenio and Fernando in the final scene. These were the moments that justify Michael Billington's praise of the RSC *Cardenio* as 'theatrically powerful'. They were certainly more engrossing than anything I saw in the Classic Stage Company's earnest, faithful, dull, 2011 New York City revival of *Double Falsehood*.

But the most passionate, most dramatic, most interesting elements of Doran's production were wordless. They belong to Doran's directing, rather than Doran and Álamo's written adaptation of *Double Falsehood*. Javier was singing words, but they were in a foreign language, and no playwright wrote them; effectively, for the overwhelmingly Anglophone audience Javier's voice was simply a musical instrument, rising above the other instruments in the band, providing the script with a movie soundtrack.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, when Greenblatt and Mee want to convey passion, they have Simonetta sing Donizetti's 'Il barcaiolo' (2008, 16) and later have Melchiorre sing Rossini's 'La danza' (56). Both adaptations import packaged passion. They outsource emotion to the Mediterranean.

Shakespeare and Fletcher did not. Both created, in their own language, what C. Stephen Jaeger calls the 'enchantment' of 'charismatic art', an art that conveys 'the sense of living a heightened form of life' and promises 'to transport the viewer into that world' (2012, 3). Jaeger contrasts normative Aristotelian 'mimesis' with a 'hypermimesis', associated with Longinus, in works that 'violate the mimetic and ignore or subordinate realism and the real' (38). Shakespeare's plays have enchanted audiences for more than four centuries by combining the personal magnetism of star actors with the sublime emotional stimulus of hyperarticulate poetry. Great roles, great words. In the 'secular magic' of 'synthetic experience' in the seventeenth-century theatre,

<sup>9</sup> For more on the music, see Della Gatta 2013.

‘abnormally interesting people’ speak abnormally interesting English sentences (Roach 2007, 1-3). Greenblatt and Mee’s script, Doran and Álamo’s script, never deliver the interesting sentences. As the famous RSC voice coach Cicely Berry said, after an early workshop reading, ‘It’s the language, isn’t it? It’s just not Shakespeare. Not surprising enough. It doesn’t fly’ (Doran 2012, 76).

When Doran realized that he would need to write some new scenes and new dialogue for the play, he went to John Barton to learn how to ‘bombast out a line or two’. Barton gave him, as an instructive exemplar of blank verse, the line ‘I want to go and have a cup of tea’ (Doran 2012, 44). Very British, but not very passionate.

Barton’s iambic pentameteacup might have been convincing when inserted into scenes from the three *Henry VI* plays, where the verse of Shakespeare and his collaborators is not much better (Barton and Hall 1970). But twenty or more years later, when *The History of Cardenio* was written and performed, dramatic verse had been radically transformed by the poetic experiments of Shakespeare, Jonson, Marston, Middleton, Beaumont, Fletcher, and Donne. One thing we absolutely and undeniably *know* about *Shakespeare’s lost play* is that it was *not* written in the verse style of the late 1580s and early 1590s.

Doran and Álamo (and almost everyone else who has tried to imagine the lost play) agree that Theobald omitted a scene, narrated in *Don Quixote*, in which Fernando bribes his way into a woman’s house in order to seduce her (if possible) or rape her (if necessary). That scene must have been placed early in the Jacobean play; somewhere between 1.3 and 2.1 of *Double Falsehood*. It thus belonged to the portion of the play apparently written by Shakespeare. Cervantes tells the story from the woman’s perspective, so he provides the foundation for her speeches. For instance, she recalls that she told Fernando ‘With me your violence shall not prevaile, your riches gaine any grace, your words have power to deceive, or your sighes and tears be able to move’ (Cervantes 1612, 4.1.290). Doran’s version of the woman’s passionate Shakespearian resistance changes just a few words to turn Shelton’s prose into verse. Here’s a sample of Doran’s mechanico-pentameter:

With me your violence cannot prevail,  
Your wealth gain grace, your words have power to cheat,  
Nor yet your sighs and tears have power to move. (Doran and Álamo 2011, 29)

No metaphor, no ruffled syntax, no passion, no originality. No risk. What can be safer? If anyone objects to the dullness of these lines, Doran can always reply, ‘Don’t blame me if you don’t like it; blame Cervantes’, But in poetry, on stage, safety is death. Doran’s verse is better than Greenblatt’s, but it is not Shakespeare. As poetry, it is actually less metaphorical and imaginative than Theobald.

#### 4. *Names and Actors*

Theobald was adapting a seventeenth-century play for the 'here, now' of London's Drury Lane theatre in 1727. The original play did not, apparently, give Leonora a long final speech – something that the company's leading actress, Mary Porter, may have desired or demanded.<sup>10</sup> In 1613, all female roles would have been played by juvenile males, apprentices in 'the art of the stage' (Astington 2010, 76-107). Those Jacobean apprentices did not have the power or importance to demand changes to the script. Georgian actresses had much more leverage. Moreover, the speech Theobald provided for Mrs. Porter explicitly enunciates the play's moral lesson: God rewards, repays, 'true' fidelity to 'vows'. It would have reassured the Drury Lane audience that art served morality; it asserted that the marriage of Leonora and Julio also celebrated the divinely-sanctioned union of aesthetics and ethics.

Theobald's added final speech for Leonora addresses, and names, 'Julio'. This cannot have been the name of the protagonist in a seventeenth-century play entitled *The History of Cardenio* or simply *Cardenio*. But 'Julio' (easily elided to the disyllabic, trochaic 'Jul-yo') perfectly fits the meter of Theobald's new line, where 'Cardenio' would not. So the word 'Julio' supplies yet another indication of Theobald's hand in Leonora's speech: it substitutes a common Spanish name for a very unusual one.<sup>11</sup> This change of name probably reflects Theobald's desire to avoid any association between his adaptation and Thomas D'Urfey's crude but popular *Comical History of Don Quixote* (1694). Drury Lane already had one play in its repertory that featured a theatrical adaptation of the Cervantine love story of Cardenio and Luscinda. Audiences might not want another. At least, they would have to be persuaded that this new adaptation, full of Shakespearian poetry and romantic moral sentiment, radically differed from D'Urfey's musical farce. Between 1613 and 1727, the character-name 'Cardenio' had acquired theatrical associations that undermined the aesthetic value associated with Shakespeare's brand-name.

The name 'Julio' occurs another twenty times in Leonora's speeches, and all those twenty lines must be either (a) written in their entirety, like this one, by Theobald, or (b) rewritten by Theobald to accommodate the changed name.

With 'Cardenio' we can be certain, and with 'Fernando' reasonably confident, of the original names. No editor can be so sure of the name of the woman they both love. Cervantes calls her 'Luscinda'; so does D'Urfey. Fletcher used that name in *The Knight of Malta* (1618). *Double Falsehood's* 'Leonora' does not appear elsewhere in an English play until Webster's

<sup>10</sup> For Mrs. Potter playing the leading female roles in this period, see Goff 2007, 34, 40, 61, 92, 101, 130.

<sup>11</sup> On the editorial principle that rare words are probably more authentic than common ones in literary texts, see Taylor 1988.

*Devil's Law Case* (1617-1619). The same motive for changing the original 'Cardenio' and 'Fernando' would also have required 'Luscinda' to be changed to something else. And unlike the commonplace 'Leonora', 'Luscinda' means something. 'Luscinda' derives from the Latin *lux*, light, and its English pronunciation also suggests the pun 'loose' (as in 'loose woman', or 'light woman'). Could Shakespeare, or Fletcher, have resisted the temptation to pun on the name Cervantes gave her? Luscinda would sit naturally among the symbolically christened heroines of Shakespeare's late romances: Marina, Perdita, Innogen, and Miranda.<sup>12</sup>

Of the twenty-nine appearances in verse of 'Leonora', six would be better served, metrically, by the Cervantine trisyllable.<sup>13</sup> That allows an editor to restore 'Luscinda' without disturbing the context. But in other cases, the name's context seems to be Theobald's writing. For instance, in the following passage that suspicious vocative begins a sequence of thirteen lines crammed with Theobaldisms. (I print in bold type words, phrases and collocations found in Theobald but not Fletcher; in bold small caps Theobald language not found anywhere else in English drama 1576-1642):

*Henr.* O Leonora, see! **thus SELF-CONDEMN'D**  
**I THROW ME AT YOUR FEET**, and **sue for Mercy**.  
 If I have err'd, **impute it to my LOVE**;  
 The **TYRANT GOD** that bows us to his **SWAY**,  
**REBELLIOUS TO THE LAWS OF REAS'NING MEN**;  
 That will not have his **Votaries** Actions **scann'd**,  
 But calls it Justice, when we most obey him.  
 He but **COMMANDED**, what your **Eyes INSPIR'D**;  
 Whose **SACRED BEAMS**, **darted into** my Soul,  
 Have purg'd **the Mansion** from **IMPURE DESIRES**,  
 And kindled **in my Heart** a Vestal's **Flame**.

*Leon.* **Rise, rise**, my Lord; this well-**dissembled Passion**  
**Has gain'd** you nothing but a deeper Hate. (5.1.25-37)

<sup>12</sup> Violante would be another example. For its associations with flowers, violence, and deflowering, see Leigh 2012, 258-259. These associations are even clearer if we adopt the odd spelling of the name that occurs twice in the first editions of Shakespeare's plays, 'Violenta' (*All's Well that Ends Well* 3.5.0.1, *Twelfth Night* 1.5.160.1). Moreover, unlike Dorotea, 'Violenta' echoes the other three lovers' names: -enta, -inda, -den, -nando, the 'l' in 'Lucinda', the associated V- and F-.

<sup>13</sup> *Double Falsehood* 1.2.196, 2.4.30, 3.1.32, 3.3.59, 4.2.56, 5.2.237. Hammond 2010 asserts that 'Leonora' could be pronounced as 'three syllables' (179, 232, 274), but he gives no evidence for the currency of such an elision in Jacobean or Georgian verse. Contrast the explicit elision 'Rod'rick' (5.2.27, 32, 38).

In my own early attempts to unadapt Theobald's adaptation, my initial response to this sequence was to try to improve Henriquez's speech, by rewriting it, or shortening it, or both.<sup>14</sup> By the time the Indianapolis cast began rehearsal, in January 2012, only three (modified) lines remained. But I could not, and still cannot, imagine what Fletcher might have written here that Theobald would need to rewrite so extensively.

Actors always found these two speeches difficult, and they created problems for the whole scene. Immediately after her two lines to Henriquez, Leonora begins speaking of him in the third person: 'Should I imagine, he can truly love me' (5.1.38). Henriquez is not given an exit line. When Roderick asks Leonora to 'go with us' (5.1.44), the plural pronoun apparently includes Henriquez. Roderick then sends her off with Henriquez, without accompanying her himself: 'Look to the Lady there. – I follow' (5.1.53). Why does he leave her with Henriquez, after she has just asked him to protect her from Henriquez? Why would Violante want to intervene at precisely this point, thereby insuring that her lover Henriquez has time alone with her rival Leonora? Why does Roderick depart with Violante at the end of the scene? In the interim, he hears even more damning evidence of his brother's bad behavior – but apparently has no compunctions about leaving him with Leonora. Violante also is willing to leave the pair alone together – in order to take Roderick to see Julio. Why? Does Julio matter more to her than Henriquez? All four actors had difficulty accommodating this sequence to their understanding of the characters.

Other recent adaptations of *Double Falsehood* have all expanded the role of Henriquez/Fernando in the second half of the play, and male directors of my own adaptation had encouraged me to clarify Fernando's trajectory between the wedding and the final reunion. But in fretting over Henriquez/Fernando, I had been neglecting Leonora/Luscinda (and Roderick and Violante). It was apparently Theobald who put into Henriquez's mouth 'I throw me at your feet' (5.1.26). That Theobald sentence, which appears nowhere in English drama before 1642, in turn prompted Leonora's Theobaldian reply, 'Rise, rise' (5.1.36).<sup>15</sup> The rest of Leonora's opening sentence – 'this well-dissembled Passion / Has gain'd you nothing but a deeper hate' (5.1.36-37) – contains nothing Fletcherian, but does sport other Theobald parallels.<sup>16</sup> Both Henriquez's address to Leonora, and her response, seem to be Georgian interpolations.

<sup>14</sup> The two-decade evolution of my reconstruction is traced by Bourus 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Theobald's *Perseus* begins a speech 'Rise, rise, at once' (15), but neither Shakespeare nor Fletcher ever began a speech with that doubled imperative, and Fletcher never doubled it at all (though Beaumont did).

<sup>16</sup> Theobald, *Perfidious*, 57 ('Passion / ... Gain'). Hammond 2010 notes that 'well-dissembled' is 'very popular in drama of the Restoration period'. Jackson 2012 cites an example from *Love's Pilgrimage*, but it occurs in Act Four, attributed to Beaumont. The only Literature Online examples of 'dissembled passion' before 1728 are Braithwait (1641), and twice in Aaron Hill (1711, 1716); although not specifically Theobald's, it is anachronistic for 1613.

This combination of lexical and theatrical evidence suggests that Leonora's entire encounter with Henriquez in 5.1 is Theobald's melodramatic addition to the scene. Nothing else she says requires his presence on stage. Remove Henriquez, and everyone else's actions make sense. The elegant chiasmus of the scene also becomes apparent: Roderick speaks first with the second female victim of his brother (who has become a nun), and then speaks second with his brother's first female victim (who has become a shepherd); he enters with one, and exits with the other, moving forward by moving backward chronologically toward the font of his brother's betrayals.

Theobald might well have been encouraged, or compelled, to write Henriquez into the scene to satisfy the demanding ego of Robert Wilks, who played the role, and who was also one of the triumvirate of managers that ran Drury Lane. For the 'twenty years' of his tenure there, Wilks would not support production of any play 'wherein it was not his Fortune to be chosen for the best Character'; his 'petulant Opposition' could be expected if 'he had but a middling Part', and he resented any success 'that he was not himself at the Head of.'<sup>17</sup> In *Don Quixote*, until the reunion in the inn, the story of Fernando is narrated entirely from the point of view first of Cardenio, then of Dorothea; consequently, between the aborted wedding and the Coincidental Inn, Fernando and Lucinda almost entirely disappear from the story. We do not know what they are thinking or doing, and neither do the other characters. Then, when they first ride into the novel *in propria persona*, what Cervantes emphasizes above all else is their silence. That silence, first of the narrator and then of the characters, creates a vacuum that our curiosity rushes to fill. Why should we imagine that Shakespeare, or Fletcher, was oblivious to the dramatic effect of that silence, or that absence? *Double Falsehood* brings Henriquez on stage twice during that interim. But here and at 4.1.212-257, his presence is theatrically awkward and his speeches reek of Theobald. Much of his soliloquy in 2.1, and of his speeches in 2.3, is also Theobald's.<sup>18</sup> The expansion of Wilks's part also entailed an expansion of Mary Porter's role in 5.1 and 2.3 (not to mention the added speech in 5.2, with which we began). In *Double Falsehood*, Leonora has more stage time with Henriquez than with Julio, and Henriquez speaks much more to and of her than to and of Violante. That is not true in *Don Quixote*, and need not have been true of the Jacobean *Cardenio*, either.

<sup>17</sup> Lowe 1889, II, 227-228. Lowe cites in a footnote the corroborating comment by John Dennis, that 'any Author who brings a Play to *Drury-Lane*, must . . . flatter Mr. *Robert Wilks*' (II, 226).

<sup>18</sup> For 2.1 see Taylor and Nance 2012, 198-212, and Taylor 2012, 40-44; for Theobald line-endings in 2.3, see Proudfoot 2012, 173-174. More generally, since Oliphant (1927), attribution scholars have found the most concentrated evidence of Theobald's hand in Act Two.

### 5. *Trajectories*

I have been working on the problem of unadapting *Double Falsehood* for twenty-five years, and in that time I have seen nine different incarnations of my own evolving script (sometimes including prolonged rehearsals, and always culminating in a rehearsed reading or public performances); I've also seen as many other productions and adaptations as possible. In my experience, the play cannot work if it is dominated by Fernando, as it was in the RSC production, the Classic Stage revival of *Double Falsehood*, and all the versions of my own reconstruction before Indianapolis. In obvious ways, the plot hinges on Fernando; he is psychologically interesting, and almost certainly the character and the actor bring to the story a personal charm or charisma that explains his powerful emotional effect on other people. To secure the happy ending that Cervantes imagined, Fernando must change; that change is a challenge for the writer(s) and the actor; audiences watch for it, and respond to it, positively or negatively, in a way that affects their evaluation of the whole story. Of course, Shakespeare and Fletcher might have wanted a more realistic, or more cynical, or more complicated, ending. But just as Benedick is more important to *Much Ado About Nothing* than Claudio, so Cardenio is more important than Fernando. The play's original title, and the Cervantine source, focused on Cardenio, who also appears before Fernando in both *Don Quixote* and *Double Falsehood*. In *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes changes; in *Cymbeline*, Giacomo changes; in *The Tempest* Alonso changes; all three men have behaved appallingly, but none of them dominates the second half of his play. Fernando, likewise, does not dominate the second half of Cardenio's story in *Don Quixote*; he does not even dominate the scene at the Coincidental Inn. Shakespeare and Fletcher made it even more impossible for him to tower over that final scene, because they expanded the roles of the three fathers and of Fernando's brother, and they brought all those other older men onstage at the end, producing an irresistible coalition of patriarchal authority that is completely absent in the Cervantine episode. Emotionally, the two women dominate the final scene (just as the women dominate the final scene of *The Winter's Tale*). The romance ending depends on the harmonious ensemble of the two young women and the four older men. In the end, Cardenio's return – which is, effectively, a resurrection that enables a romantic reunion – matters far more than anything that Fernando can say or do. If the earlier scenes have made Fernando the play's primary dramatic focus, then an audience will be dissatisfied by his necessarily constrained and secondary role in the final scene. (It took me more than twenty years to recognize this fact; I suspect that Shakespeare and Fletcher would have known it instinctively.)

Unlike Gregory Doran, Terri Bourus cast Cardenio before she cast Fernando, and the published reviews, audience talk-backs, and private feedback we received all recognized Cardenio as the protagonist. He shares

the spotlight with Fernando through the first third of my version of the play, up to the moment when he declares ‘Falseness my business now’ and exits. But then Cardenio challenges his dominance in three consecutive scenes, culminating in the wedding (*Double Falsehood* 3.1, 3.2). In my latest version of the script (Fletcher, Shakespeare and Taylor, 2013), Fernando then virtually disappears between the wedding and the final scene. He appears on stage only once (where his older brother persuades him to hide in the coffin), and in that scene speaks only twenty words (to his brother’s 211).<sup>19</sup> That appearance reminds us of Fernando, but answers none of our questions. What happens to him after the wedding? What is he thinking? Where is he moving, emotionally? His prolonged absence, then taciturnity, makes his transformation in the final scene more plausible and more moving.<sup>20</sup>

I started with emending Leonora’s word ‘Julio’, and wound up transforming the structure of a scene (5.1) and the arc of a character (Henriquez/Fernando). No editor would stretch speculation so far, or intervene on such a scale. But the logic remains historicist: restore the past, remove the accretions of intermediaries. The only difference is that, in this case, the intermediary has intermediated macrographically, and his doing cannot be undone with a scrupulous toothpick. Does my collaborative reconstruction reconstruct exactly what was performed before King James in 1613? Absolutely certainly no. Is my reconstruction more Jacobean in its language and its dramaturgy than the corresponding moments in *Double Falsehood*? Absolutely certainly yes.

My title promised you fake Shakespeare, but the first rule of writing fake Shakespeare is that you must not fake Shakespeare when you should be faking Fletcher. Attending to the singularities of Fletcher sharpens your ability to identify, and imitate, the singularities of Shakespeare. It prevents you from writing a generalized Jacobethan pastiche. Actors are told, ‘Never generalize’. The same rule applies when you are trying to capture, and vicariously convey, the personality of another writer. Imitating someone else’s style is, after all, what writers and other mimics do all the time when they try to capture the way another person behaves.

I started with a systematic analysis of language, and wound up analyzing entrances, exits, a man throwing himself at a woman’s feet, and the accidentals of theatre history. I started with Leonora, then changed her name back to

<sup>19</sup> Bourus in the 2012 Indianapolis production cast in the older brother’s role a taller, bigger actor, who physically dominated Fernando. This is not required by the script, but it makes sense, within the semiotics of the theatre, for the older brother to also be the bigger brother. We still speak of ‘my big brother’ (*mio fratello più grande*).

<sup>20</sup> As Gerald Baker has since pointed out to me (private communication, 17 July 2012), my interpretation of Fernando here makes him resemble Giacomo in *Cymbeline*, who drives much of the action of the first half, then disappears until almost the end, when he returns and repents.

Luscinda, and wound up discussing Cardenio and Fernando. In all forms of story-telling, characters are created through their relationships with other characters, but that rule particularly applies in theatre, where one embodied character shares space and time with other embodied characters. What the performer, or the audience, makes of Luscinda depends on what other people call her, say to her, say about her, and on what we make of the men who share and shape her story. A character does not just act; she reacts. We come to know her by how she reacts to whom.

But the actor-managers of Drury Lane prided themselves on ‘keeping the Stage clear of those loose Liberties it had formerly too justly been charged with’, and by means of ‘the Decency of our clear Stage’ making it suitable for ‘the appointed Assembly of the First Ladies of Quality’ (Lowe 1889, II, 233, 248). And the writer Lewis Theobald believed that ‘The Poet who writes for the Stage, should principally aim at pleasing his female Judges’.<sup>21</sup> Theobald consistently removed the misogyny in Cervantes’ story of Cardenio’s madness. There is no reason to think that Shakespeare would have done so. After all, Shakespeare’s portrayal of the madness of Othello, of Lear, of Posthumus, and of Leontes bubbles with vicious generalizations about the perfidy of the female half of the species. Each of those Jacobean Shakespearian protagonists believes that a woman has betrayed him, and so does Cardenio. He ought to offend every woman in the house. He ought to remind every man in the house that misogyny is madness.

## 6. *Imitatio*

Having held up for scrutiny the faux-bard speeches written for *Cardenio*’s two female leads by other adapters, I feel obliged to offer a target of my own.

I have imagined only one new long speech for Lucinda, so it will have to serve, here, as my hostage to criticism. It is, as it happens, Lucinda’s first speech, written because directors have repeatedly told me that something seems missing in her first scene in *Double Falsehood*, something to convince us that Cardenio and Lucinda really love each other, so that we will care what happens to them. Male directors had focused on the end of their scene together, but Jaq Bessell told me that Lucinda needed something before ‘Patient? What else’, and Terri Bourus more specifically located the emotional lacuna at Lucinda’s entrance. In *Double Falsehood* Julio, before the audience has even seen Leonora, complains about her coldness. But his tone changes when, in the middle of his speech, she comes on stage:

<sup>21</sup> Theobald, *The Fatal Secret* (1735), sig. A4v (Preface).

*Enter Leonora and Maid*

See how her Beauty doth enrich the Place!  
 O, add the Music of thy charming Tongue,  
 Sweet as the Lark that wakens up the Morn,  
 And make me think it Paradise indeed.  
 I was about to seek thee, Leonora,  
 And chide thy coldness, love.

*Leon.* What says your father? (*Double Falsehood* 1.2.74-79)

Below is my version of the same moment. It actually abridges his speech, but then expands hers from four words to 124:

*Enter Lucinda and maid*

But O her beauty doth ingem the night! –  
 Lucinda, speak, make this place paradise.  
 Is heaven silent?  
*Lucinda.* Hear you not my heart?  
 That claps and dances, leaps, like steeple-bells  
 Triumphant, like the laughing girl unguarded  
 Who took your boyhood hand, then not yet heeding  
 Propriety of distance, or the miles  
 ‘Twixt boy and man, nor could imagine years  
 Nor count the many mornings since one lark’s alarum  
 Child Cupid woke, musk-roses opened, and  
 Vowed heart what tongue lacked language to pronounce  
 Until tonight – is it night? Happiness  
 Eclipses darkness – this long longed-for star-time  
 When my Cardenio (name I adore  
 More than thirst worships water) at the gate  
 Of my unwillingly-still-virgin garden  
 Knocks now at last to tell me –  
 For why else knock so late, if not to tell me? –  
 (Fletcher, Shakespeare and Taylor 2013, 1.4)

I set the scene at night, because in Cervantes Cardenio’s conversation – first with Luscinda, then with her father, just before Cardenio’s departure for court – takes place ‘on a certaine night’ (Cervantes 1612, 3.10.222). Why would Shakespeare have abandoned that evocative romantic setting? As scholars conjectured long before me, I have split *Double Falsehood*’s 1.2 into two separate scenes: keeping the first part, between Cardenio and Camillo, where it is, then inserting 1.3, then continuing with the second half of 1.2, between Cardenio and Lucinda, at her father’s house, rather than his. Theobald (or Davenant) would have combined the scenes – as Theobald, Davenant, and other neoclassical adapters so often did in other plays – for the sake of greater

unity of place, time, and action. But the adaptation thereby sacrificed the structural alternation, in the first Act, between the two pairs of lovers. We understand Lucinda differently, when her first scene is sandwiched between two Violenta scenes. Moreover, the novel makes it clear that Luscinda's parents had restricted Cardenio's access to her. That sense of constraint, so important to the story, is lost if she first appears outdoors, coming to visit Cardenio, apparently free to move whenever and wherever she wants. Cervantes, here, helps me undo Theobald.

My inspiration for Lucinda's speech also comes from Cervantes: the passage when Cardenio begins his story, invoking 'the beauty of *Luscinda*', calling her 'a heaven', explaining that 'I loved, honoured and adored this *Luscinda*, almost from my first infancy; and she affected me likewise, with all the integrity and good will, which with her so young yeares did accord' (Cervantes 1612, 3.10.220). This last passage makes sense to me, personally, because my oldest son met his future wife in kindergarten; their wedding invitations featured a photograph taken of them holding hands, on a school field trip, when they were five years old. That sort of thing may be uncommon in the modern world, but it surely happened often in early modern villages (like Stratford-upon-Avon). I transposed four details of Julio's preliminary speech into hers; Theobald in adapting other plays often transferred material to another character. His usual abstract manner could have turned specific 'steeple bells' into generic 'Music'. Theobald's anachronistic cliché 'charming tongue' becomes, in my version, the 'tongue' that 'lacked language', by contrast with her 'heart' and 'hand'. Theobald's 'add' (which adds nothing) I imagined to have originated in 'count', the impatient measuring of time. Likewise, the gaseous, routine 'Sweet as the lark that wakens up the morn' seems to me impossibly bland, metrically and lexically, imagistically and grammatically, for Shakespeare in 1612. I imagined that it might be the faint Georgian remnant of something more particular and idiosyncratic ('mornings since the lark's alarum / Child Cupid woke, musk-roses opened').

I assumed that Lucinda must have said something that Theobald (or Davenant before him) deleted or transformed because it was too complex and/or too indecorous for his audiences and his actress. I turned a man's nostalgic narrative recollection of a childhood romance (in *Don Quixote*) into a young woman's present-tense first-person impatience with his delay – combined with her breathless expectation that the long wait is finally over. I imagined that what he perceives as her 'coldness' is the barely contained frustration of a woman living in a world where men must make the first move – and the man that she desires keeps failing to make it. For him, it's easier to blame her coldness than consciously acknowledge his own attraction to another man. I imagined that Lucinda's quarrel with Cardenio, which immediately follows this exchange, is intensified precisely because, having so flamboyantly exposed herself in her first speech, she is then mortified and infuriated to learn that

he still hasn't even managed to talk to his dad. In the performances of Maria Souza Eglen, under the direction of Terri Bourus, the speech successfully communicated all that information to audiences.

In their different ways Theobald, Greenblatt and Mee, and Doran and Álamo all demonstrate the limits of their understanding of Shakespeare in their effort to imitate him. So, undoubtedly, do I. But unlike them, I am interested in how he do that voodoo that he do. Unlike them, I believe that hard-core empiricist statistical scholarship can identify some of the differences between one writer and another. Empiricism is necessary, but it is also insufficient. I believe, as did the humanist European scholars and teachers of the sixteenth century, that 'imitation' is the first step toward creation, and that an essential component of the 'imitation' of classical texts is the ability to recognize the distinctions between one writer's style and another's: if your translation of Herodotus sounds just like your translation of Thucydides, then you have not understood one of them, and probably have not understood either of them. One could say the same about Ovid and Vergil, Horace and Juvenal, Plautus and Terence, Shakespeare and Fletcher (or, in another part of the forest, Shakespeare and Middleton). And I believe that we cannot learn anything new about Shakespeare, or Fletcher, unless we first accept the legitimacy of empiricist research; it is the necessary but insufficient foundation of all the palaces of our imaginations. Greenblatt and Mee and Doran don't teach us anything about the lost play, about Fletcher, or about Shakespeare, because they felt that they could understand what was important about Shakespeare without engaging with style. But if Shakespeare had not been a brilliantly idiosyncratic *writer*, you would not be reading this essay, and nobody would care about *Double Falsehood* or the Jacobean *Cardenio*.

Plagiarism is easy. Imitation is hard.

#### *Appendix: Language Data*

In all these lists, asterisked items are unparalleled in Literature Online's database of English drama, 1576-1642 (accessed January 2013). I give page numbers for Theobald's works; for Shakespeare and Fletcher, more easily searchable, I give only an abbreviated title, and (where the work in question is collaborative) a scene number. I do not cite parallels in passages of collaborative works now attributed to another author.

A. *Double Falsehood* 5.2. 251-257. Citations are from Theobald, unless otherwise specified.

\*The righteous Pow'rs] *Perfidious* 24; 'Ye righteous powers' *Antiochus* 117; 'You righteous Pow'rs' *Orestes* 38, *Richard* 56. Fletcher does not collocate 'righteous' and 'power(s)'; the adjective appears only eight times in his canon, never

describing deities. By contrast, it appears sixteen times in Theobald's smaller canon, ten times referring to deities (in an immediately following noun).

\*righteous Pow'rs at] 'Ye righteous Powers at' *Perseus* 3 (also at the beginning of a speech).

at length have] *Richard* 84; have at length *Antiochus* 105; has at length *Harlequin* 11

\*have crown'd ... Loves] the Fates with Love have crown'd us *Harlequin* 12. Only early dramatic parallel is Samuel Daniel's *Hymen's Triumph* ('haue crown'd his loue'), but that is not first person plural, and the verb is not governed by a supernatural noun.

the storm that's now o'erblown] the Storm was a little overblown *Censor* 54: 165

the storm ... o'erblown] The storm o'erblown *Electra* 29

sour affliction] hard affliction *Odyssey*; stern Affliction *Fatal* 36; sharp affliction *Perfidious* 42. No comparable adjective in Fletcher.

Affliction ... Hope] Which false Hopes linger out for new Afflictions *Richard* 44

combat] Of Literature Online's 24 examples of 'combated' in drama between 1576 and 1750, the pre-Restoration examples refer to real or imagined combat, but during Theobald's career they more often involve a contest of abstractions: Obedience v. Love (1737), Love v. Pride (1736), Reasons v. Resolves (1717). Compare Theobald's 'thoughts to combat with Irreligion and Prophaneness' (*Censor* 56:180), 'combating that rage' (*Metamorphosis* XIV: 176), 'combated the opinion' (*Antiochus* 199), 'Comfort ... combats with my Fears' (*Captive* D2).

awhile, When] Fletcher's *Lovers' Progress* 1.1 (a while, when); also Shakespeare's *Lear*

true Faith ... Vows] *Orestes* 46 (true Faith from Vows)

the list'ning Angels] The word 'listening' appears only once in Fletcher (as a verb, not an adjective). But the adjective 'list'ning' appears seven times in Theobald: 'Vows ... the list'ning Heav'ns' (*Captive* 7), 'ye list'ning Heav'ns, that register'd her Vows' (*Richard* 13), 'the list'ning Winds' (*Persian* 19), 'the list'ning Throng' (*Mausoleum* 4), 'ye listening Ecchoes' (*Mausoleum* 4), 'the list'ning birds' (*Metamorphoses* XIV:171) and 'the list'ning train' (*Metamorphoses* XI: 63).

Stand on the] *Censor* 25: 178

on the golden] *Clouds* 58. Only 3 times in Literature Online drama 1576-1642.

\*Heav'n, And waft their Vows] 'Waft 'em [= Vows], like Incense, to the purple Heavens' (*Captive* 8). No other parallels for 'vow(s)' (or a pronoun referring to them); only one parallel for 'waft ... to heaven' (J.W., *Valiant Scot*, 1637).

\*waft ... to ... Throne] 'waft the Hero to his native Throne' (*Orestes* 28). The verb 'waft' appears only twice in Fletcher, but eight times in Theobald's smaller canon (*Immortality* 35, *Censor* 18: 126, *Metamorphosis* IX:13; XI:69; XIV:166; *Orestes* 44).

their Vows to] Send up their Vows to Jove *Proserpine* 9. Only one early parallel (Jonson, *Pan's Anniversary*)

\*the Eternal Throne] th'eternal throne *Proserpine* 2. Compare also 'his eternal throne' (*Oedipus* 42).

\*Such were our vows, and so are they repaid] Such is thy rage, and so art thou restrain'd *Persian* 58. No early dramatic parallels for 'Such were' followed by 'and so are' (including variant forms of verb).

and so are] Fletcher's *Loyal, Goose, Pilgirm, H8* 4.1; also Shakespeare's *Verona, Shrew* (twice), *Coriolanus*.

so ... repaid] so scurvily repaying *Plutus* 52.

B. *Double Falsehood* 5.2.94-101. Citations are from Fletcher, unless other noted.

\*sad rites must be] These sad rites must be done first *Rollo* 5.2

rites ... perform'd] rights / Perform'd *Shepherdess*

Ere I can] *Mill* 5.2a (twice).

I can love] *Shepherdess, Loyal, Goose, Captain* 2.2, *Pilgrimage* 2.3. (Though there are 26 other occurrences of this phrase in early English drama, no one but Shirley uses it as much as Fletcher.)

can love again] cannot loue againe *Shepherdess* 1.1, Canst thou not love again *Shepherdess* 4.1

\*Maids that have lov'd] Mayde, that haue *Shepherdess*; Maides that ever lov'd *Kinsmen* 3.6; Maides, that love *Kinsmen* 4.1 (and Sampson, *Vow-Breaker*)

If they be] *Island, Night, Rule*

lov'd ... testimony ... love] *Goose* (I shall love thee. As a Testimony, I'll burn my book.)

Wear their] Theobald and Shakespeare use this phrase only when followed by physical objects (hats, heads, faces, plackets). Fletcher has 'weare their actions' (*Valentinian*) and 'weare their places in their petticoats' (*Money*).

loves here] love here *Corinth* 2.3

here, my lord] *Loyal, Mill* 5.2a

my lord, here] *Valentinian*

in their hearts] Theobald's *Persian* 43, *Censor* (22:160). The only phrase in this scene that might suggest Theobald's presence. But it occurs in the Robert Johnson song 'Woods, rocks, and mountains', attributed to Fletcher on other grounds. See Taylor 2012, 27-33.

their eyes or] *Shepherdess*

slip'd away] *Kinsmen* 4.1

Wash'd out] wash out *Rule, Scornful* 3.1

all remembrance] *Chances, Four Plays* (Time), *Double* 5.2, *Rollo* 5.2, *Very Woman* 4.3..173. The other seven examples in Literature Online all postdate Fletcher: Cowley, Glapthorne, Killigrew, Marmion, Ford's *Lover's Melancholy*, Massinger's *Picture* and *Emperor*.

mine, no] *Loyal, Island, Voyage* 4.1

no ... can cure] No promise of base peace can cure *Loyal*

no physic But ... death can] My love, that nothing but my death can *Double* 4.3 (spoken by a woman)

physic ... time] *H8* 1.3

\*physic ... time ... cure] That gentle physic, given in time, had cured me (*H8* 4.2, where the immediately preceding word is *execution*, making 'death' implied though not spoken)

\*no ... time or death can] Nor time nor death can *Mad* 4.1.

no ... or death can] nor death can *Mad* 5.1, *Four Plays* (Death)

time ... cure] time will cure that *Island*, I'll find time to cure 'em *Rule*.

C. *Double Falsehood* 1.2.109-116. Citations are from Shakespeare unless otherwise noted.

no ... but such] *3H6* 4.1, *Ado*, *TN*, *Lear*, *Winter*

no impediment] *Ado*, *Merchant*, *Coriolanus*

\*impediment ... bar] Any bar ... any impediment *Ado*

shall ... my wishes] shall I sin in my wish *MWW*

delays as] *Hamlet*

\*presses ... patience with] Do not press My tongue-tied patience with too much disdain (sonnet 140.1-2)

\*blunt not ... whet] Be this the whetstone of your sword, let grief Convert to wrath: blunt not the heart *Macbeth*<sup>22</sup>

blunt ... whet] whet thy almost blunted purpose *Hamlet*; blunt, / Till it was whetted *R3*

\*blunt not ... loves] blunt not his love *2H4*

Be patient, sweet] Sweet York, be patient *R2*, most patient, sweet, and virtuous wife *Shrew*, Sweet Sir Toby, be patient *TN*

Be patient, sweet. – Patient! What else?] Compare Cleopatra's 'By sea! What else?' (*AC* 3.7.28), where 'by sea' echoes the last two syllables of the preceding

<sup>22</sup> Jackson 2012 cites only 'blunt not', without recording the 'whetstone' in the preceding line.

speech (by Antony). This is the closest parallel in the Shakespeare canon (which contains eighteen other examples of 'what else'). The only other use of that idiom in Theobald is 'Agreed! What else?' in the later *Orestes* (1731), 42 (which does not echo the end of the previous speech).

\*Patient! What] Alas, sir, be patient. What say you sir? *TN* ; be patient; / What I can do *Othello* (Desdemona speaking).

My flames are in the flint] Both Hammond 2010 and Jackson 2012 notice the parallel in *Timon* ('the fire i' the flint / Shows not till it be struck; our gentle flame'). But also compare 'And to the flame thus speaks advisedly, / As from this cold flint I enforced this fire' (*Lucrece*).

Patient ... flames] *Hamlet* (Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper Sprinkle cool patience)

\*are in the] Compare 'our hearts are in the trim' (*H5*) and 'my friends are in the north' (*R3*), both at the end of verse line, both containing six monosyllables in the sequence '[first-person possessive pronoun] [concrete plural noun] are in the [concrete singular noun]'. I have found no comparable sentences in Theobald or pre-1642 English drama.

\*Haply ... weep] then haply she will weep *R3*

Haply ... never] *Lear* (Cordelia): Haply, when I shall wed, That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry Half my love with him, half my care and duty. Sure I shall never marry like my sisters.

\*Haply to] Haply to wive *Shrew* (beginning of verse line).

to lose a] *Romeo*.

\*to lose ... to get] *Coriolanus* (To lose itself in a fog ... to help to get thee a wife). Not only in the same order, but concerning marriage.

lose a husband] *AWW* (Since you lack virtue, I will lose a husband;) *Lear* (Burgundy, to and about Cordelia). Jackson 2012 notes the *All's Well* parallel, but not that it is spoken by a defiantly chaste woman (Diana) and preceded by 'I must *be patient*' (two lines before in the same speech).

a husband ... to get] to get a husband *Shrew*

\*husband ... bondage ... freedom] *Tempest* (My husband then? – Ay, with a heart as willing / As bondage e'er of freedom).

I may weep] *3H6* 2.5

get one] *2H4*

when I ... let] *AYLI* (when I break that oath, let me turn monster: Celia); *3H6* 1.3 (And when I give occasion of offence, Then let me die: Rutland, boy actor); *Meesure* (When I, that censure him, do so offend, Let mine own judgment pattern out my death: Angelo); *Merchant* (And when I ope my lips let no dog bark: Gratiano); *Ado* ('When I do name him, let it be thy part to praise him': Hero). In all these passages, as here in *Double Falsehood*, 'When I' begins a preliminary conditional clause to the imperative 'let' of the main clause.

for bondage] *Cymbeline*

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# *Appropriation and Authorship*



## ‘by curious Art compild’: *The Passionate Pilgrime* and the Authorial Brand

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### *Abstract*

The aim of this article is to cast some light on the ways in which Shakespeare’s reputation as a poet and author was made between the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. The article focuses on *The Passionate Pilgrime*, a puzzling collection of poems by diverse hands, published under Shakespeare’s name, probably in 1599, and in a ‘corrected and augmented’ edition, the third, in 1612. Though it raised issues of piracy and fraud, which recent criticism has much deflated, the collection is nonetheless a very interesting artefact from the point of view of the (collaborative) construction of authorship. Attention to the ways in which *The Passionate Pilgrime* was constructed, and made available during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, how its physical layouts, arrangements and paratextual materials encouraged particular readings will help us understand how Shakespeare was authored and what kind of poet he was thought to be by his contemporaries.

*Keywords:* Authorship, Jaggard, Paratext, Shakespeare’s poetry, *The Passionate Pilgrime*

... this is not my writing –  
Though I confess much like the character –  
William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, 5.1.339-340

Thence comes it that my name receives a brand  
William Shakespeare, sonnet 111, 5

All artistic work, like all human activity, involves  
the joint activity of a number, often a large  
number, of people.  
H.S. Becker, *Art Worlds*, 1982

### 1. *Introduction*

Counteracting the widespread Romantic concept of the author as the sole creator of the text, recent work in Shakespeare studies has confronted received ideas about authorship, text and dissemination, challenging not



only the notion of single authorship but also the idea of a single original text as a witness to the author's 'final intentions'. In this perspective, Shakespeare's dramatic production has attracted much attention and most studies have investigated it in terms of collaboration both in writing and performance; indeed, collaboration has been seen as 'a prevalent mode for textual production in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, only eventually displaced by the mode of singular authorship' (Masten 1997, 4). Such a claim, which implies a dispersal of authorship and authority, has been in turn strongly questioned on theoretical and historical grounds by Vickers (2002), Knapp (2005) and Jowett (2007), among others, who are adamant in upholding the centrality of the historical author. Jowett, for instance, states clearly that 'it does matter that a historical figure, William Shakespeare, creatively wrote the astonishing works associated with his name' (2007, 4); more radically, and generally, in his study on twentieth-century Shakespeare textual theory and practice, Egan 'insist[s] upon authors as the main determinants of what we read' (2010, 3). Another important contribution to the reassertion of the primacy of the Author in the works of Shakespeare is represented by Lukas Erne's studies on Shakespeare as 'literary dramatist' (2003, 2008) that claim that 'Shakespeare was acutely aware of, and cared about his rise to prominence as a print-published dramatic author' (2008, 29), not simply a playwright but 'a self-conscious literary author' (26). Erne's 2008 study was part of a forum, hosted by *Shakespeare Studies* and convened by Patrick Cheney, significantly entitled 'The Return of the Author'.<sup>1</sup> Cheney himself had previously argued in favour of Shakespeare as a 'poet-playwright', a writer who was 'a supreme theatrical man who wrote poems of matchless value, for his time and ours' (2004, 27). Cheney proposed a form of authorship that intertwines both printed poetry and staged theatre, a dynamic 'compound' that Shakespeare's dramatic and non-dramatic works sustain.

What both sides of the so-called 'Shakespeare Authorship Question' seem to share is, in most cases, a tendency to conflate two rather distinct entities, the writer and the author. While the former is someone who pens the text, the latter is the *persona* 'created in the world of print' (Hook 2011) by the interwoven, culturally contingent, and collaborative activity of compilers, editors, printers, stationers, and readers. It is by means of this joint activity that authors are constructed and reputations made, re-made, and un-made.

The aim of this article is to cast some light on the ways in which Shakespeare's authorial persona was created between the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. My interest lies here in how

<sup>1</sup> Among the contributors of the forum, Wendy Wall questions Erne's conclusions, claiming that they remain 'as speculative as the view being counteracted' (2008, 64). We have almost no evidence that Shakespeare was actively involved in the publication of his works, neither can we prove that he was concerned with their appearance in print.

Shakespeare became a revered poet, to whose works great value and much esteem were attributed. The ‘Shakespeare’ I am dealing with here is not William Shakespeare of Stratford but, as Adam Hook claims, ‘a theoretical concept, a collaborative construction, and a profitable piece of merchandise’ (2011).<sup>2</sup>

## 2. *The ‘beginning of Shakespeare’*

In the early 1590s, after a few years of acting and playwriting, partly on a collaborative basis, Shakespeare entered the literary scene with the publication in 1593 of the ‘unpolished lines’ of *Venus and Adonis*, the first printed work to which his name was attached. This work was followed a year later by the ‘pamphlet without beginning’, *Lucrece*.<sup>3</sup> In both works, the title page bears no mention of the author, but they are far from being anonymous poems: the dedicatory epistle addressed to Henry Wriothesley, third Earl of Southampton, was signed ‘William Shakespeare’, ‘a writer who had never claimed authorship in print before’ (Stallybrass and Chartier 2007, 37).

*Venus and Adonis* became a ‘bestseller’ during Shakespeare’s life and after, with its ten editions by 1617 and a further five reprints by 1636, whereas *Lucrece* reached six editions by 1616 with three further reprints by 1655.<sup>4</sup> The two narrative poems were also widely disseminated in manuscripts throughout the seventeenth century, thus taking new forms and different configurations that crucially contributed to shape their meaning.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, through the practice of commonplacing, pervasive and fundamental in the early modern period, Shakespeare’s poems (but also his plays) were scattered as fragmentary quotations which were sometimes accompanied by his name, sometimes left unattributed.<sup>6</sup> To add to the

<sup>2</sup> See also Hook 2012. On the making of a reputation as a social process, see Becker 2008, 351-371.

<sup>3</sup> Quotations from *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* are from their respective dedications ‘To the Right Honourable Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, and Baron of Titchfield’ (Shakespeare 2002, 173, 239).

<sup>4</sup> For a recent assessment of the popularity of Shakespeare’s narrative poems in the context of the late sixteenth-century and early seventeenth-century book trade, see Erne and Badcoe 2014, 33-57.

<sup>5</sup> On how the physicality of the text affects the construction of meaning, see McKenzie 1999, 9-53 and Chartier 1994, 25-59.

<sup>6</sup> During Shakespeare’s lifetime, selections from his texts were included in popular anthologies such as Allott’s *Englands Parnassus* and Bodenham’s *Bel-védere*, both published in 1600. According to Murphy, the first contains thirty-nine extracts from *Lucrece* and twenty-six from *Venus and Adonis*; the second anthology includes ninety-one excerpts from *Lucrece* and thirty-four from *Venus and Adonis*. Further evidence of the popularity of Shakespeare’s verse is provided by the presence of ‘The Phoenix and the Turtle’, ascribed to Shakespeare, in Chester’s *Loves martyr: or, Rosalins complaint*, published in 1601 (2003, 19).

popularity of Shakespeare's verse it is worth mentioning the great number of allusions it elicited before 1649.<sup>7</sup>

Whatever reasons drove Shakespeare to compose the narrative poems, whether out of necessity, or out of an intention to leave his mark as a poet, a 'literary dramatist' (Erne 2003), or a 'poet-playwright' (Cheney 2004), the publication of *Venus and Adonis* represents in fact 'the beginning of Shakespeare'; as Colin Burrow states, 'for his earliest readers, Shakespeare was a poet' (2002, 10).<sup>8</sup> This fact supports the idea that Shakespeare's poems should be at the forefront of our discussions about Shakespeare as 'author', and it should also prompt us to reflect on why we do not think of Shakespeare as a non-dramatic poet in the first place.<sup>9</sup>

In early modern England, Shakespeare's poems, and those attributed to him, were appropriated, reshaped and then transmitted across a range of texts, including miscellanies, commonplace books, composite and single-authored volumes, all bound to renew time and again the experience of their reception. The forms of these texts, their modalities and structures inevitably affected the reading and interpretation of the poems themselves. From a more general perspective, they raise a wider concern about the early modern construction of authorship and the related issue of the control of meaning in literary texts. The active role transcribers, compilers and their editorial apparatuses, printers, stationers, booksellers, and also individual readers, both professional and common, had in the design of Shakespeare's poems and therefore in the construction of their meaning cannot be overlooked. As Chartier contends,

Readers, in fact, never confront abstract, idealized texts detached from any materiality. They hold in their hands or perceive objects or forms whose structures and modalities govern their reading or hearing, and consequently the possible comprehension of the text read or heard ... it is necessary to maintain that forms produce meaning,

<sup>7</sup> In the *Shakespeare Allusion-Book*, *Venus and Adonis* is second only to *Hamlet* in the number of allusions before 1649, 44 and 58 respectively, while *Lucrece* achieved 25 allusions thus placing it behind *Romeo and Juliet's* 36 allusions and ahead of *Othello's* 19 allusions (Ingleby *et al.* 1909, vol. II, 540). See also Roberts 2003, 2 and 198, n. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Burrow argues that the expectation for 'some grauer labour' raised by that the dedication to *Venus and Adonis* suggests that both *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* 'formed part of a continuing project' (2002, 10). Incidentally, we can also observe that at the beginning of his professional career, Shakespeare engaged with three 'interrelated professional roles' that, as Rhodes contends, not only 'follow an upward trajectory in terms of status, but none of them is ever really abandoned' (2013, 104).

<sup>9</sup> During the past century, Shakespeare was seen primarily as a playwright; his poems, when considered, were tendentially divided into two groups, the *Sonnets* and 'the rest'. The latter group, including the two narrative poems, *The Passionate Pilgrime*, the poem usually called 'The Phoenix and Turtle', *A Lover's Complaint* and other poems attributed to him during the seventeenth century, was relegated to the margins of the Shakespearean canon.

and that even a fixed text is invested with new meaning and being [*statut*] when the physical form through which it is presented for interpretation changes. (1992, 50-51)

While the materiality of Shakespeare's dramatic texts has been in the past decades investigated in detail, the materiality of his poems has only recently begun to attract attention (Marotti 1990; Wall 1993; Erne 2003, 2013; Roberts 2003; Knight 2013).

To illustrate how Shakespeare's reputation as poet and author was made, I will focus on *The Passionate Pilgrime*, a puzzling collection of poems by diverse hands, published under Shakespeare's name for William Jaggard, probably in 1599.<sup>10</sup> This small octavo volume was a contemporary successful commercial enterprise, a fact attested by the two separate c. 1599 editions (STC 22341.5 and 22342) and the issue of a third edition, 'corrected and augmented' in 1612 (STC 22343).<sup>11</sup> Approximately thirty years after its first appearance in print, *The Passionate Pilgrime* was included in Benson's edition of Shakespeare's *Poems* (1640). Attention to the ways in which *The Passionate Pilgrime* was constructed and made available during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and how its physical layouts, arrangements and paratextual materials encouraged particular readings will help us understand how Shakespeare was authored and what kind of poet he was thought to be by his contemporaries.

Although *The Passionate Pilgrime* helped promote the image of Shakespeare as a poet for nearly two centuries, this small collection of poems was either surrounded by ill feeling or altogether neglected by most readers and critics during the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Swinburne's often-cited vehement comments well illustrate a shared attitude. In his *Study of Shakespeare*, Swinburne describes *The Passionate Pilgrime* as a 'worthless and impudent imposture' which 'should be exposed and expelled' from Shakespeare's poems; a 'rag-picker's bag of stolen goods'; a 'larcenous little bundle of verse'; 'worthless wares'; a 'ragman's gatherings'. In turn, Jaggard is defined as 'one Ragozine, a most notorious pirate', who 'hired ... some ready hack of unclean hand to supply him with ... doggrel sonnets ... noticeable only for their porcine quality of prurience'; a 'felonious tradesman', stealing 'from the two years published text of *Love's Labour's Lost*', and reproducing 'with more or less mutilation or corruption, the sonnet of Longavile, the

<sup>10</sup> William Jaggard, printer and bookseller, is better known for his involvement in the publication of the 1619 Pavier quartos and 1623 First Folio of Shakespeare's dramatic works.

<sup>11</sup> The title page of the first (incomplete) edition does not survive. Lacking the title page, the edition cannot be dated with any precision; nonetheless, Burrow argues that it was printed 'conceivably as early as September 1598' (2002, 74). The edition is held at the Folger Library.

“canzonet” of Biron, and the far lovelier love-song of Dumaine’ (1880, 63-64).<sup>12</sup>

The reasons for this ill repute and the accusation of piracy are essentially based on ‘anachronistic assumptions about the conditions of literary production and dissemination in early modern England, a milieu in which restrictive contemporary notions of authorship, plagiarism, copyright, and authenticity often have little relevance’ (Reid 2012, §4). Jaggard’s critics have noticed that, although only five out of twenty poems contained in the miscellany are unquestionably by Shakespeare, the title page of the 1599 edition of *The Passionate Pilgrime* mentions his name only.<sup>13</sup>

THE | PASSIONATE | PILGRIME. | By W. Shakespeare. | [Ornament] | AT LONDON | Printed for W. Iaggard, and are | to be sold by W. Leake, at the Grey- | hound in Paules Churchyard. | 1599. |

The main objection raised against Jaggard is that by exploiting for economic reasons the popularity achieved by Shakespeare as the author of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, he sought to deceive readers and passed off other poets’ compositions as Shakespeare’s. According to Jaggard’s detractors, this criticism is also borne out by the fact that, in the 1612 ‘newly corrected and augmented’ edition, the additions consisted of nine poetic passages drawn from Heywood’s *Troia Britanica*, a work that Jaggard himself had published in 1609. The title page runs as follows:

THE | PASSIONATE | PILGRIME. | OR | *Certaine Amorous Sonnets, | betweene Venus and Adonis, | newly corrected and aug- | mented.* | By W. Shakespere. | The third

<sup>12</sup> In 1894, Swinburne again stigmatizes Jaggard as an ‘infamous pirate, liar, and thief who published a worthless little volume of stolen and mutilated poetry, patched up and padded out with dirty and dreary dogrel, under the senseless and preposterous title of *The Passionate Pilgrim*’ (90).

<sup>13</sup> The poems by Shakespeare are two versions of what became sonnet 138 and sonnet 144 in the 1609 Quarto (*PP* 1 and 2), a version of Longueville’s sonnet to Maria in *Love’s Labour’s Lost* 4.3.57-70 (*PP* 3), a version of *Love’s Labour’s Lost* 4.2.106-119 (*PP* 5), and Dumaine’s ‘sonnet’ from *Love’s Labour’s Lost* 4.3.99-118 (*PP* 16). Of the remaining fifteen poems, four can be attributed to other poets: 8 and 20 are by Richard Barnfield, 11 by Bartholomew Griffin, 19 is ascribed to Marlow in *Englands Helicon* (1600), and eleven (*PP* 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, and 18) are of ‘unknown authorship’ (Burrow 2002, 76). *PP* 12 might possibly be attributed to Thomas Deloney. However, while most critics hold, mainly on stylistic grounds, that fifteen out of twenty poems are not by Shakespeare, by means of stylometric analysis Elliott and Valenza suggest that two blocks of poems (*PP* 4, 6, 7 and 9, and *PP* 10, 12, 13 and 15) are ‘strikingly Shakespearean’ (1991, 204). References to *Love’s Labour’s Lost* are from *The Arden Shakespeare* (1998). While early modern editions do not number the poems, modern editions conventionally do so. In this article, when quoting from a modern edition, I use the text edited by Burrow (Shakespeare 2002).

Edition. | VWhere-unto is newly ad- | ded two Loue-Epistles, the first | from *Paris* to  
*Hellen*, and | *Hellens* answer backe | againe to *Paris*. | Printed by W. Iaggard. | 1612.

As the title page shows, Jaggard does not seem to attribute the additions to Shakespeare: they are in fact mentioned after Shakespeare's name. Moreover, as Burrow reminds us, Jaggard 'owned the right to print the poem [*Troia Britanica*], and was legally entitled to reprint it' since he had entered it in the Stationers' Register on 5 December 1609 (2002, 78).

Jaggard's use of excerpts from *Troia Britanica* aroused Heywood's bitter anger that he expressed in an oft-cited letter to Nicholas Okes, his new printer, appended to *An Apology for Actors*:

I must necessarily insert a manifest iniury done me in that worke [*Troia Britanica*], by taking the two Epistles of *Paris* to *Helen*, and *Helen* to *Paris*, and printing them in a lesse volume [*The Passionate Pilgrime*], vnder the name of another, which may put the world in opinion I might steale them from him; and hee to doe himselfe right, hath since published them in his owne name: but as I must acknowledge my lines not worthy his patronage, vnder whom he [Jaggard] hath publisht them, so the Author I know much offended with M. *Iaggard* (that altogether vnknowne to him) presumed to make so bold with his name. (1612, G4a-b)<sup>14</sup>

Heywood's position, however, was far from being dispassionate; previously, in the same account, he had charged Jaggard with 'negligence' in printing *Troia Britanica*, and claimed that Jaggard had refused to print a list of 'Errata' on the grounds that 'hee would not publish his owne disworkemanship, but rather let his owne fault lye vpon the necke of the Author' (G4a). In fact, the passage gives no evidence of Shakespeare's anxiety about his own authorship, rather it shows Heywood's and perhaps other writers' dissatisfaction about the lack of control over their texts once a printer owned the right to print them. Heywood's reaction might have prompted Jaggard to reissue the volume with a different title page, one bearing no mention of Shakespeare's name (Burrow 2002, 79; Cheney 2004, 154; Edmonson and Wells 2004, 4):<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> It is worth noticing, however, that Heywood does not name Shakespeare as the 'offended' 'Author'. For a different reading of Heywood's letter see Thomas 2000, 277-293.

<sup>15</sup> The copy of *The Passionate Pilgrime* held at the Bodleian Library, which formerly belonged to Malone, contains two title pages, bound so as to face each other. One title page omits the reference to Shakespeare's name, while the other includes it. According to STC, the title page without Shakespeare's name was 'probably intended as a cancel'. This leads Burrow to speculate that 'Jaggard's printers may have missed out the all-important name of Shakespeare on their first attempt, and may have been instructed to reset the page' (2002, 79, n. 1). This view is backed up by the fact that, in the copy at the Bodleian, the 'title-page without the name of Shakespeare (which is bound in first) is noticeably less worn than that which includes Shakespeare's name. This suggests that the volume was originally circulated

THE | PASSIONATE | PILGRIME. | OR | *Certaine Amorous Sonnets*, | betweene  
*Venus and Adonis*, | newly corrected and augmented. | The third Edition. | Where-  
 unto is newly added two *Loue-Epistles*, the first | from *Paris to Hellen*, and | *Hellens*  
 | *answere backe* | againe to *Paris*. | Printed by W. Iaggard. | 1612.<sup>16</sup>

Though it raised issues of piracy and fraud, which recent criticism has much deflated, the collection is nonetheless a very interesting artefact from the point of view of the (collaborative) construction of authorship. What Jaggard did was present a collection of poems as the work of a single poet and constructed it by choosing, assembling and re-ordering verses by different hands, a compilatory activity that was quite common at the time.<sup>17</sup> Being directly responsible for the configuration, actually the creation, of the Shakespeare text, Jaggard is not only an important agent in the construction of meaning but is also the '(co-)author' of a book of poems '*By W. Shakespeare*'. Moreover, Jaggard's undertaking suggests that Shakespeare as an author 'was becoming important as a cultural phenomenon'. In this regard, *The Passionate Pilgrime* represents 'an important text in terms of the literary institutionalization of Shakespeare's works' (Marotti 1990, 153).

After nearly two centuries of discredit, Jaggard's reputation began to be restored thanks to Marotti's study on Shakespeare's sonnets published in 1990. Marotti persuasively argues that 'what [Jaggard] was doing in printing the Shakespeare poems and mixing them with the verse of other writers was quite legitimate' (1990, 153); indeed, 'There was absolutely no legal or moral need for Jaggard to have sought Shakespeare's cooperation in printing the texts he obtained' (154). Following Marotti's rehabilitation, much recent scholarship has reassessed *The Passionate Pilgrime* and Jaggard's editorial practices and investigated the use Jaggard made of Shakespeare's name to promote the collection of poems, as well as the related issue of Shakespeare's value in the marketplace (Thomas 2000, 277-293; Loewenstein 2002, 59-68; Erne 2003, 1-2; Roberts 2003, 143-190, *passim*; Cheney 2004, 151-172; Bednarz 2007, 252-267).<sup>18</sup>

with Shakespeare's name on the outermost leaf of the volume, and that Malone had the pages bound in their present order, having found the cancelled title-page originally inside the volume' (2002, 79).

<sup>16</sup> Apart from the presence of Shakespeare's name, or its omission, the two title pages differ in various typographic details (see Duncan-Jones and Woudhuysen 2007, 495).

<sup>17</sup> For recent discussions on the culture of compiling and text collection in early modern England, see J.T. Knight 2013 and Zarnowiecki 2014.

<sup>18</sup> So far, very few studies have approached *The Passionate Pilgrime* from a different perspective. Among others, see Potter (2008) that reads *The Passionate Pilgrime* and Chester's *Love's Martyr* in the light of a widespread European tradition of collaborative and 'combative' verse; and Reid (2012) that calls attention to the 1612 edition of *The Passionate Pilgrime* and shows how Jaggard exploited the generic conventions and Ovidian tradition to provide the readership with 'a fictitious etiology of the miscellany's origins'.

### 3. *Passionate Pilgrimes*

The three editions of *The Passionate Pilgrime* – two in 1599 and one ‘augmented’ in 1612 – have a number of interesting features which are worth considering carefully: the title page, internal division, and texts included. Different textual and paratextual details are bound to produce different readings and also highlight the active part played by Jaggard, supposedly the compiler of the collection, in producing ‘Shakespeare’, and his authorial *persona*. More generally, attention to these details reinforces the idea that authorship is hardly an authorial construct and the creation of a literary work is not an autonomous activity but ‘a social and institutional event’ (McGann 1983, 100, see also de Grazia and Stallybrass 1993, 274).

All the editions of *The Passionate Pilgrime* are characterized by a paucity of paratextual apparatus: they lack dedications to patrons, epistles to readers, commendatory verses, and other features that are common in most coeval books.<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless, their title pages still convey enough information about the nature of the collection that predisposes the readership to a specific kind of reception. This information, however, varies from one edition to another; as such, it raises different expectations and elicits different readings.

Another feature of the collection is that it has a second, internal, dated title page announcing ‘SONNETS | To sundry notes of Musicke.’, without mentioning an author’s name.<sup>20</sup>

As Wall argues, titles were extremely important in the early modern period for ‘title pages served as the only means of advertising books’ (1993, 62); they are likely to be the first piece of information readers see and read.<sup>21</sup> They arouse interest and curiosity (or lack of interest), help create initial impressions of what is yet to unfold and, as a consequence, raise expectations about the content of the book. Titles also evoke associations and memories as well as all sorts of other meanings which can be symbolic, personal and also idiosyncratic (Lindauer 2009, 70-71). Therefore, different titles have a different impact on readers, affecting their understanding of and response to the text: they prompt and guide interpretation.

<sup>19</sup> The importance of epistles to patrons and/or readers is highlighted in the epistle ‘The Stationer to the Reader’ in the 1622 Quarto of *Othello*. The epistle opens as follows: ‘*To set forth a booke without an Epistle, were like to the old English prouerbe, A blew coat without a badge*’ (A2r).

<sup>20</sup> The two 1599 copies held at the Folger Library (STC 22341.5) lack title pages; the first two poems in one copy, which are versions of Shakespeare’s sonnets 138 and 144, are also lacking. Moreover, neither copy contains an internal title page. Confronted with the complete copy held at the Huntington (STC 22342), pages are not bound in the same order and therefore the poems follow a different arrangement that is likely to affect the reading process and change the interpretation of the poems themselves. This textual ‘difformity’ may also lead to a recognition of multiple texts for a ‘single’ book of poems, a difformity pointing to the complexity of the material text in terms of its construction and dissemination.

<sup>21</sup> ‘If a text is an object to be read’, Genette argues, then ‘the title ... is an object to be circulated’ (1997, 75).

#### 4. *The 1599 Title Page*

The title page of the 1599 edition of *The Passionate Pilgrime* seems to appeal to a large readership encompassing both educated readers and theatre-goers. First of all, the title with its strategic alliteration, a pleasing device to the Elizabethan ear, echoes the titles of previously published collections, e.g., *The Paradyse of daynty deuises* (1576), *A gorgious Gallery, of gallant Inuentions* (1578), *The Forrest of Fancy* (1579), and others, therefore placing *The Passionate Pilgrime* within a specific intertextual context, that of miscellanies, books that gather disparate verse under a unifying title.<sup>22</sup> The epithet ‘passionate’, in the sense of ‘affected with love’, was conventionally used in pastoral poetry to qualify such terms as ‘shepherd’ and ‘poet’ (see Lee 1905, 19)<sup>23</sup> but also calls a well-known collection of love poetry to mind: *The Hekatompathia or Passionate Centurie of Loue* (1582) by Thomas Watson. In a commendatory ‘quatorzain’ prefacing the volume, the collection is described as a ‘Booke of Passionat Sonnetes’ (Bucke 1582), each ‘passion’ being a poem in the ‘centurie’.<sup>24</sup> *The Passionate Pilgrime* does not only evoke a well-established tradition of love poetry but also reminds the educated reader of Meres’ words in *Palladis Tamia* when he includes Shakespeare among those poets who ‘are the most passionate ... to bewaile and bemoane the

<sup>22</sup> In their full title and preliminary material, these collections often make explicit the heterogeneity of the texts they include and the diversity of the authorial hands. *The Paradyse of daynty deuises* was – the title reads – ‘deuised and written for the most part, by M. Edwards, ... the rest, by sundry learned gentlemen, ... viz. S. Barnarde. E.O. L. Vaux. D.S. Iasper Heyvood. F.K.M. Bevve. R. Hill. M. Yloop, vvith others’ (Edwards 1576); *A gorgious Gallery, of gallant Inuentions* was, according to its title, ‘First framed and fashioned in sundrie formes, by diuers worthy workemen of late dayes: and now, ioyned together and builded vp: By T[homas].P[roctor].’ (Proctor 1578); in ‘The Epistle to the Reader’, opening *The Forrest of Fancy*, H.C. says that he ‘had gathered together in one small volume diuerse diuises, ... of sundry sortes, and seuerall matter’ (H.C. 1579).

<sup>23</sup> See, for instance, a title like William Smith’s *Chloris, or The Complaint of the passionate despised Shepheard* (1596), or Thomas Powell’s *The Passionate Poet With a Description of the Thracian Ismarus* (1601). A longer version of PP 19, ‘Liue with me and be my Loue’, with the title ‘The passionate Shepheard to his loue’, subscribed with Marlow’s name, was reprinted in Bodenham’s *Englands Helicon* the following year (1600b). For possible connections between the title of *The Passionate Pilgrime* and other contemporary works see Duncan-Jones’ and Woudhuysen’s note in their edition of Shakespeare’s poems (2007, 386). In a passage suffused with religious language, ‘the unfortunate traveller’ Jack Wilton describes mockingly the lovesick expressions ‘his master’, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, uses in wooing Diamante. Wilton’s comments upon the empty magniloquence of Petrarchan imitators are illuminating: ‘Passion vpon passion would throng one on anothers necke, he would praise her beyond the moone and starres, and that so sweetly and raushingly, as I perswade myself he was more in loue with his owne curious forming fancie than herface, and truth it is, many become passionate louers, only to win praise to theyr wits’ (Nashe 1594, F3r).

<sup>24</sup> The ‘passions’ contained in Watson’s erotic sequence are not sonnets *sensu stricto* but eighteen-line stanza rhyming ABABCCDEDEFFGGHGHJJ.

perplexities of Loue' (1598, 284). Furthermore Elizabethan readers were likely to associate *The Passionate Pilgrime* with Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* since the three works were all 'sold by W. Leake, at the Greyhound in Paules Churchyard'.

The title, however, is likely to evoke another context, one that contemporary theatre lovers would not fail to recognize. Many critics have pointed out that Jaggard's title probably alludes to the masked ball in *Romeo and Juliet*, when the two eponymous lovers, who have just met for the first time, 'co-author' and 'co-perform' a sonnet (2013, 1.5.92-105), animated by Christian imagery of profanity and sin, devotion and prayer, and punctuated by the wordplay 'palme'/'palmer'.<sup>25</sup> The popularity of *Romeo and Juliet* at the end of the sixteenth century is attested by the title page of the first Quarto (1597) which informs us that *Romeo and Juliet* 'hath been often (with great applause) plaid publicquely'. In the second edition, the title page witnesses once again the success of the play on the London stage (1599). By obliquely referring to *Romeo and Juliet*, Jaggard's places the collection of poems within the theatrical culture of the time, thus appealing to a readership that knew Shakespeare as a successful man of the theatre.

We should also bear in mind that the second Quarto of *Romeo and Juliet* and the octavo of *The Passionate Pilgrime*, at least the second edition, were both published in 1599 and that the year before another play by Shakespeare appeared in print, *Love's Labour's Lost*, the first work issued with Shakespeare's name on the title page.<sup>26</sup> Significantly in both plays, poetry and its form have a fundamental role in the story and are part of the texture; moreover, both plays share interest in the sonneteering vogue, at its height in England during the last decade of the sixteenth century, following the publication of Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* in 1591.

In *The Passionate Pilgrime*, the dramatic intertext evoked by the title serves indeed to attract the play-goers' attention, especially if they had the chance to actually see, and maybe leaf through the quartos of the plays and the octavo of the collection of poems on display in bookshops. Moreover, three of the five poems by Shakespeare in *The Passionate Pilgrime* are versions of sonnets which are contained in act 4 of *Love's Labour's Lost*, a play that, as Woudhuysen shows, has formal, thematic and verbal links with Sidney's sequence (1998, 12-13), where the sonnet form displays that dramatic quality which is recognized as a distinctive trait of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. And, indeed, in thirteen out of twenty poems in *The Passionate Pilgrime*, a dramatic situation is posited; in it, fictional characters are created and seem to interact; furthermore, in a few cases the speaker includes

<sup>25</sup> It is in this dialogic sonnet that Juliet addresses Romeo as 'Good pilgrime' (2013, 1.5.92).

<sup>26</sup> The 1598 full title of *Love's Labour's Lost* reads: *A | PLEASANT | Conceited Comedie | CALLED, | Loues labours lost. | As it vvas presented before her Highnes | this last Christmas. | Newly corrected and augmented | By W. Shakespere.*

in his/her discourse, in direct form, utterances spoken by other *personae*. Direct address markers do certainly indicate the presence – either real or imagined – of an interlocutor who is actualised in the instance of discourse but also function to bracket off the reader and therefore target the discourse expressed in the poems. Since the utterance is clearly directed away from the reader, he or she occupies a ‘vicarious’ position and characteristically becomes an eavesdropper, a role similar to that assumed by the audience in the theatre. Thus as in *Romeo and Juliet* and *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, *topoi* and stylistic features of contemporary love poetry are put at the service of the dramatic action, so in *The Passionate Pilgrime*, imagined characters are ‘seen’ and ‘heard’ to play out scenes.

By simultaneously evoking contemporary literary and theatrical culture, one in which the interplay between verse and drama is crucial for the configuration of the text, in *The Passionate Pilgrime*, Jaggard fashions Shakespeare’s reputation as a well-accomplished and comprehensive ‘author’, engaged in different genres and having a familiarity with the conventions of both poetry and drama.<sup>27</sup> More generally, the allusion to *Romeo and Juliet* the title seems to make, and the poetic extracts lifted from *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, remind us that ‘lovers’ discourse’ in Elizabethan poetics is not an unveiling of personal feelings but an acting out of a ‘public’ ceremony.

An examination of the texts contained in *The Passionate Pilgrime* shows that they are characterized by a variety of poetic and metrical forms that were conventional in early modern poetry and familiar enough to the readership that, therefore, would have no difficulty in responding appropriately to the text. In particular, the volume contains: nine regular sonnets; five six-line stanza poems (i.e., heroic sestet employed in *Venus and Adonis*); two seven-syllabled rhyming couplets; one four-lined stanza alternately rhymed and three less regular metres, suitable for musical accompaniments. This array makes *The Passionate Pilgrime* appear as a kind of ‘poetic microcosm’, containing most forms and metres used at the time; this, in turn, conveys an image of Shakespeare as a sonneteer, pastoral poet, song-writer, imitator of Ovid, in sum, a well-skilled poet whose compositional finesse is expressed through his ability to use different formal and metrical techniques.

Titles contain advance information which, as Genette has shown, influences the reception process (1997, 55-103); moreover, they conventionally point forward to, or establish significant connections with the contents of the text. A title such as *The Passionate Pilgrime* creates the expectation of a text dominated by the presence of one major, nameless character, possibly the speaker of/in the poems. It does not seem to suggest anything about the gender of the character (pilgrim being used of either sex); but an Elizabethan reader familiar with Shakespeare’s

<sup>27</sup> In a well-known passage in *Palladis Tamia*, Meres praises Shakespeare as the author of both poetry and plays (1598, 281-282). On Shakespeare as ‘poet-playwright’, see Cheney 2004.

recent theatrical production would probably recognize the allusion to *Romeo and Juliet*, and imagine that the passionate pilgrim is a male character.<sup>28</sup>

In an unusual way, however, the texts in *The Passionate Pilgrime* do not seem to fulfil the expectation created by the title: nowhere do terms such as 'passionate' and/or 'pilgrime' appear, neither do we find the specific figure it mentions.<sup>29</sup> In this sense, the advance information the title appears to convey can be seen as misleading. Moreover, diverging from most contemporary books, the title page of *The Passionate Pilgrime* omits an important piece of information: it does not contain any reference to the genre of the texts that follow. In this sense, the title may appear cryptic. Rather than pointing forward to the content of the *text* or a central character in it, the title page invokes a particular literary and theatrical *context*, one that a knowledgeable reader and theatre-goer would immediately associate with Shakespeare, a strategic move that helps corroborate the plausibility of Shakespeare authorship.

*The Passionate Pilgrime* of 1599 is organized in two sections divided by a separate title page, a partition that is not mentioned in the title page:

SONNETS | To sundry notes of Musicke. | [Ornament] | AT LONDON | Printed for W. Iaggard, and are | to be sold by W. Leake, at the Grey- | hound in Paules Churchyard. | 1599.

The first part includes fourteen poems, whereas the second contains the remaining six which possibly were 'known to have musical settings which are now lost' (Burrow 2002, 357n.). The two sections, Burrow claims, 'could not have been sold separately, since the new title page occurs in the middle of a gathering' (2002, 75); the internal title page may point out that 'Iaggard did not wish to attribute the following poems to Shakespeare (in which case Poem 16 from *L.L.L.* is anomalous)' (357n.).

When examining the volume, an early modern reader would have been struck by the unusual *mise en page* of the poems. Their texts are distributed on twenty-eight leaves of which twenty five are printed on rectos only and the last three (signatures D5-D7) are printed on both sides, a setup that deviates from customary printing practice. If, on the one hand, this has been interpreted as a device to bulk the book up; on the other, the blank space might have been

<sup>28</sup> In his *World of Wordes*, Florio defines 'Roméo, as Romitaggio, a roamer, a wanderer, a palmer' (1598, 333). In turn, 'Pellegrino' is translated 'a wanderer, a pilgrim, a palmer' (2659).

<sup>29</sup> A possible, rather oblique connection between the title and the text appears in *PP* 14. Here the speaker reflects on how his mistress makes him 'wander'. She had bid him farewell and told him to 'come againe to morrow' (5): 'Yet at my parting sweetly did she smile, / In scorne or friendship, nill I conster whether: / 'T may be she ioyed to iest at my exile, / 'T may be againe to make me wander thither. / Wander (a word) for shadowes like my self, / As take the paine but cannot pluck the pelfe' (1599, 7-12, my italics). The term 'shadowes', Burrow reminds us, was also used of actors (2002, 355, n. 11).

cherished by readers and used to add poems of their choice, write comments and glosses, or even ‘tear favourite pages out of the book’ (Potter 2008, 10).<sup>30</sup>

### 5. *The 1612 Title Page(s)*

For the new and enlarged edition of the 1612 *Passionate Pilgrime*, as we have seen, Jaggard appended, without acknowledging their author, nine poetic excerpts lifted from Heywood’s *Troia Britanica*;<sup>31</sup> he also expanded the title and, in so doing, provided the readers with a guiding framework for the interpretation of the texts which differs significantly from that given for the 1599 editions. As mentioned above, there are two versions of the title page, one including Shakespeare’s name and one omitting it:

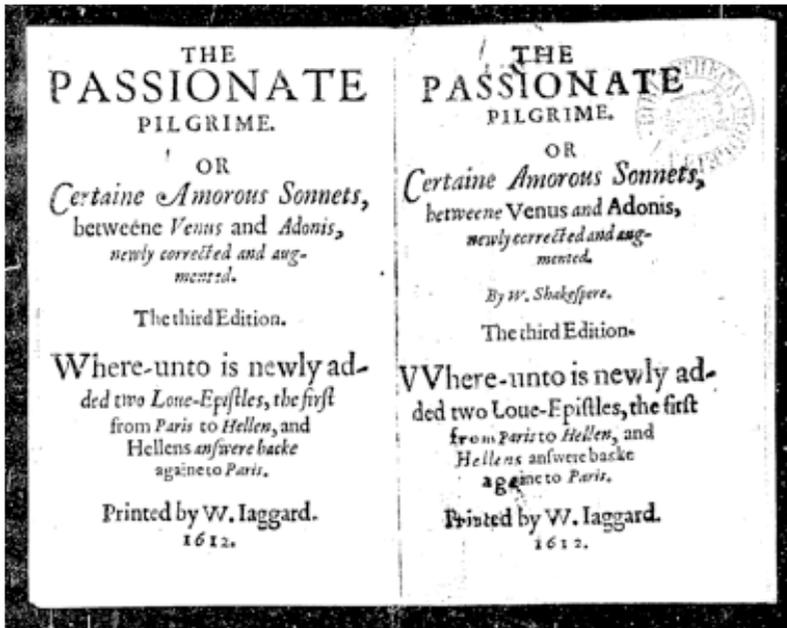


Fig. 1 – *The Passionate Pilgrime* (1612), STC 22343, Arch G g.1, Titlepages on sig. A1v and A2r.  
By permission of the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford

<sup>30</sup> On the annotating practices of early modern readers, see, among others, Mayer 2012 and 2016 in this volume; Roberts 2003, *passim*; Sherman 2002, 2008; Sumimoto 2013.

<sup>31</sup> Rollins observes that Jaggard borrowed the added poems, ‘as typography, punctuation, and spelling show, directly from Heywood’s *Troia*, not from manuscripts’ (1940, xxix). The decision to add poems by Heywood may derive from the fact that they seem to accommodate well the general design of *The Passionate Pilgrime*, especially as far as the Ovidian strand is concerned. On the influence of Ovid in Heywood and Shakespeare and their ‘shared Ovidianism’, see Bate 1993, *passim*.

The 1612 title page differs from those of the 1599 editions in significant ways – it conveys much more information which creates a new set of expectations. After the main title, the first part of the title page not only makes explicit the content of the volume (it is a book of verse) but also illuminates the poetic genre and subject matter of the texts it contains (they are love sonnets). It also reveals the identity of the characters in the sonnets, Venus and Adonis, two mythological figures whose poetic exchange seems to constitute the subject matter and focus of attention of the poems themselves.<sup>32</sup>

The immediate association that will probably come to mind is with Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* which had already been through at least nine editions by 1612.<sup>33</sup> Early modern learned readers would have known that Shakespeare's narrative poem was a contribution to a genre of erotic poetry based on the elaboration of single tales from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a genre that became popular in European literature from the mid-sixteenth century onwards. Young writers in England, often with some connection to the theatre (e.g. Marlowe, Lodge, Beaumont), composed narrative poems in this genre, a genre in which they could exhibit their art and skills to an educated, elite male readership (Burrow 2002, 16-17).

The reference to Venus and Adonis as (fictional) characters in *The Passionate Pilgrime* evokes a possible context for the coeval reading of the poems, that of Ovidian erotic poetry, and arouses expectations according to that genre. However, another tradition is called upon through the phrase 'Amorous Sonnets', that of Petrarchan love poetry, to which Shakespeare's 1609 collection of sonnets is indisputably indebted. Thus, as the title page shows, Jaggard merges two poetic traditions, the Ovidian and the Petrarchan (see Cheney 2004, 157), in which Shakespeare had successfully engaged during his artistic career.

The second piece of advertisement contained in the title page informs the reader about the additions to the volume and reinforces the Ovidian context by evoking the *Heroides*, the collection of literary epistles which received special attention at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the

<sup>32</sup> In the 1599 edition, as shown above, the title page mentions only one, and nameless, character: 'the passionate pilgrime'.

<sup>33</sup> That *Venus and Adonis* and *The Passionate Pilgrime* were perceived as closely connected at the time is also witnessed by their 'physical proximity' in a *Sammelband* (Folger STC 22341.8) containing a unique copy of *The Passionate Pilgrime*, Shakespeare's *Lucrece*; Middleton's *The Ghost of Lucrece*, the sequence *Emaricdulf* by E.C. Esquier, and Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*. The publication date for all these texts, as estimated by the *Short Title Catalogue*, is 1599. On this compilation and its description, see Knight 2013, 70-72. In the introduction to the facsimile volume *The Passionate Pilgrim* by William Shakespeare, Joseph Quincy Adams explores the possibility that *Venus and Adonis* and *The Passionate Pilgrime* were sold together by the printer W. Leake (1939, xv).

seventeenth centuries, following the great success of Drayton's imitations of them, *Englands Heroicall Epistles*, first published in 1597, and augmented and reprinted in 1598, 1599, 1602, 1605 (Bate 1993, 188).<sup>34</sup>

It is significant that the information presented in the first part of the title page is to some extent reiterated in the second part. Here again we find an indication of the genre of the (added) poems – they are 'Loue-Epistles' – with their immediate association with Ovid's work. Again, mention is made of the characters involved in the exchange, in this case Paris and Helen, two other mythological figures described as the 'authors' of the letters we see written on the page, the letters we read, the letters that, in sum, constitute the poems.

The two parts of the title page are further linked by their rhetorical arrangement which relates, by means of syntactic parallelism, 'Amorous Sonnets, betweene Venus and Adonis' to 'Loue-Epistles ... from Paris to Hellen', in which the names of the characters are chiasmatically disposed to stress the close connection between them. Such a rhetorical construction (parallelism and chiasmus) reinforces the internal coherence of the volume. Furthermore, the two parts emphasise that both the 'Amorous Sonnets' and the 'Loue-Epistles' are, respectively, 'newly ... augmented' and 'newly added' (in the text the phrases form another chiasmus), an advertising move on Jaggard's part possibly aimed at luring readers.<sup>35</sup> And of course the modifiers 'amorous' and 'love' reinforce the 'passionate' nature of the 'new' volume of verse just printed and underscore its thematic consistency.

The title page of the 1612 *Passionate Pilgrime* can be seen as a metapoetic statement. By declaring the fictive nature of the poems contained in the volume and presenting them as acts of communication in canonical forms (sonnet and verse epistle), purportedly originating from mythological, fictional *personae*, the title page focuses attention on the work's status as an artefact and, at the same time, makes readers aware of its fictionality.<sup>36</sup>

The title page raises expectations not only as far as the form and contents of the volume are concerned but also with regard to its structural organization since it seems to indicate that the book falls into two main sections: one containing the 'Amorous Sonnets'; the other including the 'two Loue-Epistles'. Examining the volume, however, a careful reader would not fail to notice that

<sup>34</sup> The allusion both to the *Metamorphoses* and the *Heroides* in the title page shows that Jaggard was perfectly aware that Shakespeare's work bore the marks of Ovid's influence, knowledge that he exploited in the construction of *The Passionate Pilgrime*.

<sup>35</sup> In fact, no augmentations are to be found in the first section of the book which contains the same poems as the 1599 edition.

<sup>36</sup> In her study on '*The Passionate Pilgrime* of 1612', Reid contends that the volume 'imaginatively restyles Ovidian-Shakespearean characters as poets who, much like the members of tantalizing exclusive Tudor and Stuart literary circle, craft texts and "responses to the texts of others in a continual literary flow"' (2012, §30).

it is, in fact, divided into three parts. Part one comprises the first fourteen poems; these are followed by a new, dated title page, reading: 'SONNETS | To sundry notes of Musicke. [Ornament] | AT LONDON | Printed by W. Iaggard. | 1612.'<sup>37</sup> which, in turn, introduces the second part that contains six songs and poems. Finally, the third section, including nine poems, presents the 'newly added' texts, the Ovidian excerpts, culled from Heywood's *Troia Britanica*. These, unlike the preceding poems, are all titled, an indication likely to demarcate further the first (1599) two parts and the (1612) additions.<sup>38</sup>

The same attentive reader would soon realize that the expectations created by the title page are partly frustrated since the material added consists of more than 'two Loue-Epistles': the new poems are indeed nine. These poems are all translations from Ovid, but only the first two are from the *Heroïdes*. As to the remaining poems, six are translations from *Ars Amatoria*, and one from *Remedia Amoris*.<sup>39</sup> As far as the 'amorous sonnets' are concerned, only

<sup>37</sup> The partition between the first two sections reproduces the one in *The Passionate Pilgrime* of 1599. However, in the two editions, the internal title pages exhibit different ornaments and, perhaps more importantly, while the 1599 one informs readers that the 'Sonnets to sundry notes of Musicke' are 'Printed for W. Iaggard, and are to be sold by W. Leake, at the Greyhound in Paules Churchyard, the 1612 title page only states that the sonnets are 'Printed by W. Iaggard'.

<sup>38</sup> The third part of the volume opens with Paris' 'love epistle' to Helen entitled: 'The amorous Epistle of *Paris to Hellen*'. The modifier 'amorous' appears to be Jaggard's addition to the title of the epistle in Heywood's *Troia Britanica*, which reads: 'The Epistle of Paris to Hellen' ('Canto.9.'). The presence of the adjective on the title page of *The Passionate Pilgrime* and its repetition at the beginning of its third section is revealing of Jaggard's attempt to create a coherent text and establishes significant relationships among its parts.

<sup>39</sup> In particular, only the passage entitled '*And in another place somewhat resembling this*' (PP 1612, G7v) is a free translation from Ovid's *Remedia Amoris* (1982, 771-781). In *Troia Britanica*, Heywood always makes explicit his Ovidian sources by citing them, together with other authorities, in the marginal notes; on the contrary, Jaggard reproduces Heywood's text only, omitting all the marginalia, a move which obfuscates the intertextual links exhibited in Heywood's work. Moreover, Jaggard changes Heywood's titles, often by expunging all reference to Ovid as the author of the source texts which are, in *Troia Britanica*, translated into English. For instance, Heywood's long description: '*That Menelaus was at home when Paris Landed in the Isle Cythere, and gaue him friendly entertainment, though some seeme to disproue, yet Ouid in diuers of his workes affirms it*' (1609, 239) becomes in *The Passionate Pilgrime*: '*That Menelaus was cause of his owne wrongs.*' (G7r). The omission of the reference to Ovid appears particularly revealing in the sixth poem from *Troia Britanica* added by Jaggard to *The Passionate Pilgrime*. Heywood's title reads: '*Vulcan was Iupiters Smith, an excellent workeman, on who the Poets Father many rare workes, among which, I find one, not unnecessary to be remembred, which Ouid speaks of, and I thus English.*' (1609, 113). In *The Passionate Pilgrime*, the title is thus shortened and changed: '*Vulcan was Iupiters Smith, an excellent workeman, on whom the Poets Father many rare workes, among which, I find this one.*' To which, the following addition is made: '*Mars and Venus.*' (H2r). Here, not only the reference to Ovid is cut out, but perhaps more crucially the title erases the fact that the following text is the result of an act of translation. Another element appears rather problematic here: it concerns the identity of the 'I'

four poems (4, 6, 9, and 11) of the fourteen comprised in the opening section are, strictly speaking, exchanges between Venus and Adonis. By singling out a group of poems in the title, purportedly originated from two mythological characters, Jaggard seems to provide readers with a context for the interpretation of the remaining ones. Through this lens, all the poems are likely to be perceived as 'spoken' by Venus and/or Adonis, even when the 'I' is not explicitly identified. This creates the impression that, rather than simply being 'scattered rhymes', the poems in the section form an integrated whole, an organized sequence.<sup>40</sup> The sense of unity that the fictional *personae* seem to guarantee is reinforced thematically by the motif of betrayal, and, by implication, of truthfulness and falsehood, swearing and forswearing, that permeates the whole of the 1612 *Passionate Pilgrime*.<sup>41</sup>

Jaggard's attempt to create a well-formed and coherent text is also demonstrated by his careful selection of poetic materials from *Troia Britanica*. All the excerpts chosen deal with versions of betrayal, deceit, and related feelings, in (love) relationships; from a thematic point of view, they harmonize well with the other poems included in the volume. Moreover, intratextual links between the new poems added and the other sections help create a sense of internal aggregation.<sup>42</sup> And as *The Passionate Pilgrime* opens with two sonnets

speaking in Jaggard's text. In *Troia Britanica*, contemporary readers could easily disambiguate the personal reference—the 'I' being most likely Heywood in the role of translator of Ovid's works. In *The Passionate Pilgrime*, the deletion of all reference to the hypotext renders that identification almost impossible. Here, the 'I' cannot be viewed as a translator, but as someone that is only responsible for the choice of the text which follows, possibly the compiler of the volume, who, for the first and only time, describes himself in that role.

<sup>40</sup> On *The Passionate Pilgrime* of 1612 as 'a sonnet sequence in miniature', see Reid 2012, §20ff. If we read the opening section as a sonnet sequence, then we might perhaps notice that it is comprised of fourteen poems, a kind of 'macrosonnet' in which each individual poem fulfils the function of an individual line in a sonnet.

<sup>41</sup> According to Cheney, in the first two sections, 'Vows, oaths, swearing, faiths – and their inversions – organize the octavo's thought, appearing directly in five poems (1, 3, 5, 16, 17), narrated in five more (2, 7, 13, 18, 20) – half the total. The majority of these appear early, setting the volume topic and tempo' (2004, 160).

<sup>42</sup> See, for instance, the address to 'Air' in *PP* 16, 9-10 and in 'The Tale of *Cephalus* and *Procris*', 14-16. A more complex example of inter- and intratextual relationship appears in a few lines dealing with the seduction of Venus by Mars in *PP* 11. In this sonnet, almost certainly by Griffin, Venus tries to seduce Adonis while telling him how the god of war 'fell to her' and 'she fell to him' (4). The lines remind us of a brief passage in *Venus and Adonis* where the goddess describes Mars' submission to her (97-114). In Shakespeare's narrative poem, as well as in the sonnet in *The Passionate Pilgrime*, Venus omits an important detail: both she and her lover were caught in an invisible net, forged by Vulcan, Venus' husband, and exposed to the gods' gaze and ridicule. This story is told in one of Heywood's excerpt that Jaggard included in *The Passionate Pilgrime* ('*Vulcan was Iupiters Smith, an excellent workeman, on whom the Poets Father many rare workes, among which, I find this one. Mars and Venus.*, 1612, H2r-v-H3r). By adding Heywood's passage, Jaggard offers the readers the

by Shakespeare which, together with the reference to *Venus and Adonis*, set immediately the tone for the whole volume, so the two 'Loue-Epistles' between Paris and Helen,<sup>43</sup> introducing the third section, establish intertextual relationships with the other Shakespearean narrative poem, *Lucrece*, which are bound to reinforce the Shakespearean mood. In both stories, desecrating the laws of hospitality and betraying his host's trust, a prince carries off a beautiful young woman from her legitimate husband. In both stories, this action has catastrophic political consequences leading, in one case, to the Trojan War, and in the other, to the uprising against the rulers and the change of state government.

In an extensive passage in Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece* (1366-1578) that expresses the eponymous heroine's response to the painting of the siege of Troy, Lucrece attacks Paris, for his 'heat of lust' (1473) has caused the fall of Troy; she also blames the 'strumpet' Helen (1471) for, the implication is, encouraging him with her beauty.<sup>44</sup> Rape as a theme also recurs in the final poem of 1612 *Passionate Pilgrime*, 'Achilles his concealement of his Sex in the Court of Lycomedes:' that recounts the story of Achilles and Deidamia, in which, among other things, the Greek hero's cross-dressing cannot but remind early modern readers of a common practice on the contemporary stage.

Though differently inflected, the recurring theme of violation which opens and closes the last section of *The Passionate Pilgrime* – the one containing the added poems – frames the section itself and helps foster a sense of cohesion in it. Moreover, this section appears to be linked to the preceding ones by the

'complete story' and, in a sense, makes them aware of Venus' reticence and manipulative strategy adopted to seduce young Adonis. This example seems particularly revealing of Jaggard's own strategy in constructing *The Passionate Pilgrime* and sheds some light on the highly collaborative nature of the volume itself.

<sup>43</sup> Apart from the popularity of Ovid's letters in verse, it should be remembered that Shakespeare made frequent use of letters in his plays. According to Alan Stuart, 'At a conservative estimate, one hundred and eleven letters appear on stage in the course of Shakespeare's plays, and his characters allude to many more, running through all the genres and his entire career' (2008, 4). When choosing to add love epistles to *The Passionate Pilgrime* and advertising them on the title page, Jaggard was probably aware of the importance that Shakespeare attributed to letters and expected that the readership would associate the form with Shakespeare himself.

<sup>44</sup> The rape of Lucrece and the rape of Helen were often associated in early modern English literature. For instance, in the epistle 'To the kind Reader' in *Loves Martyr*, Robert Chester mentions 'Hellens rape, by Paris Troian boy' and 'Lucrece rape, being rauisht by a King' in parallel (1601, A4v). Similarly, in Richard Johnson's *Most famous Historie of the Seauen Champions*, the two violations are listed together: 'What became of Hellen's Ravishment, but the Destruction of Renowned Troy? What of Romaine Lucreciaes Rape, but the Banishment of Tarquin?' (1596, 163). According to Fineman, the evocation of the Homeric story in *The Rape of Lucrece* 'gives an exemplary dimension to Lucrece's situation, making it another instance of the "primal" rape (or cuckolding) with which our literary tradition historically begins, another version of the same old story' (1999, 106). On rape and its different representations in early modern texts, both canonical and non-canonical, see Pallotti 2013.

presence of the same theme, evoked through several references to Philomel's 'ditty' in *PP* 14 and *PP* 20, the poems that end the first and second part of the collection respectively. These references, in turn, recall Lucrece's repeated mentions of Philomel in Shakespeare's *Lucrece* (especially, 1079-1148), and weave a significant web that closely links the poems and the sections together. It also establishes intertextual relationships between the texts of *The Passionate Pilgrime* and the Shakespearean poetic macrotext, thus interlacing poems from various sources in a new and compelling configuration. Attention to these details shows that Jaggard was first of all a sensitive reader of verse and ultimately sheds some light on his techniques of text appropriation and creative engagement with Shakespeare's and his contemporaries' poems.

The attribution on the title page of the 1612 *Passionate Pilgrime* (but also of the 1599 edition) to one and only one author reinforces notions of stylistic unity, the 'author' being, in early modern poetry, a 'powerful template for organizing sonnets' and other lyric forms (Spiller 1992, 92). Since the reputation of an artist has always an important influence on his/her works, the ascription of Shakespeare as the 'author' of the poems confers value on the poems themselves. In a sense, the act of ascription contributes to turn the artefact into a work of art. Rather than being a 'determinate origin', in the case of *The Passionate Pilgrime*, authorship is indeed 'a form of ascription' (Stallybrass 2011, 210).

## 6. Conclusion

As I have tried to show in the previous sections, the kind of information conveyed on the different title pages evokes expectations concerning genre, style and form as well as the system of reference about literary conventions that readers bring in while interpreting texts. Paratexts can play an important part in the construction of meaning, in guiding interpretation, and shaping texts. When paratexts change, expectations change, and so does interpretation. Indeed, as Stallybrass maintains, 'Paratexts do not just mark the book; they make it what it is' (2011, 219).

The examination of the different title pages has cast some light on the practices of text assembly and organization that Jaggard used in order to construct a Shakespeare text, and on how he created a 'book of poems' by aggregating poetic materials from different sources – works by Shakespeare and other writers – fashioning them in such a way as to present strong thematic and discursive coherence, creating for them a title and an 'author' that reinforce the impression of stylistic unity, ultimately giving them the sense of a whole.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> These practices of extraction and recontextualization inevitably make texts assume radically different meanings from those they had in their original contexts. Given the lack of evidence, it is impossible to know how 'these poems [i.e., those contained in *The Passionate*

Paradoxically, perhaps, some of the texts included in the volume are (still) known to us thanks to Jaggard's 'creation', his editorial interventions, and ... Shakespeare's name. In this sense, not only is *The Passionate Pilgrime* a co-authored work, but so are the single texts contained in it.

By 'creatively' extracting, shaping, manipulating, and ordering, Shakespeare's and others' poems, Jaggard succeeded in producing a 'new literary artefact', *The Passionate Pilgrime*, which is also a significant, though baffling, document in the construction of an authorial role for the poet Shakespeare.

### 7. Coda

One of the excerpts culled from Heywood's *Troia Britanica*, '*The History how the Mynotaure was begot*' (PP 1612, H3v-H4r), narrates a story of concealment and deceit (as well as of excesses of female sensuality).<sup>46</sup> The phrase 'by curious Art compild' (33) is used there to describe Dedalus' creation, a wooden heifer wrapped in cow's skin, that allowed Pasiphae to quench her desire for the powerful white bull.

Dedalus-like, Jaggard planned and designed 'by curious Art', a unique artefact, *The Passionate Pilgrime*, which could possibly 'beguile', with its skilful configuration, a wide and (perhaps) demanding readership. He not only constructed ('compild') a book of poems, but more crucially created an 'author' for it, whose charmed name, '*W. Shakespere*', and known talents would testify to the special qualities of the work which that 'author' had not even written.<sup>47</sup> Under that name, however, many other names were concealed. Jaggard shrewdly used Shakespeare's name as a kind of 'brand' which would guarantee financial success. It was not slow in coming.

*Pilgrime*] came into Jaggard's hands, or about the kind of copy from which the printer of the volume was working', and also 'how closely the poems are related to Shakespeare' (Burrow 2002, 76). Some possibilities are illustrated by Burrow 2002, 76-77.

<sup>46</sup> Heywood's source is Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* I, 286-326. The translation condenses the original text slightly.

<sup>47</sup> According to the OED, in early usage, the verb 'compile' could also mean 'to compose as original work (esp. a work with definite form or structure, e.g., a sonnet)', in this relating the activity of a compiler with that of an 'original' author. An even stronger connection between the two activities is highlighted by Jeffrey Todd Knight who reminds us that John Palsgrave's 1530 translation dictionary defines 'compiling' in terms of authorship: to compile is '[to] make a boke as an auctor dothe' (2013, 8). As to the adjective 'curious', the OED records a meaning, now obsolete, but in use in early modern English: 'ingenious, clever, skilful', a sense which appears particularly relevant in the context of Heywood's poem.

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# Transmission as Appropriation: The Early Reception of John Benson's Edition of Shakespeare's *Poems* (1640)

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## *Abstract*

Described by modern critics as a 'mangled hodgepodge', John Benson's much edited and rearranged text of Shakespeare's *Poems* was considerably successful throughout the seventeenth century. While Benson's choices could be considered as attempts to cater for and partly shape the tastes of a new generation of readers, its form also incited a number of them to alter the printed work. The article focuses on the annotations of two seventeenth-century readers of the edition, the main hand in Folger STC 22344 copy 2 and that of the little-known Meisei University MR 1447 – two copies in which readers' reactions to and appropriation of Benson's edition are particularly visible. A final section is also devoted to Folger MS V.a.148, a miscellany in which some of Benson's *Poems* are recontextualised. In a culture where, as Joad Raymond has observed, 'any reader was potentially also a writer, or at least a reviser or commentator', the early appropriation and transformation of Shakespeare's text played a central part in its transmission. The practices and examples examined here were part and parcel of these processes.

*Keywords:* Appropriation, Benson, Editing, Shakespeare, Sonnets

## 1. *Introduction*

Since he was accused of 'stealing' from the 1609 quarto of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, John Benson and his reputation as an editor of *Poems vwritten by Wil. Shake-speare. Gent.* (1640) have not fared well.<sup>1</sup> His 1640 octavo volume merges many of the sonnets in the previous edition, giving them descriptive titles and adds other poems

<sup>1</sup> Faith Acker is currently writing a Ph.D. thesis that is concerned with contextualising the 1640 octavo printed by John Benson. This work may considerably alter our view of Benson's edition.



to the collection from different sources. At times, it ascribes to the poet lyrics that were not his. The order of some sonnet sequences is also changed. Despite the portrait of Shakespeare facing the title page, the address ‘To the Reader’ and the preliminary epistles by Leonard Digges and John Warren (all of which consciously mimic those found in the First and Second Folios of Shakespeare’s plays), the book has an appendix with poems from a variety of other writers, such as Ben Jonson, John Milton, Francis Beaumont and Robert Herrick. No wonder that Benson did not make it into the Oxford *DNB* – to the modern editorial eye his edition is not only considered as a ‘mangled hodgepodge’ (Wells and Taylor 1997, 38), but also as a betrayal of perhaps the only work in which Shakespeare spoke in a voice closest to his own.

Yet to a seventeenth-century reader, the 1609 quarto, with its rather cryptic dedication and equally baffling sequence of numbered sonnets, may have appeared rather unattractive and not so easy to comprehend. To reach out beyond their original social and cultural contexts, for which they were at least partly written, the sonnets had to be made more accessible and more appealing to a new market of would-be buyers – those who were interested in appropriating printed poems and recirculating them in manuscript. Indeed, this was what many readers often did – collecting printed poems in manuscript miscellanies remained a common activity in the more educated circles (Marotti 1995, 218 *passim*).

This was the publishing challenge that Benson had to meet – to entice and guide readers into the collection, while leaving them a measure of freedom. On the face of it, his heavily edited printed volume appears to lock the poems’ meanings because of his groupings and added titles. While there is no denying that Benson did produce his personal version of Shakespeare’s sonnets, his titles are sometimes so commonplace that they encourage readers to appropriate them as such, but also to alter them in a quest for a different meaning.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, some of his groupings have been found to lack coherence, perhaps because he wanted to leave them open to interpretation by others (de Grazia 2009, 94).

The ultimate confirmation that Benson’s volume did not preclude interpretation, but in fact fostered it, is in the empirical evidence we can find in some of the surviving copies of his *Poems*, but also in the miscellanies, which show that some readers went to poach on Benson’s lands.

In this essay, I wish to give some idea of the various practices of Benson’s ‘empirical’ readers. Although these practices often overlap, for convenience’s sake I shall divide them into several categories, which will be explored and illustrated: retitling, censorship, simplifications/clarifications/transformations, as well as extraction and the implicit recontextualisation that goes with the practice.

<sup>2</sup> Indeed, Heffernan (2013, 81) finds that Benson’s editing actually ‘disrupt[s] the potential for a sequential reading of the larger collection’.

## 2. Retitling

Folger STC 22344 Copy 2 is an annotated copy that is especially interesting because of the repeated retitling done by a hand that probably dates back to the second part of the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup> Another feature of this copy is that only a quarter of the book bears marks – the reader stops annotating on B7r having covered 26 of the 110 poems in Benson’s collection. The absence of markings after that page (containing a poem entitled ‘Inhumanitie’ from the *Passionate Pilgrime*) may just be another indication of readers’ complete freedom to poach on lands of their choice.

Be that as it may, the way the reader has marked this quarter of the book is extremely significant. Shakespeare’s sonnet 67 ‘Ah wherefore with infection should he live’, whose title in the printed edition is ‘*The glory of beautie*’, is turned into the more negative ‘Beauty sullied with inconstancy’ (A2r). The rather vague, if not commonplace, title of sonnet 59, ‘*The beautie of Nature*’, is crossed out by the annotator and replaced by a phrase resembling a gloss, or the extended titles used by early modern publishers: ‘The search into former Ages to know or Proficiency or deficiency’. The title is also accompanied by what looks like a Latin epigram in the outside margin (A5r; fig. 1).<sup>4</sup>

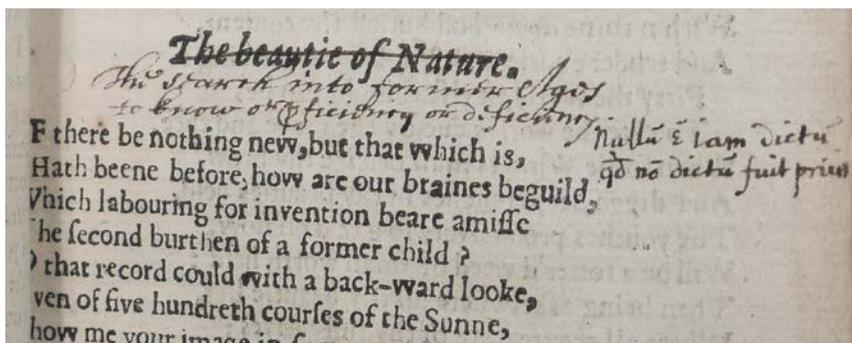


Fig. 1 – Folger STC 22344 Copy 2, sig. A5r

On the next page a similar Latin quotation is joined to the new title provided by the reader, ‘Motiues to procreation as *the way* to outliue Time’, thus replacing Benson’s ‘*Loves crueltie*’ (this was sonnet 1 in the 1609 edition). On B1v, the reader reveals some of the subtleties of his/her interpretations. sonnet 138 (‘When my Love swears that she is made of truth’) loses its printed title (‘False beleeffe’), which is replaced by the arguably more accurate ‘Mutuall flatterie’ (fig. 2).

<sup>3</sup> For other features of this copy – including emendations – see also Roberts 2003, 167-169.

<sup>4</sup> All photographs were taken by the author, in the collection and with the permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C., and of the Kodama Memorial Library at Meisei University, Tokyo.

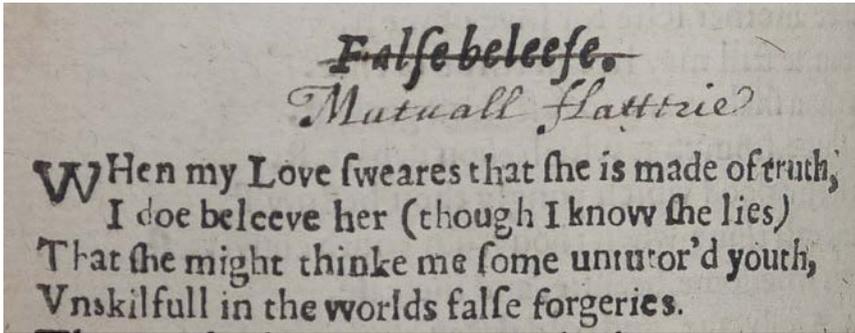


Fig. 2 – Folger STC 22344 Copy 2, sig. B1v

Revealingly also, Benson's *'The Exchange'* (sonnet 20) is subtitled 'The Mistris Masculine' by the annotator, in order to underline the androgynous identity of the lover in the poem ('A womans face with natures owne hand painted, / Hast thou the Master Mistris of my passion', B4r). The subtitling is not an infrequent practice, which shows that Benson's sometimes overly neutral titles could frustrate readers and encourage them to express their views in less uncertain terms.

What is also noteworthy is that the annotator occasionally deems Benson's titles not only inaccurate, but also unnecessary. We have already mentioned the reader's dissatisfaction with Benson's *'Loves crueltie'* as a title for sonnet 1 and its replacement by 'Motiues to procreation as *the way to outliue Time*' (A5v). The following set of titled poems *'Youthfull glory'* (sonnet 13; A6r), *'Good Admonition'* (sonnet 16; A7r), *'Quicke prevention'* (sonnet 7; A7v), *'Magazine of beautie'* (sonnet 4; A7v) is divested of its titles, the reader crossing them out and commenting each time: 'On *the same subiect*' or 'on *the subject before*' (figs. 3 and 4). In the latter case, another explanation is that the inscriber was in fact following the common practice in miscellany composition, where poems are often titled in this way ('On the same'; 'On the other'), rather than with Benson's more descriptive headings.

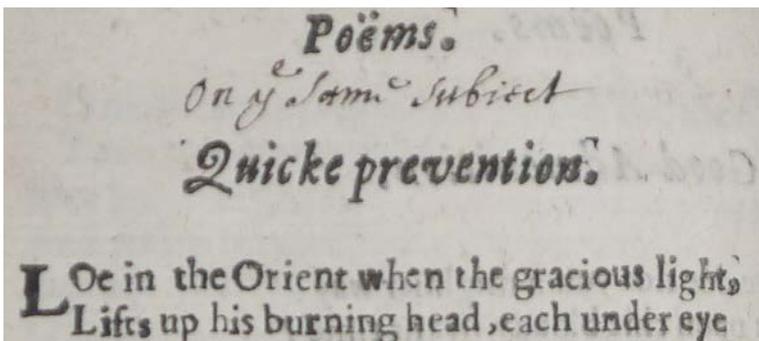


Fig. 3 – Folger STC 22344 Copy 2, sig. A7v

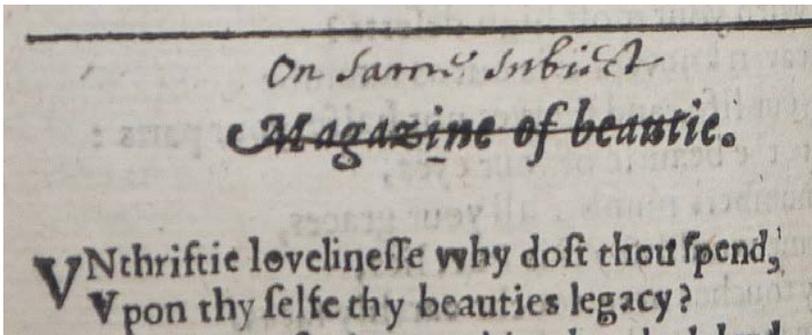


Fig. 4 – Folger STC 22344 Copy 2, sig. A7v

Despite the apparently rigid nature of print and of Benson's reframing and reshuffling of Shakespeare's sequence of sonnets, the reader here demonstrates that other combinations are not only possible, but can in fact be reinvented directly on the printed page. Conversely, Benson's 'True Admiration' (A4r-v) which compounds sonnets 54 and 57 is split by ink brackets into two poems, whose titles are respectively 'Imitability and Immutability' (A4r) and 'Chymistry of verse' (A4v, probably inspired by Shakespeare's 'my verse distils your truth') (figs. 5 and 6).

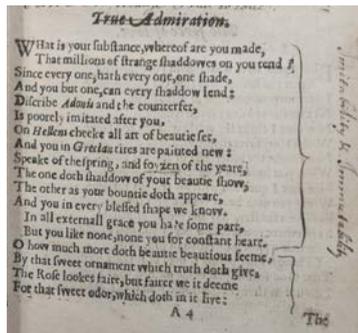


Fig. 5 – Folger STC 22344 Copy 2, sig. A4r

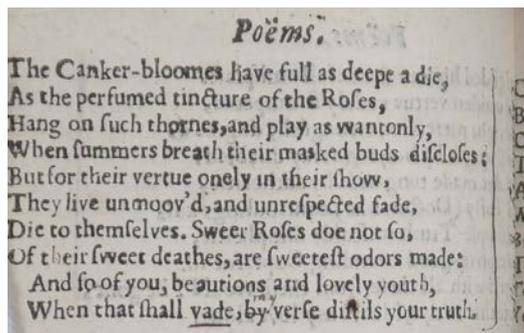


Fig. 6 – Folger STC 22344 Copy 2, sig. A4v

These practices show no real will to go back to the 1609 edition, but rather a wish to use Benson's own fashion of editing in a different way.

### 3. *Censorship*

Benson has been vilified not only for his rearrangement of Shakespeare's sonnets, but also for his alleged censorship of traces of homoeroticism in Shakespeare's poems (Shakespeare 1995, 44-45; Hammond 2002, 101-104). These charges do not quite stand up, as other scholars have observed (de Grazia 1994, 35-36; Shrank 2009, 272). There is no better proof that some readers were still discontented by the 1640 edition than the traces of censorship they left inside the book itself. What homoerotic details Benson had apparently not erased were sufficient to be picked up on disapprovingly by them.

This is very obviously the case in the little-known annotated edition of Benson's *Poems* now held by Meisei University, in Tokyo (MR 1447). There are a number of emendations in this edition, but what is most striking are the efforts to make it conform to this late seventeenth-century reader's sense of personal decency. Printed as an appendix to the 1609 edition of Shakespeare's *Poems*, some parts of 'A Lover's Complaint' are not to the annotator's taste. On H1r, the following is crossed out with the word 'nonsense' inscribed opposite:

What me your minister? for you obayes,  
Works under you, and to your audit comes,  
Their distract parcells, incombined summes. (Fig. 7)

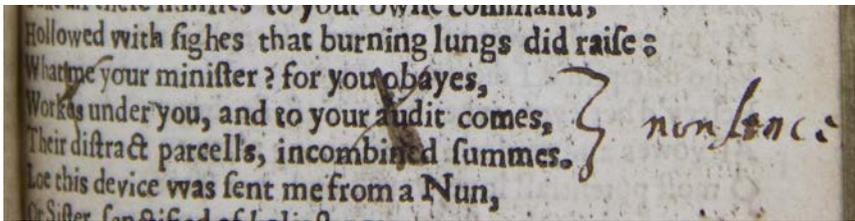


Fig. 7 – Meisei MR 1447, sig. H1r

What Katherine Duncan-Jones calls a 'contorted passage' (Shakespeare 1997, 225) may also have irritated the reader for religious reasons – as the word 'minister' is possibly too closely related to gifts of an amorous nature.

A few lines later, other lines are crossed out in the same way with the word 'nonsense' (H1v): 'Play the Place which did no forme receive, / Play patient sports in unconstrain'd gives' (fig. 8).



which has three large ink crosses over it (K1v), is likewise about possible unfaithfulness: ‘The greater, but not the greatest liberty: / Is limited to our Lascivious play, / That *Menalaus* is farre hence away’.

Thus, religious profanities and sexual licentiousness seem to have been the primary targets of this reader-censor. The epitaphs in honour of Shakespeare at the latter end of the book are untouched. More surprising, given the apparent tendency towards religious and sexual orthodoxy in the changes introduced by the annotator, the poems addressed to the ‘young man’ do not appear to have particularly raised the reader’s eyebrows. While it would be churlish to draw overly broad conclusions from one case study, this is a reminder that early modern readers reacted differently to expressions of sexual behaviour.<sup>5</sup>

#### 4. *Simplifications/Clarifications/Transformations*

If Benson has been blamed by modern scholars for modernizing the text of the 1609 edition of Shakespeare’s poems, seventeenth-century readers still struggled somewhat with the language of the 1640 octavo. Attempts at clarifying Shakespeare’s language are quite common on the part of the annotator of MR 1447. For instance, a line from Benson’s poem ‘A Complaint’ (sonnet 111) is altered from ‘O For my sake doe you wish fortune chide’, to the less subtle, but more straightforward ‘O for my sake does you my fortune chide’ (E3v). It is even more tempting for extractors – who are a further step removed from the book – to transform the meaning of lines in order to appropriate them and prepare them for further use. This is the case of the compositor of Folger MS V a 148, a manuscript miscellany of *ca.* 1660. A line in Benson’s ‘Complaint for his Loves absence’ (D8v; also sonnet 97), ‘How like a Winter hath my absence beene / From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year?’ is simplified and turned into the far more reusable ‘thou art *the* Pleasure of *the* fleeting year’ (f. 23r).

Reading and annotating are self-conscious activities and it is logical that a poem whose topic is partly the gathering of extracts into a table book should receive some special attention. Thus, ‘Vpon the receipt of a Table Booke from his Mistris’ (sigs. E6r-v; sonnet 122), is transformed in Meisei MR 1447 in order to make the aims of annotation and extraction, as well as the processes involved in these activities, perfectly clear. ‘That poore retention could not so much hold’ is replaced by ‘It was too little room my thoughts to hold’ and the more cryptic ‘To keepe an adjunct to remember thee’ is turned into ‘to keepe a copy to remember thee’ (E6v; fig. 10).

<sup>5</sup> A counter-example is found in Folger MS V.a.148 where the compiler of the miscellany has feminized pronouns in lines taken from Benson’s ‘The glory of beautie’ (A2v), which was sonnet 68 in the 1609 edition. However, he/she does not pursue this in the rest of the extracts.

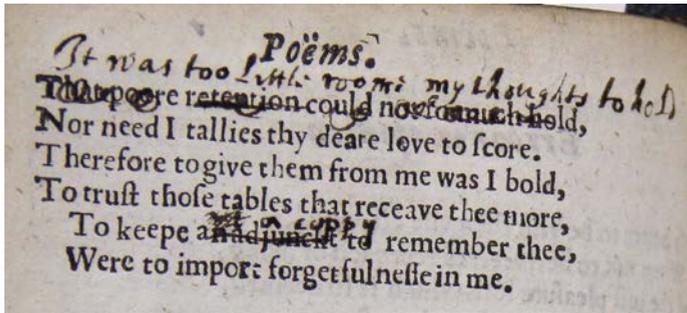


Fig. 10 – Meisei MR 1447, sig. E6v

The annotator was no doubt drawn to the poem because it dwells so strongly (but not always so clearly) on the transmission and circulation of extracts from one human being to another. It addresses issues of human communication but also speaks of a possible tension between human memory and the storage of that memory through inscription.<sup>6</sup>

Sonnet 122 suggests that human memory may retain more than what is written on paper. Indeed, and paradoxically, the poem is also there to inscribe the affirmation that natural memory is superior to artificial memory. From the perspective of most annotators, a poem is a ‘poore retention’ if it is not allowed to grow, circulate and transform itself in order to survive in human memory. In this way, early modern annotators were also *respondents*. They marked works of literature because some parts deserved to be remembered but they annotated them as well because they deemed them worthy of literary engagement. The last fourteen lines of Benson’s ‘Injurious Time’ are circled in ink by the annotator of Folger STC 22344 Copy 2 (they correspond to sonnet 66 in the 1609 edition). In the margin, opposite the last two-thirds of the poem, is a manuscript gloss or response to the poem: ‘O Tempora! o mores! / Love salues all sores’. The Latin expression (meaning ‘Alas the times, and the manners’) is from Cicero’s famous and indignant *Oration against Catiline* and captures the tone of the poem. Likewise, the rhyming addition English made by the reader appears to indicate that, despite the times, only love can cure the ills described in the lyric. But this is not all. Two manuscript verse lines are added in black ink and could be related to the relatively common early modern practice of providing ‘answer poems’, that is, a reader/annotator would inscribe a personal response to a poem directly next to it:<sup>7</sup> ‘Wer’t not for Loving, Living irk would prove / I love to live, because I liue to loue’ (A4r; fig. 11).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> On these issues, see also de Grazia 2009, 98.

<sup>7</sup> On early modern manuscript responses and ‘answer poems’, see Marotti 1995, 160.

<sup>8</sup> Likewise, and as Orgel explains, ‘The poem headed “Inhumanitie” in Benson’s 1640 *Poems* (f. B7<sup>r</sup>) is Sonnet 9 from *The Passionate Pilgrim* (no longer considered to be by Shakespeare). It has only 13 lines, and the rhyme scheme reveals that line 2 is missing.

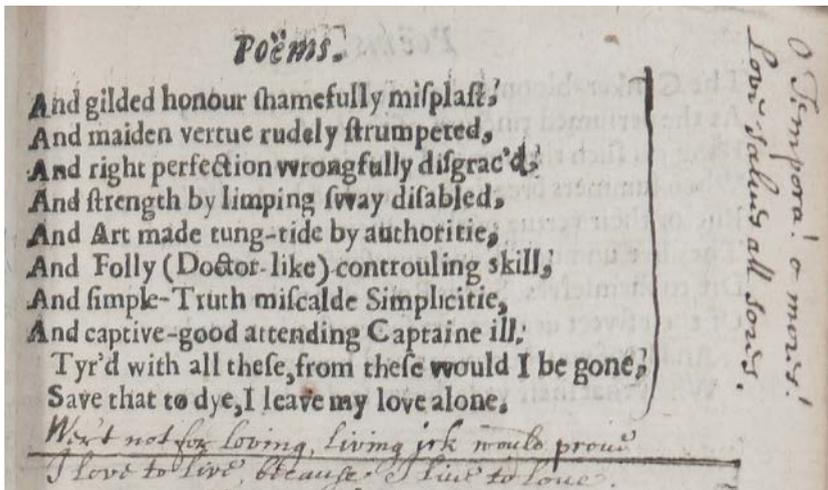


Fig. 11 – Folger STC 22344 Copy 2, sig. A4r

### 5. Extraction and Recontextualisation

In this last section, I shall focus on what happened when Benson's *Poems* left the printed page and joined the world of manuscript. Folger MS V a 148 will serve as a case study – as an example, in other words, that is revealing of the ways in which the Shakespearean lyric circulated because it was appropriated and partly transformed, but also as a particularly enlightening and unique receptacle of a human being's aesthetic tastes.

In Folger MS V a 148 the Shakespearean extracts on ff. 22-24 have been identified as Bensonian (Marotti 1990, 163-165; Baker 1998, 170). These extracts are a portion of a miscellany assembled by an anonymous compiler containing various other materials: notes on the Bible and on Hebrew grammar; notes on the use of the quadrant; notes in shorthand, possibly of sermons; poems, by such authors as J. Gibbon, Crashaw, Ravenshaw, Benlowes, Sherburne, Hooke and Llewellyn, as well as epigrams by Thomas Fuller. David Baker has argued that Benson's so-called 'Jonsonian and cavalier Shakespeare' (1998, 172) facilitated royalist appropriations of the collection and this may explain what Baker sees as pro-royalist extraction in Folger MS V a 148. There might be a measure of truth in this, as Benson's edition could have been pilfered by a nostalgic mid to late seventeenth-century reader.<sup>9</sup>

An early reader has crossed out lines 2 and 3 and supplied a new version of lines 2-4 (2007, 296).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. the epitaph on the death of Charles I (ff. 17r-19r).

However, what transpires from his/her choice of extracts are also concerns outside the political sphere: love, decay and death, the will to choose passages for their intrinsic literary beauty, the desire to use Shakespeare's lines in other contexts.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, what is significant is not only that the extractor is extremely selective, but also the progress made through Benson's collection is not strictly uniform. Some lines are rid of unnecessary elements, so as to make them more striking, or more commonplace. Through these processes of textual decontextualization, the compiler exercised even greater freedom of choice than Benson, in a fashion totally in keeping with the practices of manuscript culture.<sup>11</sup>

Love – a common theme among compilers of miscellanies (often because these are young) – is given its due. On f. 22v the compiler has taken his / her pick in Benson's 'Fast and loose' (B4r; lines now known to belong to *The Passionate Pilgrime* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act 4, scene 3). The square brackets indicate what the extractor has excised in Benson's text: '[Did not] the heavenly Rhetoricke of thine eye, / Gainst whom the world could not hold argument'. While the cut produces in effect two decasyllabic lines, the affirmative mode makes the extract reusable in other contexts by altering the meaning of the printed version slightly.

On f. 23r, all that is left of 'In prayse of his Love' (sigs. D4r-v in Benson; sonnets 82-85) are the following lines. The extractor has universalized his extracts, focusing on the power of rhetoric and on a striking declaration of love, which could be readily recycled in another context:

What [replaced by 'Devise' in the manuscript] strained touches Rhetorich can lend,

There lives more [replaced by 'all'] life in one of your faire eyes,

Typical subjects for compilers to reflect upon, death and decay also figure prominently in the miscellany – such notebooks being receptacles of private as well as public concerns for readers set on existential quests. Two lines in Benson's 'Youthfull glory' (A6r; sonnet 13) seem to have struck a particular chord in the extractor: '[Against the] stormy gusts of winters day / And barren rage of deaths eternall cold?' (f. 22v; sonnet 13, 11-12).

Trained as many of these annotators and extractors were in the skills of tracking and storing passages of particular beauty for further use (humanist

<sup>10</sup> For a description and short analysis of the contents of this manuscript, see Marotti and Estill 2012, 60.

<sup>11</sup> Bearing in mind that they were often the work of men, printed and manuscript miscellanies 'contributed to the construction of a desirable ... masculine self, humanist-educated and socially aspiring' (Heale 2003, 233).

methods of writing recommended *imitatio* as a means to write in a copious style), they inevitably set aside lines that were aesthetically pleasing and, in the best cases, rich with sense as well as ornamentation.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, Robert Herrick's poem entitled by Benson 'His Mistris Shade' (L5r; taken from Herrick's *Hesperides* (1648)), a lyric in which the poetic voice speaks of the greatest dramatists of the age (including Jonson and Shakespeare), is pilfered for its elegant lines. It is decontextualized and the homage to Jonson is simply cut out in what follows (see square brackets):

[There yet remains brave soule than thou canst] see  
 By glimmering of a fancie [: doe but come,  
 And there Ile shew thee that illustrous roome,  
 In which thy father *Iohnson* shall be] plac'd,  
 As in a Globe of radiant fire, and grac'd,  
 To be of that high Hyrarchy, where none  
 But brave soules take illumination:  
 Immediaty from heaven [, but harke the Cocke,] (f. 24r)

In a further extract (on the same manuscript folio page), part of the poetic voice is also excised in order to focus on the sole chronographic description:

[Of late strucke one, and now] I feele the prime  
 Of day breake through the pregnant East [, tis time  
 I vanish: more I had to say,  
 But night determines here, away.]

As a further illustration of the freedom provided by the manuscript world, the extractor goes back to the beginning of the poem (L5v in Benson's edition) to choose another stylistically luxuriant passage:

And all the shrubs with sparkling spangles shew,  
 Like morning Sunshine tinselling the dew:  
 Here in greene medowes sits eternall May,  
 Purfling the margents, while perpetuall day,  
 So double guildes the Ayre, as that no night,  
 Can ever rust th'ennamell of the light:

While modern commentators have complained about Benson's reordering of some sequences of Shakespeare's sonnets, the editor of the 1640 *Poems* was really only transferring to the sphere of print practices that were entirely normal in the manuscript world. Not only were these practices customary,

<sup>12</sup> On this tradition, see the now classic study on the subject: Cave 1979.

but they were some of the ways in which Shakespeare's words came to be disseminated and exchanged through the scribal medium, only to reappear in the oral sphere or be absorbed later through further scribal and print imitation, which wavered of course between homage and plagiarism – what we now call intertextuality. Likewise, a current practice among extractors was to change the addressee of a literary text so as to guarantee the lines' transferability to the ordinary world. In this way, 'How like a Winter hath my absence beene / From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year?' is transformed into 'thou art *the* Pleasure of *the* fleeting year' (from 'Complaint for his Loves absence', D8v; sonnet 97, 1-2; f. 23r in the manuscript).

## 6. Conclusion

This brief survey of annotating and extracting practices of Benson's 1640 edition of Shakespeare's *Poems* shows that perhaps greater attention should be paid to readers' appropriation techniques in order to understand how early modern printed texts came to be edited. If the gradual dominance of print becomes a fact in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, one should not be blinded by the idea of a 'printing revolution'. Moreover, it is one thing to recognise that print and manuscript remained intertwined for longer than we think, it is another to come to realize their true *interdependence*. Probably because so much is at stake when we speak of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* (these providing a potential – but in fact illusory – access to the poet's 'heart'), we tend to stress the far greater authenticity of the 1609 edition compared to Benson's 1640. What we should bear in mind is that for early readers 'authenticity' often went hand in hand with accessibility. To alter Shakespeare was to give him greater outreach and more purchase on people's lives. But it was also to provide his text with the possibility of change – a condition of its transmission. This does not mean of course that contemporary editorial studies should abandon their quest for more 'accurate' texts. What is implied here is that, whether in the seventeenth century or in the twenty first, all editing is a form of appropriation in the very act of transmitting the text.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> As Margreta de Grazia has argued about John Benson's edition, 'The authenticity he seeks stands with his readers' (2009, 101).

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