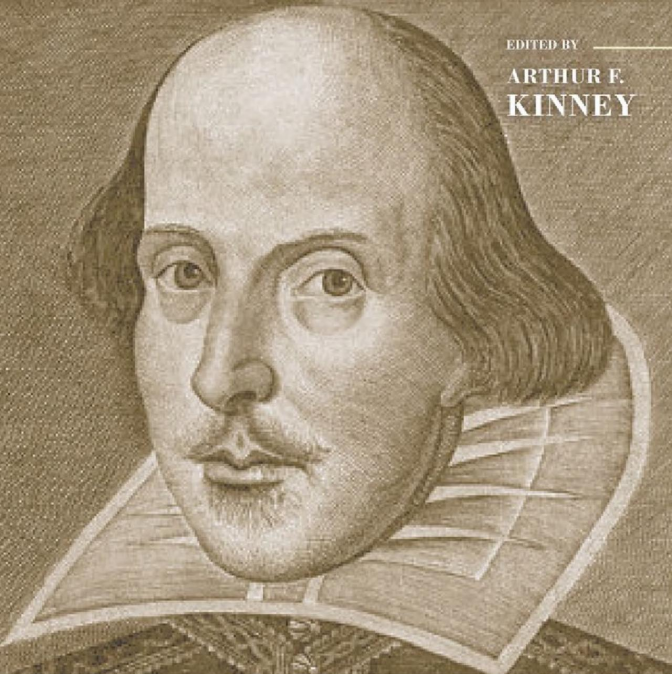


EDITED BY
ARTHUR F.
KINNEY



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INTRODUCTION

ARTHUR F. KINNEY

In the past 400 years over 100 documents relating to William Shakespeare have been recovered: he is the best known playwright of his time. There are church registries, deeds of property, tax certificates, marriage bonds, writs of attachment, and court records. Of the 230 plays still extant from that period, more than 15 per cent are wholly or partly his work, what Bill Bryson calls ‘a gloriously staggering proportion’.¹ Only two of his plays—*Love’s Labour’s Won* and *Cardenio*—appear to be lost. What we have has been calculated as 884,647 words, composing 51,939 speeches spread over 118,406 lines excluding the sonnets and poems; and of those words the *Oxford English Dictionary* credits Shakespeare with the first recorded use of 2,035 of them—words such as *abstentious, critical, frugal, dwindle, extract, horrid, vast, hereditary, excellent, eventful, barefooted, assassination, lonely, well-read, and indistinguishable*. Even some of his earliest work—*Titus Andronicus* and *Love’s Labour’s Lost*—introduces 140 of them. What the accumulated records show, however, is not only someone astonishingly creative but also someone very complex.

According to the baptismal registers for the parish of Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, ‘Gulielmas filius Johannes Shakespere’ was received into the church on April 26, 1564, the same year Michelangelo and John Calvin died and Galileo was born: he shared the name William with 25 per cent of the other boys at the time. If this event followed custom, he was born three days earlier, on April 23, St George’s Day, the same day he would die in 1616 at the age of 52. He was the

¹ Bill Bryson, *Shakespeare: The World as Stage* (New York: Atlas Books, HarperCollins, 2007), 19. The following statistics are also from Bryson. Other works consulted in writing this essay are: William Baker, *William Shakespeare* (London: Continuum, 2009); Jonathan Bate, *Soul of the Age: The Life, Mind, and World of William Shakespeare* (New York: Viking, 2008); E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930); S. Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare: His Life, His English, His Theater* (New York: Signet Classics, 1980); S. Schoenbaum: *William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975); S. Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare’s Lives, new edn.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991); and Simon Trussler, *Will’s Will: The Last Wishes of William Shakespeare* (Kew Gardens: National Archives, 2007).

third child and first son of John and Anne (or Agnes) Hathaway Shakespeare and the first child to survive childhood. Less than three months after his birth, the burial section of the parish register notes *Hic incepit pestis* (here begins plague) and the epidemic, which began that spring, spread rapidly in the autumn, taking the lives of at least 200 people, ten times the normal rate and one out of seven in the town; one of the Shakespeares' neighbours lost four children. We might speculate that, given such fierce danger, the Shakespeares harboured their new baby at the home of his maternal grandparents in nearby Wilmecote.

Shakespeare's father was then 34. He had grown up on a farm in the nearby village of Snitterfield before moving by 1552 to Stratford, a bustling market town of 1,200 people living in 240 households along a dozen streets. He must have arrived by 1552 when he paid a fine of twelve pence for allowing dirt to pile up in front of his house. He was first a craftsman, then a merchant, a glover, a wholesaler—and a usurer. He must have been successful from the start, for in 1556 he began a series of town appointments—first as the borough ale taster, supervising the measures and prices throughout Stratford, and then, successively, constable (doubtless superior to Dogberry); affeeror, one who issues fines not covered by statute; burgess; chamberlain, handling town finances and property; alderman; and finally, in 1568, when Shakespeare was 4, high bailiff (or mayor), a job in which he approved town funds for performances of visiting actors. They acted in Shakespeare's grammar school on Church Street: the Queen's players came in 1558–9; Worcester's Men in 1569 (for a year), 1574–5, 1576–7, 1580–1, and 1581–2; Leicester's Players in 1573–4, 1576–7; Lord Strange's Men in 1578–9, Essex's Men in 1578–9; Derby's Men in 1579–80; and Lord Bartlett's Men in 1579–80. Likely Shakespeare saw some of these plays as a boy and early teenager; he is also likely to have accompanied his father to the famous cycles of mystery plays in nearby Coventry, since their structure informs that of *The Comedy of Errors* and *Richard III*.

The records show that John Shakespeare never missed a town meeting. He was also saving and investing his money. In 1562 he purchased a home and garden in upscale Henley Street, a block from the town cross; in time he would buy the adjacent building also for his glover's shop. In 1575 he paid £40 for two more houses. But not all of his financial dealings were so respectable. Around 1569 he was prosecuted for usury and illegal practices in wool-dealing. He was accused again, and in one case fined, in 1570 and 1572. Late in 1578 he was borrowing money by selling land, mortgaging some of his wife's inheritance, and, in 1579, selling a share of his property in Snitterfield. In 1576 he withdrew from active church participation; in 1586 he was replaced as town alderman. In 1592 he was fined for recusancy, his name placed among those who were thought to forbear coming to church 'for feare of processe of debtt'. But his fortunes improved during the last decade of his life, perhaps with the help of his son. In 1596, following requests by him and by William, he was granted a coat of arms, becoming a gentleman of substance with 'lands and tenements of good wealth and substance' worth an impressive £500. (In time, William would have a coat of arms too, like his fellow players Richard Burbage, John Hemings, Augustine Phillips, and Thomas Pope.)

Shakespeare's mother was Mary Arden of Wilmecote, whose father Robert was Shakespeare's landlord. She was a descendant of an old provincial family living on a large farm at the edge of a rapidly diminishing Forest of Arden, a setting for *As You Like It*: John Shakespeare married up the social register as his son William would do. She bore eight children. Two were short-lived: Joan, baptized in 1558, died in childhood, and Margaret died in 1563, the year she was born. Following William there were Gilbert, a haberdasher, born in 1566 and buried in 1612; a second sister Joan, christened in 1569 who alone outlived William, finally residing in the house in Henley Street; Anne, born in 1571 and buried in 1579; Richard, born in 1574 and died in 1613; and the youngest, Edmund, who followed his brother William to London and became an actor too, and died in 1607 (perhaps a victim of the plague) and was buried there in Southwark Cathedral, some two days' horseride from Stratford and the graves of all his family. Of the eight children, only William and Joan married; and Joan, marrying a hatter, William Hart, remained childless at his death in 1616.

Although no records remain, William must have walked the four blocks to the King's New School, a public school for merchants' children, for his plays and poems lean heavily on the lessons of grammar, rhetoric, and logic that made up grammar-school curricula as well as readings of classical texts that are frequently alluded to in his works. School days went from six in the morning (seven in winter) until five at night with a break for lunch. They were generally conducted in Latin and Latin was spoken during recess. After learning Latin grammar, the students were taught rhetoric by way of declamations (formal speeches such as the funeral orations of Brutus and Antony in *Julius Caesar*); debate through Latin dialogue (as in the trial scenes of *Merchant of Venice* and *Othello* and *The Winter's Tale*), often through the speeches in the essays of Cicero often playing the part of historical figures. Besides such imitations—called *prosopopeia*—they also read (and acted) plays by Plautus (such as the *Menaechimi* used in *Comedy of Errors*) or Seneca (a basis for revenge tragedies like *Hamlet*). Here Shakespeare would have read his favourite writer, Ovid (whose *Amores* serve as a model for Shakespeare's sonnets and whose *Fasti* serves as a model for *The Rape of Lucrece*), whose *Heroides* is a model for letters in *King Lear* (and form a basis for female soliloquies of Helena, Cressida, and Cleopatra), and the whole idea of transformation, the subject of *Metamorphoses* (which appears in *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Tempest*, and, most especially, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

Customarily in sixteenth-century Stratford, men of 25 or 26 married women much younger than themselves (life expectancy for men was around 35). But Shakespeare was an exception: he was 18 when he married Anne Hathaway of neighbouring Shottery, aged 26, the daughter of a landed farmer to whom his father loaned money, in early December 1582. No marriage licence has survived, but there is a marriage bond that cost £40 (today, £10,000) that allowed the marriage to proceed with a single reading of the banns instead of the required three each Sunday and indemnified the church authorities against suits arising from this action. The ceremony was held five miles from Stratford in the chapel of Luddington, Temple Grafton, officiated by John Firth, whom one observer called a man of 'unsound religion'. (The marriage may well have

followed a more private or public ceremony of handfasting or pledge of commitment.) Their first child, Susanna, was baptized six months later, on May 26, 1583. She was followed by the twins Judith and Hamnet, named for family friends Judith and Hamnet Sandler, a baker and his wife who lived on Bridge Street and probably served as godparents. They were baptized on February 2, 1585; Shakespeare was the father of three children before he was 21. There were no more children; Stratford registers show that mothers producing twins rarely had further offspring.

All known records of Shakespeare disappear from 1585 until 1592 when he appears in London as an actor and a collaborator writing *Henry VI*. In 1681 the biographer and gossip John Aubrey noted that Shakespeare was a schoolmaster in the country and recent elaborations have sought to have him follow the Jesuit Edmund Campion, briefly visiting Stratford, to Lancaster where he taught in a Catholic household. But there is no documentation for this. In these 'lost years' he is also said to have studied law, preparing him for the staging of *Comedy of Errors* at Gray's Inn, one of the Inns of Court (or law schools) in London; to have become a professional writer or scrivener like the playwright Thomas Kyd; or to travel in northern Italy, since he sets plays in Verona, Padua, and Venice; or to serve in the military in Flanders since he shows some knowledge of military life in the *Henriad* and elsewhere; or even sailing with Sir Francis Drake on the *Golden Hinde* since a number of plays concern sea voyages. All these are speculations only. Since playing companies often worked on the model of guilds and actors were expected to apprentice for seven years, perhaps that is where he was, playing and travelling with the Queen's Men or with Lord Strange's Men.

London was a city of about 200,000 some 85 miles southeast of Stratford; it took four days to walk there or two days on horseback (Shakespeare is said to have broken his trip by staying at the Golden Cross Inn at Oxford). It was the third largest city in Europe, after Paris and Naples: 448 crammed acres around the Tower of London and the old St Paul's Cathedral, roughly 100 parishes closed in by a town wall with various gates—Bishopsgate, Cripplegate, Newgate, Aldgate—that were locked at dusk and reopened at dawn. To one side lay Westminster, with its palace and Parliament House; to the north lay the suburb of Shoreditch; to the east and south lay the Thames, a wide river of heavy commerce that separated the city from Southwark, the home of the brothels, bearbaiting pits, prisons, lunatic asylums, unconsecrated graveyards, and, in time, public theatres. Inside the city walls, plays were staged in the large innyards of the Bel Savage, the Cross Keys, the Bell, and the Bull.

London's first true playhouse was the Red Lion, built in Whitechapel in 1567 by the entrepreneur John Brayne, when Shakespeare was three years old. It may not have lasted long, for within nine years Brayne, in partnership with his brother-in-law James Burbage, a carpenter and actor, was building the Theatre, an outdoor amphitheatre a few hundred yards north of the city near Finsbury Fields in Shoreditch that, for years, would be the main playhouse for Shakespeare and his company. Two years later, just up the road in Holywell, Philip Henslowe built a rival playhouse, the Curtain. Shoreditch, like Southwark, was a part of the 'liberties', jurisdictions free of the London city government, which refused to allow playhouses since they might cause the kind of

unruly crowds that spread uprisings and the plague. (The only public activity the City Fathers permitted was churchgoing.) Not until 1595 with the building of the Swan did Southwark begin to displace Shoreditch as the main theatre district; it was preceded by Henslowe's Rose (1587), followed by the Globe, the Hope, and the Fortune.

Shakespeare joined Burbage's playing company at the Theatre in Shoreditch in 1592. The company was organized hierarchically: there were sharers (shareholders), actors, hired men, and apprentices. Master players signed the patent. Sharers split the profits after costs (Shakespeare took out one-twelfth of the shares). Other company members took constant inventory, purchased playbooks, selected routes for provincial travels to great halls of landed nobility and gentry and town halls of towns and villages, and scheduled performances. Hired men worked behind the stage, took tickets, and played walk-on parts or silent roles. Boy apprentices, playing the women's parts, received training, room, board, and clothing. The playing company helped the local economy by hiring a workforce, by paying taxes, and (in the case of the Fortune theatre), paying taxes for poor relief. Shakespeare probably made between £150 and £300 a year from his shares (equivalent to £30,000–£40,000 today).

He was also an actor; he is listed in documents from 1592, 1603, and 1608—the latter two as a member of the cast of Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour* and *Sejanus His Fall*. Companies might keep as many as thirty plays in their active repertoire, so that actors could be asked to memorize as many as 15,000 lines at one time. Players rehearsed in the morning and played in the London public playhouses in the afternoon, or in provincial town halls and the great halls of noble estates in the evening. According to Philip Henslowe's *Diary*, the Admiral's Men performed 15 different plays in 27 playing days. A new play might be performed up to three times in a given year. The average play ran to about 2,700 lines, running about two hours or two and a half hours on stage, but recently unearthed evidence suggests some longer plays—like *Hamlet* and *Antony and Cleopatra*—might run four hours in both public and private playhouses. There is no primary documentation of Shakespeare as an actor, although John Davies of Hereford wrote in 1611:

Some say (good Will) which I, in sport, do sing,
Hadst thou not played some King parts in sport,
Thou hadst been the companion for a King
And, been a King, among the meaner sort:

He could represent a king, but also kingliness. Shakespeare may also have acted in the first play on which he collaborated: *1 Henry VI*, which opened in the first week of March 1592. It earned £3.16s.8d. at the opening and played fourteen times over the next four months. Henslowe's *Diary* also tells us that 'titus & ondrinicus' was played at the Rose on January 14, 1594. The play shows Shakespeare learning his craft in conjunction with his collaborator George Peele: where Peele has Tamora turn upon the Goths in Act 1, Shakespeare rounds out the play with Lucius and Marcus leaving Rome for the Goths; he counters Peele's Titus, willing to sacrifice his son Mutius at the start with Aaron's protection of his son near the end. Shakespeare's early work on the first tetralogy, in which each play was left unfinished for the next one to begin, may have

also taught Shakespeare both the dramatic effect of inconclusiveness and the consequent desirability to involve the audience in formulating their own conclusions. That becomes an open invitation in *Henry V*: ‘Can this cockpit hold the vasty fields of France?’; ‘eech out our performance with your mind’. The same inconclusiveness aborts the marriages presumed at the end of *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, the unending competition between the Montagues and Capulets, the tales still untold by Horatio and Lodovico about the lives and significance of Hamlet and Othello.

And then, disastrously it must have seemed, Shakespeare’s theatre career came to an abrupt halt in 1593, when for two years the plague in London prevented the staging of plays. More than half the theatres were closed and Shakespeare, now 29, turned to writing poetry under the patronage of Henry Wrothesley, third Earl of Southampton and Baron of Titchfield. He drew on Ovid for *Venus and Adonis* and on Livy and Ovid for *The Rape of Lucrece*, two longer narrative poems. The first of these established him as an important poet and outsold every other work of his published in his lifetime.

By 1595 he was back with his old playing company as the resident dramatist—what was termed an ‘ordinary poet’ who wrote two plays a year to his company’s deadlines and with the company’s particular actors in mind. The Burbage family owned half the shares and Richard Burbage was their leading actor: he was doubtless the King of Navarre, probably Benedick and Shylock, and almost certainly Prince Hal, Henry V, Hamlet, Othello, and Lear. It is more difficult to propose roles for others in the company—for Augustine Phillips; for John Heminge, a former grocer; for Henry Condell, initially a hired man; and for Thomas Pope. But the clown parts went to William Kempe, who played Launce, Lancelot Gobbo, and Dogberry and then, after he retired in 1599, Shakespeare wrote more serious cerebral clown parts for Robert Armin—Touchstone, Feste, Lear’s Fool, Thersites.

The first decade, the 1590s, was a time when Holinshed’s *Chronicles*, along with the histories of John Hall, William Camden, and Richard Grafton, were hugely popular as a consequence of the unexpected and miraculous defeat of the awesome Armada from Spain in August of 1588. England found herself a naval power and, as a country that wanted to know more about itself, was consumed in nation building. It is the time of Shakespeare’s many history plays—the two tetralogies of 1, 2, and 3 *Henry VI* and *Richard III*; of *Richard II*, 1 and 2 *Henry IV*, and *Henry V*—that explored troublesome times of the past while tracing the ancestral background of the Tudors; the plays concentrate on tumult and war while tracing the demise of a code of honour in favour of a pragmatic, even Machiavellian rule of power. At the end of the 1590s with the rising demands of the House of Commons and the lack of clear succession to an ageing and sickly Queen, plays dealt with change in leadership and even assassination: *Julius Caesar* and *Hamlet*. The Danish play, in fact, seems particularly pointed as it examined surveillance during the increasingly recognized systems of spying and counterspying by Sir Francis Walsingham and his successors and the treatment of prisoners by the Queen’s torturer, Topcliffe. In 1596, *Romeo and Juliet* combined tragedy with a reference to a recent English earthquake and the sudden invasion of plague.

Yet, remarkably, the 1590s was also the time of Shakespeare's sunniest comedies—of *Comedy of Errors* and *The Taming of the Shrew*, of *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Merchant of Venice*; of *Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *As You Like It*. Shakespeare not only understood popular trends but (as later with tragedies and romances) had a hand on the nation's temperamental pulse and an eye for the market. He understood that the theatre was not only a place where history was taught but a place where social customs were learned and social behaviour was modelled. Nor was he one who declined to learn from his own successes. The successful use of twins in *Comedy of Errors* laid the groundwork for *Twelfth Night*; the failure of Hotspur to get reinforcement from Northumberland and Glendower was repeated in the failure of the Lord Governour of Harfleur to get expected and necessary support; the punishment of Malvolio anticipates the same scene with Parolles; the bed trick that permits the plot to work in *All's Well That Ends Well* also works in *Measure for Measure*. He learned to begin drama by an early interruption: Petruchio arriving in Padua, Hamlet arriving at Elsinore, a ship sailing past Prospero's island. He learned the dynamics of plot construction, cresting near the centre of Act 3. He learned how penetrating characterization can be realized within the talented strengths of his resident company, letting Kate and Petruchio reappear as Beatrice and Benedick and Lance reappear as Lancelot Gobbo. In the sudden miraculous reappearance of Rosalind at the end of *As You Like It*, he lay the groundwork for the reappearance of Helena, of Marina, and of Hermione. But he also learned how to dig deeply into the minds and passions of his characters, calibrating in Hamlet the fear and anxiety of the Ghost with the idea he represents, the unknown and undiscovered country of the mind. Shakespeare's discoveries meet up with our own: in Pistol he portrays post-traumatic stress disorder.

He juggled all his roles in the Lord Chamberlain's Men with those of characters and events in his life. In August 1596, his only son Hamnet died of unknown causes at the age of 11: he would have no male heirs to carry on the Shakespeare name. We do not know how he grieved, although lines in which Constance laments the death of young Arthur in *King John* may be a possibility:

Grief fills the room of my absent child,
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,
Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,
Remembers me of all his gracious parts,
Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form;
Then had I reason to be fond of grief,
Fare you well.

Nevertheless, in nine months he was investing heavily in the future: in May 1597, he bought New Place, the second largest house in Stratford. It was brick and timber, with five gables, ten fireplaces, two barns, and an orchard on the corner of Chapel Street and Chapel Lane and across a side street from the grammar school. It had belonged to William Underhill, who had been poisoned the previous year by his eldest son Fulke, who would shortly be executed in Warwick for his crime. A short time later Shakespeare purchased the cottage

across the road, presumably for a servant's quarters: like his father he saved his money and made investments in Warwickshire real estate; continuing only to rent various quarters in London while his family stayed in Stratford. The purchases of land in Shuttery and Old Stratford came at a time of deep recession: three years of dearth had decimated crops and starvation was rampant; real wages declined to less than a third of what they were in buying power a century earlier; basic foodstuffs—peas, beans, cereals—had doubled in price and bread had risen by 400 per cent. The high bailiff called in all the grain supplies in and around Stratford to distribute them equitably and found that two citizens had been hoarding grain to drive up the price: one of them was William Shakespeare. In these two years, moreover—in 1597 and 1598—Shakespeare was defaulting on his London taxes and fined 5 shillings. In many respects, then, he was his father's son. He confirmed this by buying for his father the coat of arms that would descend to him.

During the night of December 28, 1598, Shakespeare's playing company, bolstered by a dozen or more workmen, secretly dismantled the Theatre in Shoreditch and transported it across the Thames to Southwark, where they rebuilt it (overnight, it was said) and christened it the Globe: the lease had run out in Shoreditch and was not renewable, and the company leased the new land in Southwark for thirty-one years assigned to Cuthbert Burbage, his brother Richard, and five other members of the company. This is the 'wooden O' the Chorus pronounces in the Prologue to *Henry V* and for the opening months Shakespeare wrote that play as well as *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, and began *Hamlet*: he must have been elated at this transfer and with New Place, because he was now writing at the top of his form. The first (bad) quarto of *Hamlet* was completed in 1601, a better quarto version by 1604; and in 1607 the first extant records of a performance documented that it was played on September 5 aboard a ship, the *Red Dragon*, off the shore of what is now known as Sierra Leone, forced there by a storm. 'We gave the tragedie of Hamlet', someone noted in the ship's log. And again, on September 31, the head of the ship invited a fellow captain 'to a fish dinner and had Hamlet acted aboard. . . w[hi]ch [per]mit to keepe my people from idelness and unlawful games or sleep'. By then, Shakespeare had become masterful in connecting symbolic words and thoughts, building his plays on metaphor—they are heavily metaphorical even for his day—and metonymy, what is seen and heard and what is realized like *bond* in *Merchant of Venice* or *blood* in the forthcoming *Macbeth*. It was his dramatic and enacted process, but decidedly more, it was a receiving and factoring process that, now throughout the plays, depended like their endings on the participation of his audience.

In the final years of Queen Elizabeth and the first years of James I, from 1601 to 1608, Shakespeare's plays reached their tragic apex with *Othello*, *Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Coriolanus*, speaking like James of power and empire. A darker tone invades the comedies of *Twelfth Night*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Measure for Measure* extending into the bitterness of *Timon of Athens* and the cynicism of *Troilus and Cressida* (where plague is displaced by syphilis). But even as he wrote these darker plays, he continued to push his money into home town investments. On May 1, 1602, he signed a deed of conveyance for 107 acres of land in Stratford, acquiring open fields north of Old Stratford for £320. In 1605, he bought from Ralph Huband a substantial share in Stratford tithes

which paid him £60 per annum. In a sense, he was an opportunist: in 1594 and 1595 two 'disastrous fires' destroyed 200 buildings in the centre of town and displaced 400 people; by 1601, about 700 citizens of Stratford, roughly one-third of the town, were registered as paupers. But London was no better off; although records show that Shakespeare roomed as a lodger on Silver Street, London, with the Mountjoy family in 1603–4, he may have spent much of his time in Stratford. Once again plague broke out in London in 1603, taking 30,500 lives, and continuing for years. As a result, the theatres were closed within seven miles of London from May 1603 to April 1604; from May to September 1604; from October to December 1605; in the first six and a half years of James's reign theatres were only open a total of two years. Aside from the notations on Silver Lane, Cripplegate, there is no evidence that Shakespeare remained in the city. He may have made additions to Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* in 1604, becoming a play doctor. Now he wrote only one play a year, and his collaborations increased: *Timon of Athens* written with Thomas Middleton, *Pericles* written with the brothel-keeper George Wilkins, *Henry VIII* and *Two Noble Kinsmen* written with John Fletcher, his successor as the resident dramatist for the Lord Chamberlain's Company, made the King's Men by royal patent in 1603. Shakespeare's writing grew more complex and allusive, his single-authored works longer. They lacked the tight control of his earlier work. His company stayed active, performing before the court 187 times—a number greater than that of all the other companies' performances combined. Such performances might be with the court outside plague-ridden London as well as at Whitehall when the epidemic subsided, but there is no documentation that Shakespeare was present, and at least one scholar has speculated that Shakespeare retired to Stratford not in 1611 but in 1604.

On June 5, 1607, Susanna Shakespeare married Dr John Hall, ten years her senior. He was the most prominent and respected doctor in Stratford, treating his patients largely with herbal remedies, many of which he concocted. His case book, *Select Observations on English Bodies of Eminent Persons in Desperate Diseases*, was published decades later but reprints of one of his works are still available at his home, Hall's Croft, which is open to visitors, and still in much the way he left it in Stratford, two blocks from the site of New Place. But later that year, on September 5, Edmund died in London and was buried there, the only member of his family not laid to rest at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford.

The following year was similarly notable. Elizabeth Hall, Shakespeare's granddaughter, was christened on February 21. (She was also his last surviving descendant, dying unmarried in 1670). Little over a half-year later, on September 9, 1608, Mary Arden Shakespeare was buried. Somewhat earlier, Shakespeare sued a Stratford man for debt, the case winding on from December 17 to June 7, 1609. Things were brighter financially that year in London. The Blackfriars Theatre, located in the old Blackfriars monastery within the city walls, fell under royal control and the King's Men leased it from Richard Burbage and performed continuously there from the autumn of 1609 until the closing of all the theatres in 1642 at the outbreak of the Civil War. It was an indoor theatre and allowed the King's Men to play through the winter and in inclement weather. Rather than seating 3,000, as the Globe and other amphitheatres did, it seated only 600, including some who sat on the stage, sharing it with the actors. The darkened

room was lit by candelabra, which had to be lowered periodically so that candles could be trimmed and relit, causing plays for the first time to be divided into acts. But the candelabra partially blocked the view from the higher seats, those that cost the most in the open-air theatres, and the pit, where groundlings stood at the Globe and elsewhere, became the most expensive location. This, and the size of the theatre, made the presentations far more intimate. On March 10, 1613, Shakespeare purchased the nearby Blackfriars Gatehouse from Henry Walker, an eminent London musician, for £140. He paid £80 down but neglected to pay on the mortgage, which remained unpaid at his death, thus preventing any future claims on the property by his heirs. He must have rarely used it, if at all; it was, at the time of probating his will, described as ‘All that Messaue or ten[emen]t with thappurtenances wherein one John Robinson dwelleth, scituat, lyeing and being in the blackfriars in London nere the Wardrobe.’

Shakespeare drafted his will in January 1616 with his lawyer, Francis Collins, at a cost of £13.6s.8d. A month later, his second daughter Judith, already 31 and still unmarried, wedded a local vintner, Thomas Quiney. He was the son of Richard Quiney, one of Shakespeare’s prosperous friends, but the marriage, to be performed during Lent, required a special licence that the couple failed to obtain and, as a consequence, were briefly excommunicated. They were probably anxious to complete the ceremony because on March 26 Quiney was arraigned for ‘carnal intercourse’ with Margaret Wheeler, who, as a result, had become pregnant. A month later she died in childbirth and Quiney confessed the charge of fornication in ecclesiastical court. Instead of public penance, he was given a fine of 5 shillings. Shakespeare changed his will so that Judith’s inheritance was as executed by John and Susanna Hall; Quiney was offered £150 only if he equalled the amount as a part of the marriage.

Shakespeare’s will is extant as a part of the National Archives. He left to his sister Joan Hart the house on Henley Street at a small rent as well as his clothes. He left his daughter Judith £100 as a marriage portion, interest on £150 for her children, the cottage on Chapel Lane, and a silver and gilt bowl; he left his only grandchild, Elizabeth Hall, 8 years old at his death, most of his silver and New Place on the death of her parents; he left the poor of Stratford a total of £10 (an unusually small sum); he left his friend Thomas Combe of Stratford his sword; he left Hamnet Sandler (who witnessed the will) and three of his fellow players (Richard Burbage, Henry Condell, and John Hemings) 28s.6d. each for memorial rings; William Walter of Stratford 20s.; and Susanna and John Hall, his executors, New Place, all his household goods, and any papers or books. Susanna received everything not mentioned. A later interlineation remembered his wife Anne, and he assigned to her, rather stingingly, the second best bed, and its furnishings. This last bequest has particularly puzzled scholars who suggest that it might be the marital bed which he and Anne shared and in which she conceived their children, the best bed reserved for guests as was the custom. It may also reflect Mary Shakespeare’s own failing, since she was put into the care of Judith as the main executrix. This may (or may not) be in keeping with the fact that Anne seems to have been initially omitted from the will. She died in August 1623, just weeks before the splendid publication of the First Folio of her husband’s *Works*.

The Workes of William Shakespeare, containing all his Comedies, Histories and Tragedies: Truly set forth, according to their first ORIGINALL begins with ‘The Names of the Principall Actors in all these Playes’ and divides the plays by genre, except for *Troilus and Cressida*, which appears to be a late addition. The printing was overseen by William Jaggard and his son Isaac, but the handsetting of the oversized 907 pages, begun in 1622 and finished two years later, using up to nine printers working in three printshops, was modelled on an earlier folio publication, *The Works of Benamin Ionson*. Condell and Hemings served as the editors, collecting from the company library what they thought to be the best versions, all of them therefore theatrically based. It was a magnificent and vital venture; without the editors saving the texts, we would be, without the Folio, without *Macbeth*; *The Tempest*; *Julius Caesar*; *The Two Gentleman of Verona*; *Measure for Measure*; *The Comedy of Errors*; *As You Like It*; *The Taming of the Shrew*; *King John*; *All’s Well That Ends Well*; *Twelfth Night*; *The Winter’s Tale*; *Henry VI, Part I*; *Henry VIII*; *Coriolanus*; *Cymbeline*; *Timon of Athens*; and *Anthony and Cleopatra*. *Pericles* was omitted. Ben Jonson wrote two memorial verses, and James Mabbe wrote one:

To the memory of Master W. Shakespeare
 We wondered, Shakespeare, that thou went’st so soon
 From the world’s stage to the grave’s tiring-room.
 We thought thee dead, but this thy printed worth
 Tells thy spectators that thou went’st but forth
 To enter with applause. An actor’s art
 Can die, and live to act a second part.
 That’s but an exit of mortality;
 This, a re-entrance to a plaudity.

Shakespeare’s scope and achievement were singular and recognized as such by his contemporaries. In 1598, Francis Meres had been the first, in *Palladis Tamia*, to point out Shakespeare’s versatility. Edmund Bolton noted that ‘this man, the sun of the stage, handles tragedy and comedy with equal skill’. And in 1638, the well-known poet Edmund Waller wrote,

For thou couldst all *characters* impart,
 So none can render thing, who still escapes,
 Like Proteus in a variety of shapes,
 Who was nor this nor that, but all we find,
 And all we can imagine in mankind,²

deliberately echoing the opening Chorus in *Henry V*. All we can imagine.

But we imagine because his plays invite us to do that, whether we read them or see them or hear them. And there is much we still do not know. We do not know what he

² The references to Bolton and Waller are taken from Jeffrey Knapp, *Shakespeare Only* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 28. The list of speculations at the end of the essay is an expansion of that given in Knapp, 19.

looked like. Candos never knew him. And Condell and Hemings, choosing a frontispiece for his *Works*, published a portrait by the Flemish engraver Martin Droeshut, who never saw Shakespeare either; and while his editors would be thought unlikely to publish a portrait that was misleading, it is starkly different from the pudgy burgher-like sculpture of Shakespeare in Holy Trinity Church in Stratford, erected by his neighbours and friends who did know him: they can't both be right. We do not know how to spell his name, since he spelled it at least six different ways (in an age when spelling seemed less significant). We do not know how he pronounced his name, as 'Shake' or 'Shack'. We have no autobiography, or notes, or diaries, or personal manuscripts. We do not know anything about his marriage, his relations with his wife, or his family life. We do not know how he spent his time or with whom he spent it. We do not know if he ever left England. We do not know if he ever apprenticed to his father or learned a trade or craft. We do not know how he spent his 'lost years'. We do not know what actors trained him. We do not know exactly what he wrote and in what order he wrote it. We do not know his religion or his politics. We do not know his sexual orientation. We do not know his social life in London or how long or where he lived there. Finally, we do not know the cause of his death. There is much room, therefore, to speculate.

What we know—beyond his glorious works—is that he was never imprisoned or censored. He was the only playwright of his time to have a lasting and stable relationship with a single company. And he was the only playwright who retired by choice, not by circumstance. In itself this is an enviable record.

What follows now in this volume are the considered observations of many of the most distinguished Shakespeareans looking in detail at all dimensions of his career and his work. While subjects were assigned to each of them, the coverage and perspective is wholly theirs.

PART I

TEXTS

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CHAPTER 1

AUTHORSHIP

HUGH CRAIG

I. KINDS OF AUTHORSHIP

'AUTHORSHIP' in relation to Shakespeare can mean a number of things. There is, first of all, the question of whether the William Shakespeare who was christened in Stratford in April 1564, and whose death was recorded there in April 1616, in fact wrote the plays and poems we group together as 'Shakespeare'. While most of the people who go to 'Shakespeare' plays and read 'Shakespeare' works accept that William Shakespeare wrote them, as do almost all the scholars who are professionally concerned with these texts, there are some who doubt the connection and argue that some other person or persons is responsible. For these people this is the Shakespeare authorship question.

Then there is a second set of questions, focused more on 'authorship' than on Shakespeare: what does authorship mean in general, and what does it mean at any particular time and in any particular literary system? This has been the focus of a good deal of scholarly work and discussion. A range of views is current, from a traditional view that authorship is essentially the domain of an individual working independently to more recent conceptions that authorship is in its nature collaborative, driven more by social, technological, and institutional networks, and closely constrained by the *mentalité* of the era and by language itself. Then we need to consider local and historical factors. Plays, like film scripts, need a host of material resources and creative inputs before they can be realized in performance: in the theatre, the written text is just one input among many. In Shakespeare's time the playbook once bought by the theatre company was theirs to use, change, or dispose of, as they saw fit. Given these conditions, should Shakespeare be regarded as an 'author' at all? Plays were, of course, printed and sold as books as well as performed in Shakespeare's lifetime. How important was this alternative form of publication to Shakespeare? Should we think of him as writing plays for readers as well as playgoers?

A third area of authorship enquiry relates to the Shakespeare canon. Which of the works sometimes attributed to Shakespeare are apocryphal? Which plays are in fact

collaborations? Which sections of plays outside the canon were in fact written by Shakespeare? How many works can be attributed to Shakespeare as sole author? Work in this area began in the eighteenth century and continues apace.

II. WHO WROTE SHAKESPEARE?

The idea that 'Shakespeare' was written by someone other than William Shakespeare of Stratford was first advanced, in print at least, in the nineteenth century. The favoured candidate was Francis Bacon, Viscount St Albans (1561–1626). The idea was pursued by an American, Delia Bacon, whose book on the subject was published in 1857. She scorned the notion that a lowly-born provincial man who had not been to university could have the knowledge of the law and of politics which is demonstrated in the plays. She found parallels in 'Shakespeare' to Bacon's other writings, and a match between the amplitude of the work and the achievements of Bacon's life.¹ In 1920 J. Thomas Looney presented a case for Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550–1604), as the writer of the plays. Looney's evidence included parallels between Oxford's life experience and events depicted in the plays, and Oxford's activities as a poet. Looney was convinced that the true author of 'Shakespeare' must be, like Oxford, an aristocrat with a classical education. He suggested that the 'Shakespeare' plays usually dated after Oxford's death were in fact written before.²

The founder of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, was converted to a belief in Oxford's authorship of 'Shakespeare' by reading Looney's book, and saw parallels between Oxford as a father of three daughters and King Lear, and between Oxford's marital experiences and Othello's. Freud found it 'inconceivable' that the writer had merely invented the powerful emotions in Shakespeare characters and felt that the parallels between Oxford's life experience and the preoccupations of Shakespeare's plays were overwhelming.³

Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593) was proposed as the author of 'Shakespeare' by Calvin Hoffman in 1955.⁴ Hoffman put up a large prize, still unclaimed, to be awarded to the researcher who can prove conclusively that Marlowe is 'Shakespeare'.⁵ Alden Brooks in *Will Shakspeare and the Dyer's Hand* (1943) suggested that Sir Edward Dyer (1543–1607) wrote 'Shakespeare'. The cultured and well-travelled Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland (1576–1612), has also had proponents.⁶ A further recent candidate is Sir Henry Neville (1564–1615). Brenda James and William Rubinstein, writing in 2005,

¹ S. Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 389–90.

² Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives*, 431–4.

³ Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives*, 442–4 and 442n.

⁴ Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives*, 445–7.

⁵ The Marlowe Society, 'The Hoffman Prize', www.marlowe-society.org/reading/info/hoffmanprize.html.

⁶ Ilya Gililov, *The Shakespeare Game: The Mystery of the Great Phoenix* (New York: Algora, 2003).

contended that Neville's experiences, such as travel on the Continent and imprisonment in the Tower, correspond with uncanny exactness to the materials of the plays and their order. Not all candidates are men. John Hudson has recently proposed that Aemilia Lanyer (1569–1645) was in fact the author. He sees an extraordinary number of connections linking Lanyer's life and interests with the contents of the plays.⁷ Two books, by Robin P. Williams and Fred Faulkes (2006), put forward Mary Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, née Mary Sidney (1561–1621), as the true author of 'Shakespeare'.

The main bulwark against scepticism about the Stratford Shakespeare's responsibility for the plays and poems we know as 'Shakespeare' is the 1623 Folio. A folio volume is an imposing physical object, and was associated with works of reference and authority. The title of the 1623 example is *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies*. The dedication, the preface, and five commendatory poems mention Shakespeare as author by name. It was a notable public assertion of Shakespeare's authorship, which would seem to leave little reason to doubt that the thirty-six plays included were the work of the same William Shakespeare who had been the editors' fellow-shareholder in the King's Men theatre company, and who had been the friend and rival of the poet and playwright Ben Jonson, who signed two of the commendatory poems. In addition, the name William Shakespeare is attached to many early printed versions of Shakespeare works. *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594) were each published with a dedication signed 'William Shakespeare'. Quarto editions of the plays from 1598 frequently have Shakespeare's name on the title-page.

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.⁸

There is, then, a consistent and solidly substantiated network of evidence that connects 'Shakespeare' to the actor, theatre shareholder and property-owner William

⁷ Discussed in Michael Posner, 'Rethinking Shakespeare', *Queen's Quarterly* 115 (2008), 247–59.

⁸ Alfred W. Pollard (ed.), *Shakespeare's Hand in the Play of 'Sir Thomas More': Papers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923); MacDonald P. Jackson, 'The Date and Authorship of Hand D's Contribution to *Sir Thomas More*: Evidence from "Literature Online"', *Shakespeare Survey* 59 (2006), 69–78; Timothy Irish Watt, 'The Authorship of the Hand-D Addition to *The Book of Sir Thomas More*', in Hugh Craig and Arthur F. Kinney (eds.), *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 134–61.

Shakespeare. It would appear that it is the exceptional nature of the achievement that the plays and poems represent, rather than anything in the authorship facts themselves, which fuels the idea that someone other than the obvious and well-attested candidate wrote 'Shakespeare'. To some, it would seem, the towering edifice of the works requires a matching authorship romance. By necessity this narrative involves an extraordinary conspiracy, and requires its proponents to dismiss powerful external evidence and to contradict predecessors who were equally positive about some other candidate. It generally depends on a series of dubious coincidences and clues allegedly hidden within the poems and plays. The evidence produced is frequently of less interest than the motives of the advocates, such as a wish to deny the achievement represented by the Shakespeare canon to a commoner without a university education, and the assumptions underlying many of the arguments, like the conviction that literary work must always reflect the life of the writer.

III. WHAT KIND OF AN AUTHOR WAS SHAKESPEARE?

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The idea of an author is necessarily many-layered. Thinking about the origins of literary works is fundamental to any theory of literature. The classicizing Renaissance promoted the notion of the author as an exceptional individual, creating works as much for posterity as for an audience of their own time, a law-giver and a landmark in a universal and transcendent shared literary enterprise. The Enlightenment sought to link a stable, well-defined author with a well-established and precisely defined *oeuvre* in print. The Romantic era added notions of aberrant, isolated, tortured, and gifted individuality. The mass print culture of the nineteenth century bound the idea of an author to the ultimate sole copyright and responsibility for a commercial object, the printed book. In the post-structuralist era beginning in the 1960s this composite and perhaps internally fractured notion that literary production was entirely dominated by the individual creator was challenged. A literary system based on a separate, unique, perceiving, and creating subject was duly replaced with a doctrine according to which social, historical, and institutional forces were paramount.

This changed idea of the author had special force for scholars working in the early modern period, Shakespeare's period, and in the drama, Shakespeare's main medium. Proponents argued that authorship in the modern sense did not come into being until literary work was established as personal property and incurred personal liability, in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Thus for Shakespeare in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries a far less defined and much more collaborative idea of literary creation prevailed. In drama individual authorship was especially discounted. Putting on a play is inevitably a collective enterprise. In the London theatre of Shakespeare's day, it was argued, the performance came first, and any printed

publication a distant second. In the overall economy of the Shakespearean theatre the author was only one among many contributors.

This would make Shakespeare not an author in the usual modern sense but one of a collective, providing a written 'playbook', which was one input among many others and which might then itself be trimmed or altered into a prompt book, or abandoned altogether for comic improvisation, for instance. This picture of a collaborative, rather than individualistic, mode of production has an attractively iconoclastic force, and is a stimulating alternative to the perhaps sometimes suffocating focus on a single point of origin for Shakespeare plays.

The ideas of collaborative production and the primacy of performance have consequences for the way Shakespeare's text is regarded. Margreta de Grazia has argued persuasively that it was Edmond Malone's Shakespeare edition of 1790 that was decisive in founding nineteenth- and twentieth-century Shakespeare studies, with its quest for authentic works and texts and for a biography based on reliable documents. Malone's edition also constructed for the first time a stable textual Shakespeare, which could be understood by way of a thinking, feeling author revealing himself to readers in the *Sonnets*.⁹ While earlier commentators celebrated Malone's endeavour to produce a definitive text on consistent principles, de Grazia argues that Malone's enterprise was inevitably compromised by the fact that Shakespeare's texts were in their origins 'unfixed and unstable' in everything from spelling to the text of documents introduced in the course of the action.¹⁰ To resolve the illogicality Malone had to construct an imagined exactly finished Shakespearean original manuscript, and an 'autonomous and entitled' creator.¹¹ This he did through his apparatus, with a chronology allowing the works to be seen in terms of development, through interconnecting the feelings and observations expressed by the speaker of the *Sonnets* with the dramatic works, and through the 'authentic' biographical materials offered. De Grazia says that the edition's apparatus hid from subsequent generations the reality of the 'erratic fecundity' and 'intractable deviations' in the Shakespeare text.¹²

It is worth returning from this picture of a labile and essentially unfixed text, and a collaborative author, to what contemporaries said about Shakespeare, and the views about authorship we can glean from his own work. There are some important surviving documents. In 1598, the clergyman Francis Meres published a collection of quotations and personal observations called *Palladis Tamia*. Shakespeare is mentioned many times in the section titled 'A comparative discourse of our English poets, with the Greek, Latin, and Italian poets'.¹³ In these pages Shakespeare is certainly an author in the full sense, one of eight moderns mentioned as refining the English language as

⁹ Margreta de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim: The Reproduction of Authenticity and the 1790 Apparatus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 132–76.

¹⁰ De Grazia, 222–3.

¹¹ De Grazia, 226.

¹² De Grazia, 223–5.

¹³ Francis Meres, *Palladis Tamia, Wits Treasury* (London, 1598), sigs. Nn7r–Oo7r. The quotations in the rest of the paragraph all come from this section.

Homer and his successors enriched Greek, and Vergil and others Latin. '[S]weet witty Ovid' lives on in Shakespeare the poet, judging by the English poet's *Venus and Adonis*, *Rape of Lucrece*, and his as yet unpublished *Sonnets*. Plautus and Seneca excel in Latin for comedy and tragedy; in the same way Shakespeare is 'the most excellent' in the two genres in English, and Meres lists six Shakespeare comedies and six tragedies as evidence. There is no doubt that Meres aims to establish English writers as authors in the mode of Vergil and Ovid, places Shakespeare as an individual writer as high as any of his contemporaries, and attributes Shakespeare's prestige as much to his plays as to his poems.

In the *Sonnets* Shakespeare himself invokes the classical idea of an author whose works will live on beyond his own lifetime. For us the obvious vehicle for this persistence would be the printed book, but Shakespeare does not make this connection between immortality and publication in print. Sonnet 17, which anticipates a readership 'in time to come', talks of the physical form in which the lines will survive as 'papers, yellowed with their age'. This sounds like a manuscript rather than a printed book. Sonnets 77 and 122 refer to 'table-books', that is, blank manuscript books. In the plays Shakespeare characters rarely refer to print, and when they do the references are generally disparaging, connecting print with cheap popular ballads (*The Winter's Tale* 4.4.258–9) or with mechanically reproduced love letters (*The Merry Wives of Windsor* 2.1.71–6). In Shakespeare's dialogue the book is mostly something to write in with a pen, or a metaphorical Book of Life.

This indifference to print fits with the idea that Shakespeare took no interest in the printing of his plays, an idea that was well entrenched in Shakespeare studies until recently. Lukas Erne has argued against this view. He shows that ten of what seem to be the first twelve plays Shakespeare wrote for the Lord Chamberlain's Men were in print by 1602, following what looks like a calculated publication strategy.¹⁴ This revision to the traditional account is now widely accepted.¹⁵ One must also reckon with the dearth of later Shakespeare plays that were published in his lifetime, however. Of the sixteen Folio plays usually dated to 1600 or after, only three, *Hamlet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *King Lear*, had been printed when Shakespeare died in 1616. Many of the plays that we think of as central to Shakespeare's achievement, like *Twelfth Night*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus*, and *The Tempest*, were available to Shakespeare's contemporaries only in performance. There is no direct evidence to suggest that Shakespeare concerned himself, as Jonson and Middleton did, with the way his plays appeared in print, or indeed with whether they appeared in print at all. While, as Erne points out, most of the plays Shakespeare wrote in the 1590s were printed, this was sometimes in forms so haphazard and garbled that he cannot possibly have been involved in supervising their passage through the press. Eighteen plays appear first in the 1623 Folio, and so would very likely have been entirely

¹⁴ Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 79–100.

¹⁵ See, e.g., Patrick Cheney, *Shakespeare's Literary Authorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 8–10.

unknown today but for Heminges and Condell's editorial labours. The *Sonnets* themselves were printed in 1609, but the consensus view is that this publication was not authorized by Shakespeare. Theatrical performance, which seems so ephemeral to us today, may well have been such an intense and all-consuming mode of presentation, and so gratifying in terms of audience response and commercial reward, that it satisfied Shakespeare's appetite for recognition, where others like Ben Jonson looked to readers of his printed works, in the present, and into a long and clearly imagined posterity.

Shakespeare is thus clearly not an author in the modern sense of someone who vests their artistic identity in a set of printed works, and maintains strict artistic and commercial control over them in everything from proofreading to contract negotiations. On the other hand, the collaborative Shakespeare in vogue in the 1980s and 1990s does not fit the facts very well either. This model made 'Shakespeare' merely a cipher under which to collect a certain body of work, and regarded the man himself as insignificant as a creator of meaning.

What is meant by Shakespeare as an author has of course been revised and reformulated since the era when he was a contemporary writer of plays and poems with an evolving career. Whatever the state of affairs during his active participation with the London theatrical world, from the time Shakespeare retired to Stratford, around 1612–13, the survival of his dramatic work necessarily depended more and more on the written form. Actors' memories and theatrical traditions no doubt provided some continuity beyond what was written down in playbooks and printed plays, but these informal connections suffered a major disruption with the closure of the theatres in 1642 and the dispersal of theatre companies that followed.

The outlines of 'Shakespeare' were reasonably clearly visible in the First Folio of 1623. Its editors were close friends and colleagues and are still our best witnesses to Shakespeare's authorship, in the sense of what he was and was not responsible for in the drama of the time, and the literary system he himself knew and his role in it as seen by contemporaries. Successive editions in many ways blurred these outlines, and editors and readers showed less interest in establishing the boundaries. Charles I read Shakespeare, as we know, but in the less careful Second Folio of 1632. London theatres reopened in 1660, and Shakespeare plays were a mainstay of productions, but the current Shakespeare was the Third Folio, whose second impression (1664) added six plays, none of them as we now think by Shakespeare, and these remained in the Fourth Folio of 1685. The *Sonnets* were read in the John Benson edition of 1640, which changed many of the pronouns of the 1609 edition to make the love object resolutely female. Adaptations of the plays, adding characters and songs, and even a happy ending to *King Lear*, were common. Accounts of Shakespeare's life revolved around a series of colourful incidents whose connections with actual events are now impossible to verify. Alexander Pope's edition, published from 1725, marks the outer limits of fluidity and plasticity in Shakespeare texts. Understanding the texts he inherited to be thoroughly corrupt, and trusting in his intuitions about which sections were Shakespeare's and

which were not, he freely deleted and modified, and put sections he felt must be interpolations by others into footnotes.¹⁶

Pope's edition was controversial and a countervailing movement in favour of the 'restoration' of Shakespeare guided subsequent eighteenth-century editions, culminating in Malone's of 1790. De Grazia's view that Malone ushered in a new era of Shakespeare authorship, revolving around a fixed text and a single clearly defined originating consciousness, has already been mentioned. De Grazia highlights some of the paradoxes of Malone's endeavour to create a definitive Shakespeare out of shifting, inherently unstable texts and records. It is also possible that Malone's approach restored some of the overall shape and textual stability which seemed desirable to the Folio editors.

IV. THE SHAKESPEARE CANON

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Shakespeare as author can also be defined purely by reference to his language. At the simplest level this is a network of preferences in vocabulary and grammatical constructions. Then there are characteristic expressions, figures of speech, and images. Shakespeare shared a common language with his contemporaries—necessarily so, if he was to communicate at all—but within this, like any writer, indeed like any user of the language, he made choices, as much unconsciously as consciously. We know from contemporary references that audiences recognized and discussed aspects of these individual styles. Examples are Marlowe's 'mighty line', cited in Jonson's poem to Shakespeare in the Folio, Jonson's own fidelity to real-life speech, alluded to scornfully in a satirical play of the period,¹⁷ and Shakespeare's seductive eloquence, lauded in Meres's *Palladis Tamia* (quoted earlier).

All readers and listeners have the experience of hearing an authorial voice in a phrase, or in a favourite unusual word, or in a characteristic transition from one idea to another. It turns out that this kind of linguistic innovation is so marked and persistent that its traces in frequencies and distributions of individual words can be modelled statistically.¹⁸ This allows us to compare our intuitions as readers about the authorship of speeches and scenes with an objective set of measures. It also shows that authorial style, in the sense of highly individualized and consistent language use, is a reality, and not a romantic or sentimental fiction. To illustrate: a Shakespeare passage is twice as likely to include the words *gentle* and *beseech* as a passage by one of his contemporaries.

¹⁶ Details of the Restoration and eighteenth-century reception of Shakespeare in this paragraph are from Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History, from the Restoration to the Present* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989), 9–99.

¹⁷ Anonymous, *The Returne from Pernassus: Or the Scourge of Simony* (London, 1606), sig. B2v.

¹⁸ Craig and Kinney (eds.), *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, 1–39.

Wealth, pride, and lust, on the other hand, are half as likely to turn up in a Shakespeare passage as in the rest.¹⁹

'Shakespeare' is a very large collection of plays by the standards of his contemporaries, as well as a respectably large collection of non-dramatic verse. There is good reason to think that Shakespeare was involved in the writing of forty-four plays. He may have been occasionally exceeded in sheer output by his peers—Thomas Heywood claimed in the preface to *The English Traveller* to have had 'either an entire hand, or at least the main finger' in 220 plays, though at the most generous estimate we have records of only forty-two of these, and surviving copies of only twenty-five²⁰—but Shakespeare's is the largest surviving canon. The next largest is Middleton, whom the recent Oxford edition associates with thirty-one plays, as sole or joint author. The next after that is Jonson, with seventeen sole-author plays. Probably two factors are at work in this metric: Shakespeare was indeed exceptionally productive; and an unusual proportion of his dramatic work survives, because his plays were frequently printed in quarto editions before 1600, and it happened that his later plays were collected and printed after his death in the First Folio.

We need to make distinctions among the forty-four plays. A core group of twenty-eight surviving plays are widely accepted as entirely by his hand, if not entirely without challenge.²¹ Beyond this, *Love's Labour's Won* seems to have been a single-author play but is lost. Another set of six plays seem to be collaborations in the straightforward sense that in them Shakespeare worked with another dramatist on a joint effort. Thus it is very likely that George Peele wrote part of *Titus Andronicus*, George Wilkins part of *Pericles*, Thomas Middleton part of *Timon of Athens*, and John Fletcher parts of *Henry VIII* and *Two Noble Kinsmen*. A third likely collaboration with Fletcher, *Cardenio*, is lost. With five plays we believe Shakespeare to have written a portion, but are uncertain of the number or identity of his collaborators.²² *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth* seem to be Shakespeare single-author texts with additions or revisions by Middleton. Finally, 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.

¹⁹ These calculations are based on word counts in twenty-eight Shakespeare plays and ninety-one well-attributed single-author plays by others from the years 1580–1619.

²⁰ This is the tally of plays associated with Heywood in Alfred Harbage and S. Schoenbaum, *Annals of English Drama 975–1700* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964), leaving aside pageants, 'classical legends', and the like.

²¹ These are, in the order of composition given in Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987): *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Richard III*, *Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard II*, *King John*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Henry IV Part 1*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Henry IV Part 2*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Othello*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *King Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus*, *Winter's Tale*, *Cymbeline*, and *Tempest*.

²² These are the three parts of *Henry VI*, *Arden of Faversham*, and *Edward III*.

This estimate of the Shakespeare canon rests on centuries of work by an extraordinary band of interested individuals. In Shakespeare's lifetime, as has already been mentioned, his works existed primarily as a large collection of play-scripts belonging to his theatre company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, later the King's Men, some of which had been printed in various degrees of care and accuracy, and as a smaller assortment of printed and manuscript poems. The first attempt at collecting the plays was in 1619, when Thomas Pavier and William Jagger, printers and stationers put ten plays into a common format so that they could be bound together as a single volume, or sold separately.²³ This set included two plays now thought to be by others and several to which Pavier and Jagger did not in fact own publishing rights. Four years later two of Shakespeare's fellow-actors and shareholders, John Heminges and Henry Condell, published the First Folio, presenting thirty-six plays, eighteen never before published, and many of the others in new versions. In their dedication, and again in the preface, they say that since Shakespeare did not live to publish his writings himself, the task of collecting the plays and putting them in print has fallen to them as his friends. Heminges and Condell thus present themselves as Shakespeare's literary executors, and this strong connection is supported by Shakespeare's bequest to them, along with Richard Burbage, of money for funeral rings. None of the plays in their collection has been excluded from the modern canon, though scholars now agree that several of them contain work by other writers.

Over the last two and a quarter centuries, since, say, the founding of the New Shakspeare Society in 1874, two broad tendencies have been evident in work on Shakespeare's canon. One of them is to confirm the integrity of the thirty-six plays in the Folio, to see a single authorial controlling influence through this stable set of dramatic works, and a largely uniform progress through time with each play as a milestone, surviving more or less intact from the moment of its first creation. Schoenbaum calls the proponents of this view the 'fundamentalists'.²⁴

The other tendency is to see the Folio canon as a more arbitrary and questionable collection. Adherents of this second view argue that the volume may include sections, or at least layers, of work by others, beyond the well-attested collaborations, like *Henry VIII*, which do appear within its covers. These scholars were famously labelled 'disintegrators' by E. K. Chambers in his British Academy Shakespeare Lecture of 1924. Chambers identified some key beliefs, which lay behind their willingness to attribute parts of the canon to other authors. One was the notion that any departure from a fancied standard of Shakespearean greatness, and any local variation from regular patterns of metrical practice, necessarily indicated another hand at work.²⁵ The other was a 'doctrine of continuous copy' under which the Shakespeare texts that survive are

²³ The ten plays are *Henry V*, *Henry VI Part 2*, *Henry VI Part 3*, *King Lear*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Pericles*, *Sir John Oldcastle*, and *Yorkshire Tragedy*.

²⁴ S. Schoenbaum, *Internal Evidence and Elizabethan Dramatic Authorship: An Essay in Literary History and Method* (London: Edward Arnold, 1966), 137.

²⁵ E. K. Chambers, *The Disintegration of Shakespeare* (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), 10–13.

regarded as the product of revision by various hands and thus only imperfectly and indirectly related to a pure Shakespearean source.²⁶ Chambers declared that he was not arguing for ‘the literal inspiration of the Folio’, and he conceded that some of the plays in it may well not be entirely Shakespeare’s, but he was determined to defend ‘the structural outlines’ of ‘[t]he rock of Shakespeare’s reputation’.²⁷ Chambers’s weighty defence of a largely unitary and unadulterated canon was widely influential²⁸ and pushed arguments extending the ambit of Shakespearean collaboration and revision to the fringes of Shakespeare discourse for several decades.

A related controversy in studies of the canon is between those who give credence to internal, stylistic evidence and those who do not. Schoenbaum gives the first two and a half decades of the twentieth century the somewhat ironical title of the ‘Golden Age’ of attribution based on style rather than documentary evidence.²⁹ Too often, as he shows, the tables of statistics of metrical patterns and the lists of rare words, parallel passages, and image clusters were merely ‘impressionism rationalised’.³⁰ ‘[T]he deadly parallel’, as Oliphant called it in 1923, was in disrepute as early as 1887, when A. H. Bullen compared it to handwriting evidence in a jury trial: ‘it is always expected, it is always produced, and it is seldom regarded’.³¹ Often enthusiasts failed to carry out what M. St C. Byrne called the ‘negative check’ to see if a phrase or wording was really characteristic and not a commonplace. She points out, too, that they often overlooked the fact that if a parallel might be a sign of common authorship, it might also be a plagiarism or a coincidence.³²

On the other hand, as Schoenbaum acknowledges, the book edited by Alfred Pollard had succeeded in bringing the ‘Hand D’ passages from *Sir Thomas More* into the canon purely on the basis of internal evidence.³³ Brian Vickers has demonstrated how often scholarly work going back to the middle of the nineteenth century arrived at what now seem to be accurate divisions of collaborative plays between Shakespeare and other authors.³⁴ With searchable text provided by collections like Literature Online and Early English Books Online, present-day scholars have something like comprehensive coverage of surviving plays, so that negative controls can be watertight. Countable electronic text, allowing a statistical approach to word frequencies, offers a further step forward. With these resources it should be possible at last to pursue authorship questions ‘upon a general and disinterested method, rather than along the casual lines

²⁶ Chambers, 17–22.

²⁷ Chambers, 15–16, 3.

²⁸ Schoenbaum, *Internal Evidence*, 108.

²⁹ Schoenbaum, *Internal Evidence*, 62.

³⁰ Schoenbaum, *Internal Evidence*, 75.

³¹ E. H. C. Oliphant, ‘How Not to Play the Game of Parallels’, *JEGP* 28 (1929), 13; Bullen is quoted in Schoenbaum, *Internal Evidence*, 89.

³² M. St C. Byrne, ‘Bibliographical Clues in Collaborate Plays’, *The Library*, 4th series, 13 (1932), 24.

³³ Schoenbaum, *Internal Evidence*, 107.

³⁴ Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author: A Historical Study of Five Collaborative Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

of advance opened up by the pursuit of an author for this or that suspected or anonymous play'.³⁵

Looking in more detail at some of the outstanding problems in the canon, we can start with doubts about works usually printed in a collected edition. *A Lover's Complaint* is a case in point. There is strong external evidence connecting this poem with Shakespeare. It was published with the *Sonnets*, and is attributed to 'William Shakespeare' on its own separate title-page. On the other hand, if it is by Shakespeare, it is a departure from his regular style. Colin Burrow, editing the poems in 2002 for the Oxford edition, declared that studies by Kenneth Muir and MacDonald P. Jackson in the 1960s had concluded the attribution debate in favour of Shakespeare.³⁶ However, another eminent figure in Shakespeare authorship studies, Brian Vickers, has recently argued for John Davies of Hereford as the more likely author. In one section of his book on the topic Vickers sets out to show that the poem is distinct from Shakespeare in its vocabulary, its syntax, its verse, and in its use of some rhetorical figures and metaphor. He argues that the *Lover's Complaint* poet is much less skilful than Shakespeare in most of these areas.³⁷ A statistical study by Ward Elliott and Robert J. Valenza, applying a series of empirical tests to the poem, also declares the poem to be outside the range of Shakespeare's practice.³⁸ The debate is thus unresolved. Shakespeare studies in general seems able to tolerate this uncertainty. Complete Shakespeare editions almost invariably include the poem, and critical studies continue to declare confidently that 'Shakespeare' includes five printed poems, the two narrative poems, the *Sonnets*, *The Phoenix and the Turtle*, and *A Lover's Complaint*,³⁹ but only the occasional critical enterprise could be said to depend on the attribution for its validity.⁴⁰

If *Lover's Complaint* illustrates that areas of doubt in Shakespeare attribution remain, even after the application of the most sophisticated and modern methods, then another area, dramatic collaboration, shows how some long-standing debates can reach closure. In his book *Shakespeare, Co-Author* Vickers deals with the five collaborations already mentioned—one each with Peele, Wilkins, and Middleton, and two with Fletcher—and, in the spirit of a medical metastudy, reviews previous studies, and adds new ones to show a convergence of differing approaches to a consensus not only on the partnerships involved, but on the divisions of the plays between the collaborators.

³⁵ Chambers, *The Disintegration of Shakespeare*, 13.

³⁶ Colin Burrow (ed.), *Shakespeare: The Complete Sonnets and Poems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 139.

³⁷ Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare, 'A Lover's Complaint', and John Davies of Hereford* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 121–203.

³⁸ Ward Elliott and Robert J. Valenza, 'Did Shakespeare Write *A Lover's Complaint*? The Jackson Ascription Revisited', in Brian Boyd (ed.), *Words That Count: Essays on Early Modern Authorship in Honor of MacDonald P. Jackson* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), 117–39.

³⁹ E.g., Cheney, *Shakespeare's Literary Authorship*, 19, 34.

⁴⁰ Examples are John Kerrigan (ed.), *Motives of Woe: Shakespeare and the 'Female Complaint': A Critical Anthology* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), and Shirley Sharon-Zisser (ed.), *Critical Essays on Shakespeare's 'A Lover's Complaint': Suffering Ecstasy* (London: Ashgate, 2006).

The most straightforward cases of collaboration involve Shakespeare's younger contemporary John Fletcher (1579–1625). The title-page of the 1634 Quarto of *Two Noble Kinsmen* says the play was 'Written by the memorable Worthies of their time Mr John Fletcher and Mr William Shakespeare Gent[lemen]'. The play does not appear in the First Folio. A series of tests such as metre, the use of contractions, and vocabulary converge on a division of the play agreed on by modern scholars.⁴¹ There is also general agreement that *Henry VIII* is a collaboration between the two playwrights; the division of the play proposed by Spedding in 1850 stands up well to modern testing.⁴² The relative ease with which the divisions are established suggests that the two men generally worked on separate sections of the play, rather than jointly writing scenes or acts. It seems likely that there was a third Shakespeare–Fletcher collaboration, *Cardenio*, based on an episode from *Don Quixote*, which was published in an English translation in 1612. A play of this name was performed twice at court in 1613, although there is no evidence of publication.⁴³

It now seems clear that Shakespeare worked as an anonymous collaborator on plays early in his career. He may well have contributed a section, but only a section, to *The Raigne of Edward III*, which was printed in 1595 but seems to have been performed earlier. Timothy Irish Watt has recently summed up and augmented the case for Shakespeare's part-authorship.⁴⁴ The three parts of *Henry VI* are dated to this period also. Confusion surrounds their authorship, however, and even the order in which they were written. Versions of part 2 and part 3 were published, without any indication of authorship, in 1594 and 1595. All three were included in the First Folio, so there is a prima facie case that Shakespeare was involved, but there is no agreement on how much, or about who his collaborators were, though Kyd, Marlowe, Peele, and Greene are most often mentioned by scholars.

Since the middle of the seventeenth century there has been a persistent strand of commentary linking Shakespeare with the anonymous play *Arden of Faversham*, first printed in 1592. Claims that the play is entirely by Shakespeare have been refined to suggestions that only some sections are his. There is by no means consensus—other candidates like Kyd continue to be put forward—but there are some strong connections with known Shakespeare in terms of style and imagery, confirmed by quantitative work in stylistics.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, 402–32.

⁴² Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, 332–402.

⁴³ G. Harold Metz (ed.), *Sources of Four Plays Ascribed to Shakespeare* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989), 257–83.

⁴⁴ Timothy Irish Watt, 'The Authorship of *The Raigne of Edward the Third*', in Craig and Kinney (eds.), *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, 116–32.

⁴⁵ Brian Vickers, 'Thomas Kyd, Secret Sharer', *Times Literary Supplement*, 18 April 2008, 13–15; MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Shakespeare and the Quarrel Scene in *Arden of Faversham*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 57.3 (2006), 249–93; and Arthur F. Kinney, 'Authoring *Arden of Faversham*', in Craig and Kinney (eds.), 78–99.

Shakespeare may well have written the series of additions to Thomas Kyd's pioneering revenge play *The Spanish Tragedy* which were published in the 1602 edition of the play. In this case the external evidence points to Ben Jonson as the writer. Payments to Jonson for revisions to the play are listed in the diary of the theatre manager Philip Henslowe in 1601, but the additions include speeches of whimsical, ironical mental instability quite unlike anything in Jonson. Coleridge thought they were Shakespeare's work, and they share a number of unusual words and phrases with Shakespeare plays and poems.⁴⁶ A statistical analysis of patterns of word use, both function words and lexical words, supports the attribution to Shakespeare.⁴⁷

In the late 1990s the claim that 'Shakespeare' should be extended to include a 1612 funeral elegy for William Peter, a little-known Devonshire gentleman, renewed the debate about the role of internal evidence in attribution. Donald W. Foster, the main proponent of the attribution, presented extensive data in a 1989 book showing that the poem fitted well within the 'Shakespeare' range on a number of linguistic markers such as the frequency of some common words and the frequency of some figures of speech. Foster says in fact that he was unable to find a Shakespeare test that the *Elegy* could not pass.⁴⁸ He summed up the case thus: the poem 'belongs hereafter with Shakespeare's poems and plays . . . because it is formed from textual and linguistic fabric indistinguishable from that of canonical Shakespeare'.⁴⁹ The only external evidence of any substance was the appearance of the initials 'W. S.' on the dedication to the poem. Most readers, meanwhile, agreed that the poem was laboured and dull, and saw no obvious connections with 'Shakespeare' in style, theme, or artistic stance. Richard Abrams, a second proponent of the attribution, responded that given the strength of the evidence for the inclusion of the poem in the canon, the rest of Shakespeare's works would just have to be read differently from now on.⁵⁰

Doubters had had to rely on their impressions that the *Elegy's* style was 'un-Shakespearean', and these were increasingly discounted. The poem began to appear in authoritative American Shakespeare editions like the Norton and the Riverside. The momentum was abruptly reversed in 2002, however, when G. D. Monsarrat published strong evidence in favour of another candidate, John Ford—mainly words and phrases in common with Ford poems written about the same time.⁵¹ Foster and Abrams conceded shortly afterwards. The case illustrates some important methodological

⁴⁶ Warren Stevenson, *Shakespeare's Additions to Thomas Kyd's 'The Spanish Tragedy': A Fresh Look at the Evidence Regarding the 1602 Additions* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2008).

⁴⁷ Hugh Craig, 'The 1602 Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy*', in Craig and Kinney (eds.), 162–80.

⁴⁸ Donald W. Foster, *Elegy by W. S.: A Study in Attribution* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1989), 147.

⁴⁹ Donald W. Foster, 'A Funeral Elegy: W[illiam] S[hakespeare]'s "Best-Speaking Witnesses"', *PMLA* 111 (1996), 1082.

⁵⁰ Richard Abrams, 'Breaching the Canon: *Elegy by W. S.: The State of the Argument*', *The Shakespeare Newsletter* (1995), 54.

⁵¹ G. D. Monsarrat, 'A Funeral Elegy: Ford, W.S., and Shakespeare', *Review of English Studies* 53 (2002), 186–203.

considerations. Where an attribution relies on internal evidence, and connections are relative and comparative, one author may be the most likely candidate from those tested, but there is always the possibility of a new author from outside the set being stronger still. Once that author is included, or just taken seriously—Ford was in Foster’s original control set, but not given anything like the same attention as Shakespeare—the claims of the first author look much less conclusive. Further, the lure of a Shakespeare discovery can lead to a gold rush mentality, which can tempt researchers into arranging tests to ensure the right result.⁵²

There was a precursor to the *Elegy* episode in a controversy over a much shorter untitled poem beginning ‘Shall I die? shall I fly?’. Gary Taylor, one of the editors of *The Oxford Shakespeare*, found the poem in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. The catalogue attributed the poem to Shakespeare. The poem was included in the 1987 Oxford edition, but its evident clumsiness and derivativeness and the paucity of persuasive parallels to ‘Shakespeare’ kept it out of the canon in any more general sense. Thomas A. Pendleton’s collection of words that are used in the poem and in ‘Shakespeare’, but in different senses, is damaging for the attribution.⁵³

A considerable number of anonymous and even well-attributed plays have been proposed for inclusion in the Shakespeare canon as wholly or partly by him. Like the apocryphal books of the Bible, they form a penumbra to the canonical works. One instance is *Edmond Ironside*, a late sixteenth-century history play which has survived in manuscript. E. B. Everitt put a case for Shakespeare’s authorship in a 1954 book, mainly on the basis of verbal parallels with early canonical Shakespeare, and subsequently Eric Sams made his own arguments for the idea in a book and series of articles in the 1980s, again on the basis of internal evidence from vocabulary. Most other scholars reject the attribution.⁵⁴

V. CONCLUSION

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It is hard to exaggerate the cultural prestige that is invested in Shakespeare as an author. His works are invoked to guarantee the richness of the resources of the English language, to anchor English national pride, and as touchstones for the power of literature itself. They are read, performed, and studied to a degree that makes him outstanding even among the select band of national poets. A poem that is accepted as Shakespeare’s is analysed with unparalleled intensity; the same poem, no longer

⁵² Hugh Craig, ‘Common-Words Frequencies, Shakespeare’s Style, and the *Elegy* by W. S.’, *Early Modern Literary Studies* 8 (2002), <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/081/craistyl.htm>.

⁵³ Thomas A. Pendleton, ‘The Non-Shakespearean Language of “Shall I Die?”’, *Review of English Studies* 40 (1989), 323–51.

⁵⁴ For a discussion of Everitt and Sams, and a review of this authorship problem, see Philip S. Palmer, ‘*Edmond Ironside* and the Question of Shakespearean Authorship’, in Craig and Kinney (eds.), 100–15.

attributed to Shakespeare, instantly loses its lustre. As a creator Shakespeare is both exceptional and representative. Defining him either as an independent author, or as essentially a member of a theatrical collective, affects the picture of literary creation in general. For many beyond the academy, questions about his identity, his moral character, and his politics must be resolved in a satisfactory direction to sustain general beliefs about humanity and culture.

Because so much is at stake, Shakespeare authorship throws the methods for arriving at the truth in a range of questions into extraordinary relief. These questions range from the attribution of a brief passage of dialogue to the nature of authorship itself. The cut and thrust of debate is intriguing, and there is no doubt that some fine intellects have given their best efforts in the quest to resolve some of the perplexing problems that arise. It is also remarkable how hard it is to rule out even wildly improbable hypotheses, and how far interpreters will go in building elaborate structures on uncertain foundations in attribution; and it is dismaying that doubts about what might seem to be obvious facts persist.

It is also worth noting that after several centuries of endeavour there has really been not so very much added, nor much taken away, from the first monument of Shakespeare authorship—the Folio volume of 1623, with its thirty-six plays presented as the work of a fondly remembered friend and colleague dead seven years before. No one has succeeded in ruling any of the Folio plays out of a collected Shakespeare: our best understanding is that he was involved in the majority of them as sole playwright, and in a minority as collaborator, or as the author of an earlier version later revised or supplemented by another. No whole play has been added to the canon, though there are a series of parts of other plays that can now be attributed to him, from the near-certain to the confidently ascribed. There is no equivalent to the Folio for the poems, but we can say that two long poems, a sonnet sequence, and a shorter poem stand clearly within the canon, and *A Lover's Complaint*, with some short poems published in a brief anthology, stand on the threshold; despite some urgent pleas for admission, no other poem has qualified.

The Folio also remains the best guide to Shakespeare authorship in terms of the identity of the author, and the idea of authorship itself. William Shakespeare is in the title, is presented throughout as the author, and is identified through the dedication, preface and commendatory poems with William Shakespeare the actor and King's Men shareholder, born in Stratford-upon-Avon. No challenge to these straightforward links between this individual and these works has been sustained. In the Folio volume Shakespeare appears neither as a solitary genius creating in isolation, nor as a mere functionary in a larger productive enterprise. He is presented simply as an exceptional theatre professional, admired by his peers both for his collegial ties and for his extraordinary talent.

CHAPTER 2

COLLABORATION

MACDONALD P. JACKSON

THE royal Chamber Accounts for 1613 record payments to the King's Men for performances of a play called by the scribe 'Cardenno' and 'Cardenna'. Thomas Shelton's English translation of the first part of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, which contains 'The History of Cardenio', had been published the previous year. The natural presumption that this episode served as the lost play's source is confirmed by Humphrey Moseley's entry in the Stationers' Register on 9 September 1653 of a playscript designated 'The History of Cardenno, by M^r. Fletcher. & Shakespeare'. It appears never to have reached print and does not survive. But in 1727 Lewis Theobald presented at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane his *Double Falshood; or, The Distrest Lovers*, which he claimed to have 'Revised and Adapted' from manuscripts descended from a Shakespearean original. Two successive issues of *Double Falsehood* (to modernize the spelling) were printed in 1728. Theobald conceded that some contemporaries thought *Double Falsehood* 'nearer to the Style and Manner of FLETCHER than of Shakespeare'. The majority opinion among modern scholars who have studied the question is that *Double Falsehood* was based on a version of the lost *Cardenio*, and that Moseley's ascription of that play to Shakespeare and Fletcher was correct.¹

Believing this to be the case, Gary Taylor attempted a creative reconstruction of the original *Cardenio*. He was aided by careful study of the source episode in *Don Quixote*, of the ways in which eighteenth-century playwrights, such as Theobald, adapted plays of Shakespeare's time, and of the contrasting styles of Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Theobald. In May 2009, David Carnegie directed a short season of performances of Taylor's reconstructed *Cardenio* at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

¹ For the details in this paragraph, see E. K. Chambers. *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), 1: 537–42; 2: 343; Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (eds.), *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986 2nd edn. 2006), 132–3. A history of opinion on *Double Falsehood* is provided by G. Harold Metz (ed.), *Sources of Four Plays Ascribed to Shakespeare* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989), 255–93.

The script underwent many modifications as Taylor and Carnegie worked closely together in rehearsals.²

Cardenio and *Double Falsehood* illustrate various ways in which a playtext may be the work of more than one agent. Shakespeare and Fletcher collaborated on the writing of the original play. Theobald reworked a version of it that may well have already undergone alteration. Much later Taylor made his own substantial contributions, some of them in association with actors preparing the script for the stage. Of course, Theobald's intervention came over a century after initial composition, and Taylor's almost four centuries after, but the same processes occurred within the early modern period before the closing of the London theatres in 1642. Plays might be co-authored, adjusted by theatre-folk for performance, and afterwards augmented or revamped for revivals in new circumstances.

Investigating the input of persons other than playwrights to the scripts of plays is the province of textual criticism. 'Collaboration' is involved only in the broad sense in which drama is a collaborative art, so that actors, costumers, carpenters, book-holders, musicians, stagehands, and others join in the cooperative venture of bringing words on the page to life in the theatre. Nor is it helpful to regard the authors of source material as collaborators. Fletcher, Shakespeare, Theobald, and Taylor all drew on Shelton's English version of *Don Quixote*, so that at each stage of the play's evolution Cervantes served as what Harold Love, in *Attributing Authorship: An Introduction*, called a 'precursory author'.³ But Cervantes' unwitting contribution to *Cardenio* and *Double Falsehood* was not, in any but the loosest of senses, collaboration.

Further, adaptation, rewriting, and augmentation of which the author or authors who first created a complete script were unaware must be firmly distinguished from the contemporaneous composition of a script by two or more playwrights working as a team, which is this chapter's main concern. The distinction has not always been appreciated. Jeffrey Masten, for example, asserts that 'collaboration was the Renaissance English theater's dominant mode of textual production'.⁴ The claim rests on a misinterpretation of some educated guesswork by G. E. Bentley, who suspected that 'as many as half of the plays by professional dramatists' in the period 1590–1642 'incorporated the writing at some date of more than one man'.⁵ But this formulation includes the reshaping of single-authored plays by subsequent revisers and providers of 'new additions'. Of surviving plays that were first performed during the years of Shakespeare's career as dramatist (1590–1614) and that are neither by him, nor mere closet dramas, nor anonymous, modern scholarship ascribes

² Papers from an international colloquium held in conjunction with the production will appear in a book edited by David Carnegie and Gary Taylor.

³ Harold Love, *Attributing Authorship: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 40–3.

⁴ Jeffrey Masten, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 14.

⁵ Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time, 1590–1642* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971), 119.

some 20 per cent to more than one playwright.⁶ The proportion is a little higher in the second half of the period than in the first, and in the following eight years—with the Fletcher–Massinger and Middleton–Rowley partnerships—it rises to 38 per cent.

In these terms, Shakespeare, seven of whose thirty-nine extant plays (18 per cent) are now widely thought to have been co-authored, is typical of his time. *1 Henry VI*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Edward III* belong to his apprentice years, *Timon of Athens*, *Pericles*, *All Is True (Henry VIII)*, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* to his late maturity, from 1605–6 onward.⁷ Of course, the lost plays of dual or multiple authorship for which Philip Henslowe's *Diary* recorded payments would swell the numbers of non-Shakespearean collaborations, and the co-written potboilers of the London entertainment industry may have been less apt than one-author plays to reach print and more apt to be published anonymously when they did. Moreover, the title-pages of play quartos sometimes bore one playwright's name when in fact two or more had shared the composition. But Jeffrey Knapp, in a cogent critique of Masten's influential book, has argued strongly that 'the primary theoretical model for playwriting throughout the English Renaissance was single authorship'.⁸ It probably, as Knapp claims, predominated in practice too. Bentley's estimate, rightly understood, would support such a view.⁹

Clearly, however, collaborative playwriting was very common indeed and, like most other dramatists, Shakespeare engaged in it. One of the reasons for supposing that Moseley was right to credit Fletcher and Shakespeare with *Cardenio* is that the two men are known to have collaborated at about the right date. *The Two Noble Kinsmen*,

⁶ The figures derive from the chronological table of plays in A. R. Braunmuller and Michael Hattaway (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 419–46. Using the same source, Philip C. McGuire shows that 'Collaborative dramatic writing was most intense in James' reign', when 'the King's Men's use of collaboratively written plays' increased both absolutely and relative to their rivals' ('Collaboration', in Arthur F. Kinney [ed.], *A Companion to Renaissance Drama* [Oxford: Blackwell, 2002], 540–52, at 543–4).

⁷ Adding either *Cardenio* (lost except in Theobald's *Double Falshood*) or *Arden of Faversham* (not yet widely accepted as partly by Shakespeare) would raise the percentage to 20. Moreover, Shakespeare contributed one scene to a collaborative revision of *Sir Thomas More* (see below). Both *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure* underwent some adaptation by Thomas Middleton before being included in the Shakespeare First Folio of 1623 (Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino [eds.], *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007], 1165–201, 1542–85; and Taylor and Lavagnino, *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to the Collected Works* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007], 383–98, 417–21). Brian Vickers, in his *Shakespeare, Co-Author: A Historical Study of Five Collaborative Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), expertly summarizes the evidence for collaboration in *Titus Andronicus*, *Timon of Athens*, *Pericles*, *All Is True (Henry VIII)*, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and includes both an excellent chapter entitled 'Plot and Character in Co-Authored Plays: Problems of Co-ordination' (pp. 433–500) and a rebuttal of Masten, *Textual Intercourse* (pp. 5.27–41). His book obviates the need for a detailed account within this essay of the various stylistic and sub-stylistic discriminators.

⁸ Jeffrey Knapp, 'What is a Co-Author?', *Representations* 89 (2005), 1–21, at 1.

⁹ Practices may well have differed among different companies. The Admiral's Men, under Henslowe at the Rose Theatre, seem to have been especially dependent on collaboratively written scripts (Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author: A Historical Study of Five Collaboration Plays* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002], 20).

printed in a quarto of 1634 with their names on the title-page, was first performed 1613–14.¹⁰ *All Is True*, which unlike that play was included in the Shakespeare First Folio (1623), can confidently be dated 1613. It was not until the mid-nineteenth century that it was recognized as a collaboration with Fletcher. But both plays clearly exhibit the contrasting verse styles of the two men.

STYLE AND SIGNIFICANCE IN *THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN*

Some modern theorists, deferring to Michel Foucault, would regard the previous section's last statement with extreme scepticism. Masten brands as futile any attempt to determine the shares of collaborating playwrights, because 'the collaborative project in the theatre was predicated on *erasing* the perception of any differences'.¹¹ But the differences between Shakespeare and Fletcher were not erased. The nineteenth-century essayist Thomas De Quincey judged Shakespeare's dramatic poetry in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* to be 'perhaps the most superb work in the language' and had no difficulty distinguishing it from Fletcher's.¹² And in its density, richness, and weight, Shakespeare's verse, which is far beyond Fletcher's range, conveys different attitudes to his material from those of Fletcher to his. Shakespeare, beginning and ending the play, dramatizes, in a sombre manner, events in Chaucer's *The Knight's Tale*. Fletcher develops several of these and is mainly responsible for a sub-plot suited to his gift for a mix of comedy and pathos. The distribution of scenes between the two men and their complementary perspectives on the whole story give the play its special quality. Contrast is built into its organization.

At the beginning of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* Theseus' wedding to Hippolyta is interrupted when three queens plead that he should resume war on Creon, who has refused burial to their husbands slain on the battlefields of Thebes. Theseus accedes to their request, is victorious, and captures the Theban warriors Palamon and Arcite. The main action turns on the rivalry of these cousins over Hippolyta's sister Emilia, with whom both fall in love at first sight, and culminates in a knightly contest set up by Theseus, with Emilia as the prize. Arcite no sooner wins than he dies when thrown off his horse, and so Palamon is awarded Emilia: the winner loses and the loser wins. In the

¹⁰ Dates of first performance of Shakespeare's plays are taken from Wells and Taylor, *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion*; dates for non-Shakespearean plays are from Alfred Harbage, rev. edn. S. Schoenbaum, *Annals of English Drama 975–1700* (London: Methuen, 1964).

¹¹ Masten, *Textual Intercourse*, 17.

¹² Quoted by Eugene Waith in Waith (ed.), *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 9–10. Waith's allocation of shares (p. 22) seems to me right, except that 5.1.1–17 (but no more of 5.1) is (in my view) Fletcher's. The Oxford *Collected Works*, numbering scenes in Act 5 differently, agrees with Waith, except that it denies Shakespeare 4.3. In the *Collected Works* Shakespeare's share ought to be: 1; 2.1; 3.1–2; 4.3; 5.1.18–67; 5.2–3; 5.5–6.

sub-plot the Jailer's Daughter falls mad with passion for Palamon, May Day is celebrated by morris-dancing rustics, and the Daughter's cure is effected when a Wooer of her own class gratifies her in the nobleman's guise.

Before the final combat, Arcite offers a long prayer to Mars, Palamon to Venus, and Emilia to Diana. Shakespeare is in each case the author, and his concerns in the play gather round the three aspects of human experience represented by these deities: war, valour, death, honour; romantic love, sexual obsession, marriage, new life; virginity, innocence, purity, and friendship. For him, Chaucer's tale is a fit vehicle for a poetic exploration of the paradoxes of desire in a world where good and ill become inextricably mingled. Shakespeare's comedies end in weddings, his tragedies in the formal removal of corpses. In *The Two Noble Kinsmen* gain and loss, wedding and funeral, combine at the end, as at the beginning. The pattern is unlike that of Shakespeare's late romances, in which a potentially tragic outcome is diverted toward a blissful comic resolution—a pattern adhered to in the sub-plot, though the Jailer's assurance that his Daughter is 'well restored, | And to be married shortly' (5.6.27–8) lacks the emotional amplitude of the endings of, for example, *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale*.

The mood and atmosphere of Shakespeare's contribution to *The Two Noble Kinsmen* recall Prospero's famous 'We are such stuff | As dreams are made on' (*The Tempest*, 4.1.156–7). The last words that Shakespeare wrote for the stage are those with which Theseus sums up the action, as he addresses the immortal gods:

O you heavenly charmers,
 What things you make of us! For what we lack
 We laugh, for what we have are sorry; still
 Are children in some kind. Let us be thankful
 For that which is, and with you leave dispute
 That are above our question. (5.6.131–6)

La comédie humaine, with its passions, absurdities, and mysteries, is here viewed, as though from a distance, with a solemn resignation, acceptance, and, ultimately, gratitude—simply 'for that which is'. The lines are spoken by the Duke of Athens, but serve also as a moving valediction from their author.

Shakespeare's poetry, with its wealth of imagery and its wide range of reference, invests the story with a sense of real *gravitas*. Meaning is also conveyed in visual terms through ritual, pageantry, and tableaux, as when the three queens, dressed in funereal black, intrude upon the opening bridal procession, where the contents of the accompanying song reinforce the symbolism, as life and death are juxtaposed even in the catalogue of flowers: 'Oxlips, in their cradles growing, | Marigolds, on deathbeds blowing' (1.1.10–11). Significance is generated through the interweaving of action, spectacle, and language that carries a strong metaphorical charge. The queens' 'lords | Lie blis'tring fore the visitating sun, | And were good kings, when living' (1.1.145–7). The lines encapsulate volumes about the Fall of Princes. The Second Queen, kneeling before Hippolyta, entreats her to do likewise and plead their case before Theseus:

Lend us a knee;
 But touch the ground for us no longer time
 Than a dove's motion when the head's plucked off;
 Tell him if he i'th' blood-sized field lay swoll'n,
 Showing the sun his teeth, grinning at the moon,
 What you would do. (1.1.96–101)

The astonishing image of the beheaded dove, obviously drawn from a country-bred lad's first-hand experience, is grotesque but not gratuitous in envisaging brutal violence against the emblem of peace and love. And could there be a more vivid *memento mori* than the ghastly image of the dead king?

The salient features of Shakespeare's and Fletcher's contrasting verse styles have been well summarized by Brian Vickers in *Shakespeare, Co-Author*. Many are measurable. Although as his career progressed Shakespeare increased the proportion of double endings (where an extra unstressed syllable follows the pentameter), he never used them with the frequency of Fletcher, for whom the variation became the norm, with monosyllables (even quite weighty ones) often used for the purpose. Shakespeare runs the sense on from one line into the next more often than does Fletcher, whose rhythms, syntax, and vocabulary are far less varied. Fletcher's epithets and similes tend to be predictable. And of course trivial preferences over colloquial contractions, affirmative particles, verbal forms, and the like distinguish one man's writing from the other's. Concentrations of 'ye', and 'em', for example, point to Fletcher, of 'hath' and 'doth' to Shakespeare. Fletcher prefers 'yes', Shakespeare 'ay'. Shakespeare, unlike Fletcher, is fond of unregulated auxiliary 'do', as in 'I do bleed' or 'I did begin', rather than 'I bleed' or 'I began'.

But a comparison of two speeches will illustrate the disparity between the two writers in poetic power.¹³ In 1.1 Theseus at first insists that the solemnization of his marriage to Hippolyta must have precedence over the three queens' urgent requests. The First Queen objects:

The more proclaiming
 Our suit shall be neglected. When her arms,
 Able to lock Jove from a synod, shall
 By warranting moonlight corslet thee; O when
 Her twinning cherries shall their sweetness fall
 Upon her tasteful lips, what wilt thou think
 Or rotten kings or blubbered queens? What care
 For what thou feel'st not, what thou feel'st being able
 To make Mars spurn his drum? O, if thou couch
 But one night with her, every hour in't will
 Take hostage of thee for a hundred, and
 Thou shalt remember nothing more than what
 That banquet bids thee to. (1.1.173–85)

¹³ Some of my points derive from discussions with the late Sydney Musgrove, as we prepared class notes for a course on Shakespeare's late plays.

The first three words complete a line that begins 'Or futurely can cope' at the end of Theseus' preceding speech, and so belong to one of only two lines that have double endings ('able' forming the other at 180). Only one line is end-stopped, that is, written so that the natural pauses in speech and thought coincide with the end of a line. Grammar often connects the last word of a line so intimately to the first word of the next line ('when | Her'; 'fall | Upon'; 'care | For'; 'able | To'; 'will | Take'; 'and | Thou') that the sense is welded into one, increasing momentum and enhancing coherence. To write such a sustained run-on passage without the verse collapsing into chaos demands great technical skill, especially since the speech conveys a tide of bitter emotion. In no two adjacent lines is the natural speech rhythm the same: the subtle variations of the almost completely regular lines 176–80 ('By . . . care') segue into the metrically turbulent, heavily stressed, 181–2 ('For . . . couch'). The effects are organically related to patterns of sense and emotion.

Characteristic are the semantically packed monosyllables, particularly active verbs, several with consonantal clusters—'lock', 'spurn', 'couch', 'feel'st'—alongside rarities such as 'warranting', 'synod', 'blubbered', and 'corslet'. The metaphorical structure is complex. Again images of love and war (Venus and Mars) are thrust into violent contrast. So the lover's 'arms' have the power to 'lock' the supreme god from the divine assembly ('synod', an official, remote word), and they 'corslet' what they embrace. The metaphor, in which a noun is turned into a verb, is from armour, the corslet being the plates that cover breast and back. Thus 'arms' and 'corslet' have double associations, of love and war. The bride herself is warrior-queen of the Amazons. The romantic 'moonlight' becomes a kind of formal licence ('warranting') to love. The next lines are richly sensual. 'Tasteful' has its etymological meaning of 'full of taste', here 'having intense capacity to taste', and the quarto's 'twyning' includes both 'twining' and 'twinning'. There are two pairs of lips in live contact, and the participle vividly evokes the real cherries dangling in pairs from their stalks, so that the effect is much more complicated than in Fletcher's clichéd 'cherry lips' at 4.1.74: in Shakespeare's formulation, cherries and lips intertwine in a delicious fusion of fruit and flesh! Then pictured in stark contrast are the rotting bodies of kings and the tear-stained, swollen faces of their widowed queens.

The syntax of lines 194–202 ('The . . . drum') is likewise varied and complex. In the quarto it is punctuated as a single intricate sentence: (1) main clause; (2) subordinate 'when' clause; (3) another subordinate 'when' clause; (4) a question; (5) another question; (6) a hanging absolute participial clause that includes (7) a double infinitive noun clause. The linked sequence, like the chain of images, ends with a vivid figure of war-god Mars, so inflamed by passion that he 'spurns' his martial drum. It is a tour de force, difficult to read and understand, and very demanding for an audience.

In the speech's final sentence ('O . . . to') love and war are yet again brought together in the image of taking hostage. If Theseus spends one night with his new bride, every hour will be so pleasurable as to make him spend a hundred more with her; but the suggestion is of a kind of warfare in which hostages are taken from Theseus, depleting his forces (as it were), his powers of action beyond the bridal bed. And in the last line 'banquet' links back

to the ‘cherries’ of Hippolyta’s lips. The opposition is between feasting on sensual delights, and so obliterating thoughts of anything else, and the call to a warrior-king’s duty.

One of Fletcher’s more eloquent passages of similar length points up the disparity between the two playwrights as poets. The imprisoned Arcite and Palamon join in despairing of their future:

No Palamon,
 Those hopes are prisoners with us. Here we are,
 And here the graces of our youths must wither,
 Like a too-timely spring. Here age must find us
 And, which is heaviest, Palamon, unmarried—
 The sweet embraces of a loving wife
 Loaden with kisses, armed with thousand Cupids,
 Shall never clasp our necks; no issue know us;
 No figures of ourselves shall we e’er see
 To glad our age, and, like young eagles, teach ’em
 Boldly to gaze against bright arms and say,
 ‘Remember what your fathers were, and conquer.’ (2.2.25–36)

Seven of the twelve lines have double endings, three of them monosyllables: ‘find us’, ‘know us’, and ‘teach ’em’ all typically consist of verb plus pronoun. The falling cadences help create the wistful tone. Nearly all the lines are end-stopped: most editors also place a comma after ‘wife’. There are only mild variations from the metrical paradigm, such as the trochaic inversions of the first foot in ‘Like a’ and ‘Loaden’. There are no physically ‘packed’ words, no double meanings. The syntax is simple, consisting mainly of a series of main clauses. Metre, vocabulary, and sentence structure together form a straightforward string of statements elaborating on the idea that the cousins, confined in jail, will never marry and have sons. Figurative language is restricted to similes—‘Like . . . spring’ in 28, ‘like . . . eagles’ in 34—and the epithets are as expected: ‘embraces’ are ‘sweet’, a ‘wife’ is ‘loving’, ‘arms’ are ‘bright’. The god-figure Cupid is a decorative property, an attribute of a thousand wifely kisses, not an integrated symbol like Shakespeare’s Mars. The passage elicits sympathy for the cousins and ends with a climax that is true to their nature and situation. On stage, it would be clearly comprehensible and doubtless more immediately effective than the Shakespearean passage. But there is little to stimulate the imagination.

In Arcite’s prayer to Mars in 5.1, the god is ‘Thou . . . that both mak’st and break’st | The stony girth of cities’ (54–5), and the imperious Venus addressed by Palamon in 5.2 likewise creates and destroys. Nostalgia for the prelapsarian state symbolized by Diana is beautifully expressed in Emilia’s treasured memories of her girlhood friendship with the dead Flavina (1.4.47–82), a more elaborate and delicate counterpart to Polixenes’ description of the boyhood he shared with Leontes, when, like ‘twinned lambs that did frisk i’th’ sun’, they ‘knew not | The doctrine of ill-doing’ (*The Winter’s Tale* 1.2.69–72). Shakespeare could no more erase his poetic self from *The Two Noble Kinsmen* than Fletcher could emulate it. A Shakespearean set piece is like an operatic aria: though integral to the drama, it can, in its own right, stir the emotions, intellect, and

imagination, and focus aspects of the playwright's vision. For instance, a more benign Venus emerges in the rapturous praise with which Arcite idealizes and deifies Emilia in 3.1.1–30. Queen of the May, she is transformed by the poetry into a veritable Flora in Botticelli's 'Primavera', and 'jewel | O'th' wood, o'th' world' besides. The way that 'wood' expands into 'world' beautifully mimics Arcite's surge of religious devotion.

Fletcher is at his most typical in such speeches as the soliloquy (the whole of 2.4) in which the Jailor's Daughter tells the audience how she came to fall in love with Palamon and how she delights in the daily routines that bring her into contact with him. Romantic adoration in Arcite is infatuation in the Daughter. She speaks with a childish simplicity. The breathless, staccato outpouring, while recognizably Fletcherian, is expertly organized to reveal character and advance the sub-plot, and the discrepancy between her feelings toward Palamon and his toward her makes for the kind of pathos in which Fletcher specializes. The incremental expansion of 'Then I loved him, | Extremely loved him, infinitely loved him' (14–15) is among his favourite tricks of style. The effect is very different from Arcite's 'O'th' wood, o'th' world'.

Nevertheless, reviewers have often regarded the Jailor's Daughter's sex-driven journey from reckless adolescent exuberance through desperation into madness as the highlight of a stage production. Although her story is mainly Fletcher's province, her third soliloquy (another whole scene, 3.2), when she is alone at night in a wood, having failed to find Palamon, was written by Shakespeare, whose verse vividly evokes her dire predicament. But he has accommodated his style to Fletcher's to the extent of breaking the Daughter's thirty-eight lines into short, urgent, troubled units of speech. Her subsequent mania assumes a darker, more authentic air when Shakespeare takes over its dramatization in 4.3. Although the Daughter, as she first appears in Shakespeare's prose in 2.1, is far more sophisticated and literate than she becomes when next seen in Fletcher's 2.4, the playwrights clearly worked to a jointly considered plan. It is Fletcher who in 2.2 introduces the cousins' conflict between love and friendship and who develops it in 3.6, and it is he who contributes Emilia's long but inconclusive debate with herself over which of the two men she prefers. In both 2.2 and 3.6 there are Fletcher's trademark sudden reversals from one position, expressed in extravagant terms, to its opposite, creating a note of flippancy absent from Emilia's comparison of Palamon and Arcite in 5.5.41–55. The contrasts in situation, attitude, and behaviour of the two young women, so unequal in social class, are important in the overall scheme.

Yet collaboration between playwrights of such different temperaments and talents did make for inconsistencies in characterization. Fletcher's Palamon and Arcite, who luxuriate in self-pity (2.2) and josh each other about their former sexual conquests (3.3.28–42) are scarcely recognizable as the sturdy moralists of Shakespeare's 1.2 or 5.2.30–9. The knowing innuendo that Fletcher gives Emilia in 2.2.151–2 is foreign to Shakespeare's conception of her nature. Collaborating playwrights evidently first devised a 'plot' furnishing a detailed description of each scene or episode (Vickers 2002: 20–3), but to the actual composition of these they brought their individual values and skills. Fletcher was inclined to exploit his material for immediate theatrical effect, rather than in the interests of the whole.

ALL IS TRUE AND CARDENIO

The Two Noble Kinsmen is the sole extant play for which there is clear external evidence of Shakespeare's collaboration with another dramatist. But Fletcher's hand in *All Is True* is no less manifest. Shakespeare begins this play too, writing the first two scenes, but the final three scenes of Act 1 are Fletcher's. Disregarding prologues and epilogues (Fletcher's in both plays), Shakespeare's share of *All Is True* (1.1–2, 2.3–4, 3.2.1–204, 5.1), namely 42 per cent of the lines, was proportionally smaller than his share of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, namely 46 per cent. Despite the enthusiasm of recent editors of *All Is True*, older views that in it 'Shakespeare's dramatic imagination was' not operating 'at anything like full pressure' seem warranted.¹⁴ The play dramatizes events from a stretch of Henry VIII's reign, beginning with the meeting of Henry with Francis I of France on the Field of Cloth of Gold (1520) and ending with the birth and baptism of Elizabeth (1533).

The structure is unusual. Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles* (second edition, 1587) is the source for the successive falls of the Duke of Buckingham, Queen Katharine, and Cardinal Wolsey—the three linked by Katharine's defence of Buckingham and by Wolsey's hubristic machinations—and for the coronation of Anne Boleyn and the christening of the daughter that she bears Henry. Interpolated into the final act from John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (first published 1563) is the abortive trial of Cranmer, who delivers the closing prophecy of the glories of Elizabeth and James. Spectacle, elaborately described in stage directions, is prominent: a masque of shepherds at Wolsey's banquet (1.4); processions from Buckingham's arraignment (2.1) and to Katherine's trial (2.4), Anne's coronation (4.1), and the christening (5.4); and the dying Katherine's vision (4.2).

The prologue promises tear-inducing *exempla* of 'how mightiness meets misery' (Prologue, 30), but this vague theme does not persist into Act 5. Rather, a stretch of history, treated in the spirit of Shakespeare's late romances, is manipulated into a pattern in which good providentially emerges from a medley of ills and the birth of the infant Elizabeth redeems old woes. Her christening, prompting Cranmer's vision of the future, performs a function similar to the unions of a younger generation, Florizel and Perdita or Ferdinand and Miranda. Henry's evolution as a monarch, freeing himself from Wolsey's domination, and the series of spiritual gains from worldly losses, are subsumed within this broad design.

All is true, so the title claims, but the play repeatedly gives us contradictory versions of the same event, character, or behaviour: the 'truth' seems to be a matter of 'on the one hand . . . on the other hand'. This is most blatantly the case in 4.2. Fletcher has Katherine sum up the dead Wolsey's character: he was ambitious, corrupt, ruthless. But her Gentleman Usher, Griffith, immediately voices a more charitable account of

¹⁴ J. C. Maxwell (ed.), *Henry the Eighth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), xxxii.

Wolsey's career, stressing his accomplishments and virtues. Fletcher has deliberately juxtaposed the two speeches, which are closely based on separate passages in Holinshed. In *The John Fletcher Plays*, Clifford Leech associates such a technique with 'Fletcher's way'.¹⁵ But even in Shakespeare's *All is True* 1.1 Norfolk's enthusiastic description of the Field of Cloth of Gold as an occasion on which the English matched the French in opulent display is countered by Buckingham's splenetic repudiation of 'vanities' organized by Wolsey to further his own ambitions.

However, characterization, in particular, is affected by the co-authors' dissimilar verse styles. As Brian Vickers has pointed out, Shakespeare introduced and individualized all the main characters, 'leaving Fletcher to take care of their endings'.¹⁶ As Buckingham, Wolsey, and Katherine fall from greatness, their personal identities are dissolved by the alchemy of Fletcher's verse. Renunciation, forgiveness, and acceptance become the keynotes. Fletcher's languid cadences, with their dying fall, are not unsuited to convey the changes in spiritual state, but they sentimentalize their speakers. At her trial in 2.4 Katherine is a forceful, intelligent, woman, engaging in passionate self-defence, with the regal dignity and strength of Hermione in *The Winter's Tale*, 3.2. Her sentences vary in form and length, often running across the line divisions, with mid-line pauses. The verse is subtle and vigorous. As the old Arden editor, Knox Pooler, remarked, in such Shakespearean passages 'the rhythm is the meaning and the emotion of the speaker expressed by sound; it changes with every change of feeling, with every hesitation and impulse'.¹⁷ Fletcher's verse reduces the Katherine of 3.1 to a passive victim, even when she is indignant. Here she addresses the cardinals Wolsey and Campeius:

The more shame for ye! Holy men I thought ye,
 Upon my soul, two reverend cardinal virtues—
 But cardinal sins and hollow hearts I fear ye.
 Mend 'em, for shame, my lords! Is this your comfort?
 The cordial that ye bring a wretched lady,
 A woman lost among ye, laughed at, scorned?
 I will not wish ye half my miseries—
 I have more charity. But say I warned ye.
 Take heed, for heaven's sake take heed, lest at once
 The burden of my sorrows fall upon ye. (3.1.101–10)

Typical are the succession of double endings ('thought ye', 'virtues', 'fear ye', 'comfort', 'lady', 'warned ye', 'upon ye'), four with the pronoun 'ye' and three of those preceded by a verb, and the strings of small elaborations on a phrase: 'your comfort', for example, is varied as 'cordial that ye bring a wretched lady', 'wretched lady' as 'woman lost among

¹⁵ Clifford Leech, *The John Fletcher Plays* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1962), 154.

¹⁶ Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, 486.

¹⁷ C. Knox Pooler (ed.), *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry VIII* (London: Methuen, 1915), xxiii.

ye', 'lost among ye' as 'laughed at', and 'laughed at' as 'scorned'. Fletcher tends to pour all utterances into the same rhythmical mould.

Ralph Waldo Emerson found in Fletcher's style 'a trace of pulpit eloquence',¹⁸ and this is appropriate enough to Archbishop Cranmer's oration over the new-born Elizabeth. Audiences have regularly been moved by its plangent strains, as also by the elegiac cadences of Katherine's valedictory speeches in 4.2. The play was evidently jointly plotted, and in 5.1 Shakespeare points forward to Fletcher's close. Fletcher's material is stageworthy, and Shakespeare seems to have been content to give his collaborator free rein, but the discrepancy between Shakespeare's and Fletcher's poetic styles has certainly not been 'erased'.

If *Double Falsehood* is an adaptation of a third (though first-written) Shakespeare-Fletcher collaboration, any account of the original *Cardenio* must be largely conjectural. Theobald's play contains many of the ingredients of Fletcherian tragicomedy and Shakespearean romance: wronged lovers, male rivalry, women endangered, madness, disguise (of a woman as a boy), pastoral scenes, and a complicated *Cymbeline*-like denouement in which lost young folk are restored to their fathers and couples reunited. The overall effect is more Fletcherian than Shakespearean, and Fletcher's verse style remains evident in much of the play's second half, as when Leonora, forsaken by Henriquez, laments:

You maidens that shall live
To hear my mournful tale when I am ashes,
Be wise, and to an oath no more give credit,
To tears, to vows—false both—or anything
A man shall promise, than to clouds that now
Bear such a pleasing shape and now are nothing.¹⁹

This wringing of pathos from lines in which a character imagines herself a posthumous exemplum is typical, and is closely matched in the Jailor's Daughter's fears of the consequences of her freeing Palamon in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*:

If the law
Find me and then condemn me for't, some wenches,
Some honest-hearted maids, will sing my dirge,
And tell to memory my death was noble,
Dying almost a martyr. (2.6.13–17)

Theobald, revising for the eighteenth-century stage, would have been less tolerant of Shakespeare's complex late poetry, and wholly Shakespearean lines are harder to identify. William Davenant's adaptation of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* as *The Rivals* (1664) retained some of Fletcher's share but left no line by Shakespeare intact. Nevertheless, the signs are that Shakespeare began *Cardenio* too, the bulk of the younger

¹⁸ Quoted by Marco Mincoff, 'Henry VIII and Fletcher', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 12 (1961), 239–60, at 248.

¹⁹ Modernized from the second issue of the 1728 edition, 49, sig. E1.

dramatist's contribution belonging to 3.3 onwards. In all three collaborations with Fletcher, Shakespeare was more apt to reshape his sources, Fletcher to echo their wording.

SHAKESPEARE'S COLLABORATIVE PLAYS 1605–1607: WITH GEORGE WILKINS AND WITH THOMAS MIDDLETON

While *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, *All Is True*, and (probably) *Cardenio* form a coda to Shakespeare's unaided late plays, *Pericles* (1607) is their precursor. In this case, Shakespeare wrote the last three acts, while the first two were written by George Wilkins, author of *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage* (1606), performed by the King's Men, and main co-author, with John Day and William Rowley, of *The Travels of the Three English Brothers* (1607).²⁰ *Pericles* retells the story, popular throughout Europe for a thousand years, of Apollonius of Tyre, as recycled by the medieval poet John Gower in his *Confessio Amantis*, and, in a prose version, by Laurence Twine. The old folk-tale is deeply rooted in the 'collective unconscious' of the ancient world, and much modern critical interpretation of the play, which adheres closely to the original, might equally well be addressing the Latin *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri*.

Shakespeare's late plays cover two generations, in which infants grow to marriageable age. In *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest* Shakespeare solves the structural problem thus posed by loading the first act with narrative informing us of events long past. In *The Winter's Tale* a personified Time enters to fill the sixteen-year gap between Acts 3 and 4. In *All Is True* the child is born not at the beginning but at the end, and narrative is transformed into closing prophecy of her future reign. In *Pericles* the figure of Gower is resurrected to serve as choric presenter, whose quaint tetrameters guide the audience through time and space as the seafaring princely hero, after a false start, acquires a wife, begets a daughter, is separated from both, and is finally reunited with them.

Although Wilkins was a lesser dramatist than Fletcher, and *Pericles* is preserved only in a textually corrupt quarto (1609), it is, as T. S. Eliot declared, a 'very great play', building to two intensely moving recognition scenes that restore to *Pericles* his daughter Marina and his wife Thaisa, both supposed long dead.²¹ The first holds audiences spellbound, as father and daughter inch their way toward realization of the other's identity and *Pericles*' spirit is drawn from despair to bliss. The second is treated economically, but Shakespeare can touch the heart with the simplest of speeches, as

²⁰ The evidence for the authorship of *Pericles* is most fully set forth in MacDonald P. Jackson, *Defining Shakespeare: 'Pericles' as Test Case* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), where the sources are also discussed, and the contrasting styles of Shakespeare and Wilkins analysed (pp. 149–65).

²¹ For details concerning Eliot's statement see Jackson, *Defining Shakespeare*, 24 n. 40.

when Pericles draws Thaisa's attention to Marina, unseen by her mother since her birth at sea, and Thaisa responds 'Blessed, and mine own!' (Sc. 22.70).

Pericles derives its essential coherence from the Apollonius legend, which, despite its episodic nature, has its own inner dynamic. Wilkins dramatizes the young prince's discovery of incest between Antiochus and his daughter, his flight and his relief of famine at Tharsus, and the reversal of his fortunes when, shipwrecked on the coast of Pentapolis, he wins princess Thaisa as his bride. Wilkins's verse is halting, hobbled by sporadic rhyme, his manner sententious and prolix, his dramaturgy crude. But there are compensatory elements of the pictorial and emblematic; Wilkins can write lively colloquial prose (in Pericles' encounter with fishermen in Scene 5); and the scenes at the jovial King Simonides' court at Pentapolis have surprising theatrical vitality, with their parade of knights, banquet, and dance. Wilkins gets the events of Pericles' unmarried life onto the stage. Shakespeare takes over from Scene 11 (or Act 3) onwards, his imagination fully involved in the latter portion of the story, from Marina's birth and Thaisa's apparent death aboard a tempest-tossed ship, through Thaisa's miraculous recovery and her husband's and daughter's 'painful adventures', to the conclusion in which all three are 'crowned with joy at last' (Sc. 22.13). Once the fortunes of Marina (in particular) and Thaisa enter the tale, Shakespeare's superior architectonic skill is required for a less doggedly linear, more complex dramatic structure, as the focus shifts among father, mother, and daughter. Characters are more 'inwardly' observed. Shakespeare's superb poetry creates a sea-storm on the bare Globe platform, turns a boy actor lying in a wooden box into the lovely confined queen whose eyelids 'Begin to part their fringes of bright gold' (Sc. 12.98) as she is revived by the physician-mage Cerimon, and conjures transcendental emotion from the blissful finale. The play benefits from the simple division of labour.

But there is nevertheless evidence that Wilkins, familiar with bawdy-house trade, contributed to the brothel scenes, in which Marina defends her chastity. This helps account for some anomalies surrounding Lysimachus' visit as a client in Scene 19.²²

In *Timon of Athens* (1605–6) the collaborators' shares are more intertangled.²³ There are indications that the compilers of the Shakespeare First Folio (1623) had not originally intended to include this tragedy.²⁴ In 1968 Philip Edwards remarked that had it been omitted, 'We should not have known . . . of Shakespeare's power to write satirical merchant comedy in a style which only Middleton can equal.'²⁵ It is now clear that the 'brilliant' scenes admired by Edwards (3.1–3.3) are among those composed by Middleton himself.

²² Jackson, *Defining Shakespeare*, 211–13.

²³ There is detailed information in Wells and Taylor, *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion*, 501–2; Taylor and Lavagnino (eds.), *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to the Collected Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 356–8; and Antony B. Dawson and Gretchen E. Minton (eds.), *Timon of Athens* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2008), 401–7.

²⁴ Wells and Taylor, *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion*, 127–8.

²⁵ Philip Edwards, *Shakespeare and the Confines of Art* (London: Methuen, 1968).

The plot is simple. Lord Timon, extravagantly bountiful, finds himself insolvent, is denied by the false friends from whom he seeks to borrow, withdraws to the wilderness and rails against humankind, until, all passion spent, he dies on ‘the beachèd verge of the salt flood’ (5.2.101). In the twentieth century, theories of the play’s multiple authorship gave way to accounts that viewed it as ‘unfinished’ or related it to morality plays, *de casibus* tragedies, or ‘shews’ based on seasonal or diurnal myth. It is stylistically uneven in the extreme; scenes and characters—Alcibiades in 3.5, the Fool and Page in 2.2—are inadequately integrated into the action; there are puzzling structural anomalies, such as the failure of the Poet and Painter, whose entry is announced at 4.3.353, to appear until two unrelated episodes, covering two hundred lines, have intervened; there is muddle over the value of a talent; Timon is given two epitaphs.

Recent editors who accept the overwhelming case for Middleton having written about one-third of the play recognize that inconsistencies and loose ends in the Folio text have arisen through a process of co-authorship that had not reached the stage of a final combined effort to fully integrate individual scenes, episodes, and speeches and to ensure continuity. It seems probable that Middleton ‘wrote his contributions after Shakespeare had stopped working on his’.²⁶ Middleton was responsible for 1.2, in which Timon as host is ‘the very soul of bounty’ (209) but we learn from his steward Flavius that the coffers are empty; for almost the whole of Act 3, in which Timon is refused financial aid, is pursued by creditors, and spurns all his guests at a mock-banquet, and in which the soldier Alcibiades is banished after offending the senate as he pleads for the life of a condemned friend; for portions of Act 4 in which Flavius appears (460–537); and for a few other short patches here and there.

Middleton thus created the scenes on which the play pivots, so that Timon the city-dwelling Philanthrope of Acts 1–2 turns into Timon the cave-dwelling Misanthrope of Acts 4–5, and Athenian captain Alcibiades is provoked into becoming his city’s foe. Middleton was unrivalled at portraying unctuous hypocrisy and the scenes in which three of the destitute Timon’s friends concoct pretexts for fobbing him off are in his satiric vein at its sharpest. The later, Shakespearean diatribes in which Timon redefines Renaissance cosmology in terms of ‘thievery’ are unmatched in fury outside *King Lear*. Between them the playwrights created a generic mix with its own peculiar flavour.

EARLY COLLABORATIONS

The plays discussed so far were composed for the King’s Men late in Shakespeare’s career, when his dramatic poetry—of which a sample from *The Two Noble Kinsmen*

²⁶ Taylor and Lavagnino, *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture*, 357.

has been analysed at some length—was highly distinctive. In his plays of the early 1590s it is often much less so. He had doubtless absorbed a range of styles as an actor. There is a stylistic sameness about much of the drama written at this time and playwrights freely borrowed one another's phrases and lines. The circumstances in which Shakespeare began to write for the theatre remain obscure, and the chronology of his earliest plays is uncertain. Yet some progress has recently been made. The revised Oxford *Complete Works* (2005) is the only edition to acknowledge *Titus Andronicus*, tentatively dated 1592, as 'by William Shakespeare, with George Peele', but the ascription has been fully substantiated. Peele, eight years Shakespeare's senior, began the play, composing the long first act and (probably) 2.1, 2.2, and 4.1, which initiates the counter-movement leading to Titus' shocking revenge for the atrocities committed against him and his family.

With the advent of a 'Theatre of Cruelty' in the mid-twentieth century, *Titus Andronicus*, frequently reviled as too replete with Senecan horrors to be substantially Shakespeare's, began to gain admirers. Returning Roman war hero Titus' insistence on carrying out his customary sacrifice of 'the proudest prisoner of the Goths' (1.1.96), Queen Tamora's eldest son, provokes extravagant reprisals on the Andronici by Tamora's Moorish lover Aaron. Titus' daughter Lavinia enters 2.4, '*her hands cut off and her tongue cut out, and ravished*', bodies are stabbed, throats cut, hands and heads lopped. In retaliation Titus slaughters Tamora's sons, bakes them in a pie, and serves it to their mother. In the opening scene, as the late emperor's two sons vie for succession, Titus is asked to 'help to set a head on headless Rome' (1.1.186), and in the final scene his brother Marcus considers 'how to knit' the 'broken limbs' of the state 'again into one body' (5.3.69–71). So the physical mutilations bear a metaphorical relationship to the body politic. Although Peele set the play's nightmare events in motion, as a dramatic action organized in terms of cause and effect it is structurally more sophisticated than any of his unaided works. Therefore Shakespeare must have taken a significant role in the plotting.

Peele's verse in *Titus Andronicus* is marked not only by striking verbal parallels with his known works but also by an un-Shakespearean avoidance of double endings, the repetition *ad nauseam* of a few common words and turns of phrase, a heavy use of vocatives, a 'lumbering way with rhetorical figures',²⁷ and various quantifiable features of vocabulary, grammar, function-word use, alliteration, metrics, and so on. The effect is of rhythmical and dramatic flatness and sameness. When Tamora meets Aaron in 2.3 the dialogue suddenly becomes lively and varied. The language is concrete and vivid. On a summer's day, when 'birds chant melody on every bush' and the 'snake lies rolled in the cheerful sun', 'The green leaves quiver with the cooling wind, | And make a chequered shadow on the ground' (12–15). Tamora invites Aaron to sit with her and listen to 'the babbling echo' that 'mocks the hounds' in the nearby hunt, as their yelping answers 'the well-tuned horns', 'As if a double hunt were heard at once' (17–19), and

²⁷ Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, 235.

recalls Aeneas and Dido's amorous encounter, 'curtained with a counsel-keeping cave' (24). The imagery and the inventive compound adjective are redolent of the younger Shakespeare at his most individual.²⁸ And Tamora's twenty-line speech is organized as a verse paragraph that ends by stitching together into a fancied post-coital lullaby the sounds of hounds, horns, and birds. The image of the snake is picked up in Aaron's reply. Tamora's thoughts are of love, his of vengeance, and so the snake lying 'rolled in the cheerful sun' becomes 'an adder when she doth unroll | to do some fatal execution' (36–7). Likewise, although the *mature* Shakespeare would not have written the speech in which Marcus bandages his mutilated niece in a swathe of Ovidian conceits, it is well beyond Peele's poetic powers (2.4.11–57).

In the opening act, Peele manages stage action which requires dialogue between characters on two levels and movement up and down (as he does at the beginning of *David and Bethsabe*), but it is only when Shakespeare takes over that scenes (notably 3.1) are shaped to an emotional climax, horrors are duly foreshadowed, characters become more than mere roles, and an audience's sympathies are engaged. Titus is no Lear, but his sufferings elicit compassion. In Shakespeare's hands Aaron the Moor, silent throughout Peele's 1.1, becomes a prime mover of the plot—and an exuberant fiend, brilliantly humanized by his solicitude for his illegitimate baby son. The achievement is uneven, but many elements of Shakespeare's later tragedies are here present in embryo.

While Peele and his more talented junior partner seem to have planned *Titus Andronicus* together, Shakespeare's contribution to *1 Henry VI* may not have belonged to the original play. Even E. K. Chambers,²⁹ who protested against excessive 'disintegration' of the Shakespeare canon, believed *1 Henry VI* to be of multiple authorship. But Andrew S. Cairncross's Arden editions of the three parts of *Henry VI* (1962–4) consolidated a new orthodoxy—that they had been written in numerical order by Shakespeare alone as part of a coherent tetralogy ending with *Richard III*. It was not until 1995 that Gary Taylor effectively challenged this consensus, dating *1 Henry VI* after the other two parts, assigning Shakespeare 2.4 and 4.2–4.7.³² Thomas Nashe Act 1, and two unknown dramatists the remainder of the play.³⁰ Three scholars have since provided grounds for reaching substantial agreement with these conclusions. In a book-length analysis, full of new data, Paul Vincent modifies Taylor's findings by merging his two unknown dramatists into one and denying Shakespeare 4.6.³¹ Brian Vickers and Marina Tarlinskaja deny him 4.7.1–32 as well.³²

²⁸ For a few parallels with early Shakespeare works, see MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Determining Authorship: A New Technique', *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama* 41 (2002), 1–14, at 10–12.

²⁹ Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, 2: 277–95.

³⁰ Taylor, 'Shakespeare and Others: The Authorship of *Henry the Sixth, Part One*', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 7 (1995), 145–205.

³¹ See Paul Vincent, *When 'harey' Met Shakespeare: The Genesis of the First Part of Henry the Sixth* (Saarbrücken: DVM Verlag Dr Müller, 2008).

³² The results of Tarlinskaja's metrical analysis (part of a work 'in progress') were outlined by Vickers in 'Incomplete Shakespeare: Or, Denying Coauthorship in *1 Henry IV*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 58 (2007), 311–52, at 343–5.

Evidence that Nashe was responsible for Act 1 is compelling: for example, the idiosyncratic phraseology is his; the jerky, disconnected verse with its superabundant grammatical inversions ('Sad tidings bring I to you out of France', 1.1.58) matches that of his *Summer's Last Will and Testament*; the numerous biblical and classical allusions (much less frequent in the rest of the play) are in his manner; and the stage directions beginning with 'Here' reflect his practice. Act 1 also borrows from recondite sources used elsewhere by Nashe but not by Shakespeare. Vincent argues, but without dogmatism, that *1 Henry VI* contains some revision by Shakespeare of the 'harey the vj' listed by Philip Henslowe and produced by Strange's Men at the Rose theatre on 3 March 1592, and that this had been co-written by Nashe and an anonymous dramatist.

Beginning with Henry V's funeral, the play dramatizes the struggles of an England weakened by civil quarrels to retain his conquests in France. Joan la Pucelle (Joan of Arc) rallies the French, while Lord Talbot is presented as the English hero. History is treated with considerable freedom. In Shakespeare's 2.4—the entirely fictional 'Temple Garden' scene—the symbolic plucking of red or white roses by nobles on opposing sides of the York–Lancaster divide adumbrates the Wars of the Roses. Shakespeare's 4.5 is clearly a replacement for 4.6, and his scenes in Act 4 expose the national shortcomings that result in the heroic deaths of Talbot and his son. Again, the Shakespearean material displays more vibrant images, more colourful vocabulary, more pointed couplets, and a stronger sense of the dramatic than is to be found in the rest of *1 Henry VI*. Talbot's extended analogy of his surrounded soldiers to a herd of deer 'bounded in a pale', with its apposite hunting terminology and typical pun on 'dear deer', is outside the scope of other playwrights at this time (4.2.45–54).³³

The kind of scrupulous attribution study recently undertaken on *1 Henry VI* may yet demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that Shakespeare was not the sole author of *The First Part of the Contention* and *Richard Duke of York* (2 and 3 *Henry VI*). But results may remain indeterminate if specific collaborators cannot confidently be identified, since it is always possible to suppose that writing less recognizably Shakespeare's than that of the scenes attributed to him in *1 Henry VI* simply belongs to a more primitive phase of his development.

A big step forward has been taken in *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, edited by Hugh Craig and Arthur F. Kinney.³⁴ Their team's methods, first tested on texts of known authorship, are based on counts of (a) lexical words and (b) high-frequency function words that are used significantly more often by one playwright than another. Besides giving broad support to the allocations made in the Oxford *Textual Companion* and *Complete Works*,³⁵ the results suggest that Marlowe

³³ The hunting terms are glossed in Edward Burns (ed.) *King Henry VI: Part 1* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2000), 235. He might have added that 'a pinch' is a slight bite from a hound (*OED sb 1*).

³⁴ Craig and Kinney (eds.), *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

³⁵ Wells and Taylor (eds.), *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (1987), and *idem*, *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986; 2nd edn. 2005).

may have written some of the Joan of Arc material in *1 Henry VI* and some of the Jack Cade material in *2 Henry VI*.³⁶

EARLY PLAYS NOT COLLECTED IN THE FIRST FOLIO (1623)

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Craig and Kinney also throw light on two early plays that, though absent from the First Folio, have long haunted the fringes of the Shakespeare canon: *Arden of Faversham*, published in a quarto of 1592, and *Edward III*, published in a quarto of 1596. In the nineteenth century, each was the subject of vigorous debate. The poet Swinburne championed the former's claims, but scorned the latter's.³⁷ The only external support for either comes from booksellers' unreliable catalogues of 1656.³⁸ There is now a measure of agreement, consolidated by Craig and Kinney, that Shakespeare wrote some of *Edward III*.³⁹ The revised Oxford *Complete Works* (2005) assigns him Scenes 2 (from the King's entrance before line 90), 3, 12, and 'possibly' 13 (1.2, 2.1–2, 4.4, 4.5 in other editions). In the first two, King Edward attempts in vain to seduce the Countess of Salisbury, after he has delivered her castle from Scots enemies allied with France. Once he has been taught, by the Countess's resourceful defence of her chastity, to master his adulterous passion, he pursues his claims to the French crown in a series of battles at which his son, the Black Prince, proves his valour. The main source, Berners' translation of Froissart's *Chronicles* (1523–5), is supplemented by Holinshed and, for the Countess scenes, by William Painter's *The Palace of Pleasure* (1575). As a chronicle history *Edward III* reads like a rudimentary forerunner of *Henry V*, but lacks the single big climax of an Agincourt. The scenes in which Edward woos the Countess have exceptional dramatic

³⁶ Craig and Kinney, *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, 40–77.

³⁷ Algernon Charles Swinburne, *A Study of Shakespeare* (London: Heinemann, 1918; first published Chatto & Windus, 1879), 128–41, 231–74.

³⁸ MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Shakespeare and the Quarrel Scene in *Arden of Faversham*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 57 (2006), 249–93, at 253.

³⁹ For a history of opinion on the play's authorship and a discussion of sources see G. Harold Metz (ed.), *Sources of Four Plays Ascribed to Shakespeare* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989), 3–42; also Giorgio Melchiori (ed.), *King Edward III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Metrical data compiled by Philip Timberlake (*The Feminine Ending in English Blank Verse: A Study of its Use by Early Writers in the Measure and its Development in the Drama up to the Year 1595* [Menasha, WI: George Banta 1931], 77–80) and Marina Tarlinskaja ('Looking for Shakespeare in *Edward III*', forthcoming in *Shakespeare Yearbook* [private communication Sept. 2009]) support the Oxford ascription and suggest Shakespeare's possible involvement in Scenes 14–17, as do computerized investigations reported by Thomas Merriam (see '*Edward III*', *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 15 (2000), 157–86) and Ward E. Y. Elliot and Robert J. Valenza (see 'Two tough nuts to crack: did Shakespeare write the "Shakespeare" portions of *Sir Thomas More* and *Edward III*? Part 1 and Part II: Conclusion', *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 25 (2010), 67–83, 167–77). The Craig and Kinney team do not investigate the whole play, but support the ascription of the Countess scenes (2–3) to Shakespeare (Craig and Kinney, *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, 116–33).

and linguistic vitality, besides affording the play's sole touches of humour, while in Scene 12 Audley preaches the inevitability of death to Prince Edward in weighty lines that anticipate the Duke's homily to Claudio in *Measure for Measure*, 3.1. In both the Countess scenes and the war scenes at Poitiers (11 and 13) characters find themselves caught between the claims of conflicting oaths—a predicament explored in several of Shakespeare's earliest plays.

Edward III might have been composed almost any time between about 1588 and its entry on the Stationers' Register in December 1595. The domestic tragedy *Arden of Faversham* is indebted to an account in the 1587 edition of Holinshed's *Chronicle* of an actual crime—Thomas Arden's murder at the instigation of his wife Alice and her lover Mosby.⁴⁰ It has yet to gain admission to the canon, but is now knocking at the door. Jackson made out a case for Shakespeare's authorship of at least part of the play, notably the superb 'quarrel scene' between the two adulterers (Sc. 8), which ends with their reconciliation and the renewal of their murderous intent.⁴¹ The independent lexical and function-word tests employed in the 'computational stylistics' of Craig and Kinney converge to confirm that Shakespeare was probably responsible for much of the middle of the play, from Scene 4 to Scene 9, a stretch of text corresponding to Act 3 in older editions.⁴²

More firmly established is Shakespeare's collaboration with Henry Chettle, Thomas Heywood, and Thomas Dekker on the refurbishing of *Sir Thomas More*, extant only in a British Library manuscript. Shakespeare is almost certainly the famous 'Hand D' who contributed a scene in which More employs his oratory to quell a riot, and is the probable author of one soliloquy copied by a scribe.⁴³ The occasion of this revamping and of the composition of the original script (which is in the handwriting of the minor playwright Anthony Munday) are in dispute, but the most likely date of Shakespeare's contribution is around 1603–4. The concatenation of ideas and images in More's address to the mob is strikingly Shakespearean, as R. W. Chambers showed in a classic

⁴⁰ The fullest edition is M. L. Wine (ed.), *The Tragedy of Arden of Faversham* (London: Methuen 1973).

⁴¹ MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Shakespeare and the Quarrel Scene in *Arden of Faversham*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 57 (2006), 249–93; see also Jayne M. Carroll and MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Shakespeare, *Arden of Faversham*, and "Literature Online"', *Shakespeare Newsletter* 54 (2004), 3–4, 6; Jackson, 'Compound Adjectives in Arden of Faversham', 51–4; and *idem*, 'Shakespearean Features of the Poetic Style of *Arden of Faversham*', *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen* 230 (1993), 279–304.

⁴² See Craig and Kinney, *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, 78–99. There has been no secure identification of Shakespeare's collaborator or collaborators on *Edward III* or *Arden of Faversham*, though the Craig–Kinney team tested for Marlowe and Kyd in *Arden of Faversham*, and for Marlowe, Kyd, and Peele in *Edward III* (Craig and Kinney, at 99, 133).

⁴³ See MacDonald P. Jackson, 'The Date and Authorship of Hand D's Contribution to *Sir Thomas More*: Evidence from "Literature Online"', *Shakespeare Survey* 59 (2006), 69–78; *idem*, 'Is "Hand D" of *Sir Thomas More* Shakespeare's? Thomas Bayes and the Elliott–Valenza Authorship Tests', *Early Modern Literary Studies* 12.3 (2007), 11–36, <http://purl.oclc.org/emls/12-3/jackbaye.htm>; Craig and Kinney, *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, 134–61.

essay.⁴⁴ If Hand D is indeed Shakespeare's, this scene in *More* offers us the sole example, outside his signatures, of his penmanship and a glimpse into his playwriting workshop.⁴⁵

CONCLUSIONS

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What generalizations can be made about Shakespeare as collaborator? One concerns modes of operation. The normal division of labour was by scenes or substantial stretches of text. There is little evidence that Shakespeare and a co-author ever engaged in joint composition of individual speeches, though in *Timon of Athens* Middleton may have inserted a few short passages into scenes predominantly Shakespeare's, and in *Pericles* Shakespeare probably interpolated the famous 'blind mole' image into one speech by Wilkins (Sc. 1.143–5).

A more important finding is evaluative. Shakespeare wrote mainly poetic drama and his greatness as a dramatist is inseparable from his greatness as a poet. His dramatic verse is more flexible, vibrant, and expressive, and carries a heavier freight of meaning than that of his playwright contemporaries. Middleton's satirical cameos in Act 3 of *Timon of Athens*, mingling verse and prose, are the only scenes by a collaborator that Shakespeare could not have written better himself. The allocation of shares in Shakespeare co-authored plays does not *depend* on anybody's assessments of merit, but on a wealth of diverse quantifiable data. But value judgements need not be resisted. Shakespeare's dialogue is almost always superior, poetically and dramatically, to that of his co-authors. This superiority is not lost on experienced theatre goers. Reviewing a Royal Shakespeare Company production of *Pericles*, Robert Cushman remarked that after the first two acts 'the relief to the ear when we finally arrive at verse that moves in paragraphs instead of single lame sentences is hardly to be described'.⁴⁶ Some of Shakespeare's most densely concentrated passages in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* doubtless strain the capacities of an audience to the limit, but Emilia's account of her innocent love of Flavina, for example, is a gift to any actress with a feeling for poetry.

Emilia's speech is a wonderful piece of self-characterization. *Dramatis personae* acquire 'character' through the words and deeds given them by the playwright. The shallow natures of Lucullus, Lucius, and Sepronius in *Timon of Athens*, 3.1–3, are exposed by the glib and oily tones that Middleton's language generates for them. Fletcher's Jailor's Daughter in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* has a beguiling naiveté. But it

⁴⁴ Chambers, 'Shakespeare and the Play of *More*', in *Man's Unconquerable Mind* (London: Cape, 1939; rpt. 1952), 204–49.

⁴⁵ Shakespeare may have refurbished at least one other old play. Craig describes stylometric evidence that he wrote the famous 1602 'Additions' to Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (Craig and Kinney, *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, 162–80).

⁴⁶ Review in the *Observer*, 8 April 1979, cited by Jackson, *Defining Shakespeare*, 150 n. 3.

is a feature of the collaborative plays that, in most modes, it is Shakespeare's, rather than his co-author's, dialogue that most effectively animates characters, confers complexity, and arouses empathy. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century commentators who praised Shakespeare as the supreme master in the creation of 'life-like' characters were not wholly misguided.

Why, then, did Shakespeare collaborate? In the early 1590s, he may, as a mere tyro, have been obliged to in order to prove himself 'as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best' of the University Wits. Shakespeare's beginnings in the theatre are still the subject of speculation, but for an actor turning playwright some joint generation of scripts would have been natural enough, as it was for Ben Jonson a few years later.⁴⁷ By the mid-1600s, Shakespeare's motives must have been different. Middleton wrote *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (1605) and *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1606) for the King's Men during the same period in which he contributed to *Timon of Athens* (1605–6).⁴⁸ The company may have been eager to strengthen the connection. It is possible also that Shakespeare found the *Timon* material intractable and recognized in Middleton a playwright capable of supplying the comic matter on which the plot could hinge. *Pericles* may well have begun as Wilkins' venture, in which Shakespeare joined him upon appreciating the potential of the Apollonius story. Collaboration with Fletcher during the years 1612–14 is readily explained. *The Tempest* (1611) was Shakespeare's last unaided play and Fletcher succeeded him as the King's Men's leading dramatist. The three co-authored works provided a natural transition from the old guard to the new. Although none of Shakespeare's collaborative plays rivals *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, 1 and 2 *Henry IV*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, or *The Winter's Tale* in general esteem, the Shakespeare canon would be very much poorer without them.

⁴⁷ E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), 3: 373–4.

⁴⁸ Taylor and Lavagnino, *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture*, 355–63.

CHAPTER 3

MANUSCRIPT CIRCULATION

ARTHUR F. MAROTTI AND LAURA ESTILL

In literary history and historical bibliography, Shakespeare's writing is associated with print culture—through the ('good' and 'bad') quartos of the plays, the various Folios or collected editions of his dramas beginning in 1623, the much reprinted narrative poems (*Venus and Adonis* and [*The Rape of*] *Lucrece*), Thomas Thorpe's 1609 Quarto of *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, John Benson's 1640 editorially-distorted *Poems: Written by Wil. Shake-speare*, and other printed texts such as William Jaggard's *The Passionate Pilgrim by William Shakespeare* (1599 and 1612) and Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr* (1601). Shakespeare's name, which became a marketable commodity in the late 1590s, also appears on the title-pages of editions of plays not written by, but attributed to, him—for example, *The First Part of the True and Honorable Historie of the Life of Sir John Oldcastle* (1600), *The London Prodigal* (1605), and *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (1608).

In his own lifetime, Shakespeare may have circulated some or all of his *Sonnets* in manuscript, as is suggested by Frances Meres's famous reference to the 'sugred *Sonnets* among his priuate friends' and William Jaggard's inclusion in his 1599 volume of versions of *Sonnets* 138 and 144 textually different from those found in the 1609 Quarto.¹ As Richard Dutton and Lukas Erne have recently argued, Shakespeare may have released into manuscript circulation reading versions of some of his plays.² But, unlike such authors as Sir Philip Sidney or John Donne, Shakespeare himself did not make extensive use of this medium of literary transmission—except, of course, in writing scripts for the theatre company in which he was a shareholder.

¹ *Palladis Tamia* (1598), in G. Gregory Smith (ed.), *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1904), 317.

² See Richard Dutton, 'The Birth of the Author', in Cedric C. Brown and Arthur F. Marotti (eds.), *Texts and Cultural Change in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997), 13–78; and Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

After the publication of his plays and poems, however, Shakespearean texts were available for excerpting and appropriation by those who kept commonplace books or who compiled collections of verse. Nevertheless, if we look for Shakespearean poems or for excerpts from the poetry and plays, we find relatively few examples in the manuscript remains of the period—at least by comparison with authors who loomed large in the system of manuscript transmission—for example, John Donne, Sir Walter Raleigh, Ben Jonson, Henry King, Richard Corbett, Thomas Carew, and Robert Herrick. Those who copied Shakespearean poems, plays, or excerpts, for the most part, used printed editions as their sources rather than manuscript documents. There are a few exceptions, but copying from print was the norm.

SHAKESPEARE'S POETRY IN MANUSCRIPT

In early modern English manuscript commonplace-book miscellanies and poetical anthologies, compilers and groups of compilers transcribed or had professional scribes record a variety of poems either passed on to them by others or composed by themselves. In this world of manuscript transmission (in which poems were often copied from printed texts), much lyric poetry from the period was preserved—pieces by well-known, canonical writers, but also by lesser-known poets or anonymous authors. Even poets whose work reached print form in their own lifetimes or shortly after their deaths—John Donne, Ben Jonson, Thomas Carew, and Henry King, for example—remained attractive to verse collectors in this system of literary transmission.

Given the cultural visibility of William Shakespeare both as a dramatist and poet, it might seem strange that such a small percentage of his work survives in manuscript documents from the period. With the possible exception of some of the songs from the plays, not many of Shakespeare's poems, plays, or dramatic excerpts have been preserved in this medium. This may be partly due to the availability in printed editions of the dramas and of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, but, given Shakespeare's growing literary and cultural importance, it is still surprising how few times Shakespearean texts seem to have been recorded in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuscripts.

The shorter or longer non-dramatic poetry should be considered apart from the excerpts from the plays found in seventeenth-century manuscript collections, even though, especially in the cases of the two long narrative poems, commonplace-book compilers may have had the same motives for excerpting aphoristic or sententious passages from both kinds of writing. For purposes of this discussion, we omit two works that most specialists in the field would deny to Shakespeare, the lyric beginning 'Shall I die, shall I fly' and the funeral elegy for William Peter. We do, however, include the lyric 'When that thine eye hath chose the dame' (printed in *The Passionate Pilgrim* by William Shakespeare [1599 and 1612]).

This lyric, published in a textually garbled form in William Jaggard's *Passionate Pilgrim*, may or may not have been written by Shakespeare. It is found in complete form (with

textual variants) in three different manuscripts: British Library MS Harley 7392 (fol. 43r-v), Folger MSS V.a.89 (pp. 25–6), and V.a.339 (fol. 191v), the first manuscript version appearing to be the least corrupt text.³ This fifty-four-line piece was also used to fashion an eighteen-line poem that is found in British Library MSS Sloane 1792, fol. 11r-v and (minus two of the lines) Additional 30982, fol. 52v. In the former it reads:

Upon one that went a wooing
 The wiles and giles which women worke,
 Dissembled with an outward show:
 The trickes and toyes that in them lurke,
 The cocke that treads them cannot know.
 Have you not heard it saide full oft,
 A womans nay doth stand for nought.
 What though shee strive to try her strength,
 And bann and braule, and say thee nay;
 Her feeble force will yeld at length,⁴
 When craft hath taught her thus to say,
 Had women beene as strong as men,
 Good sooth you had not had it then.
 What though her cloudie lookes bee bent,
 Her stormie browes will calme eare night;
 And then to late shee will repent,
 that thus dissembled her delight;
 And twice desire eare it be day,
 That which with scorne shee put away.

This shorter poem not only has a title, but also reproduces three of the nine stanzas of the original in an altered order: lines 43–8, 31–6, 25–30.⁵

What we have here is a typical case of the kind of textual bricolage often practised in the manuscript system of literary transmission. Compilers of verse collections were free to copy from manuscript or printed sources; to alter the words of the texts they received; to add or subtract material; to excerpt, rearrange or conflate pieces; to provide titles for untitled poems. The collections of verse in which this excerpted, rearranged version of ‘When that thine eye hath chose the dame’ appears are among the many poetry anthologies associated with Christ Church, Oxford, in the second quarter of the seventeenth century. The first was compiled, as Peter Beal indicates, by one ‘I. A.’, a collector who also recorded a version of the Shakespeare sonnet that appeared in more

³ See Arthur F. Marotti, ‘The Cultural and Textual Importance of Folger MS V.a.89,’ *English Manuscript Studies 1100–1700* 11 (2002), 70–92, at 74–9.

⁴ This and the previous line are missing in the version of this poem found in BL MS Add. 30982.

⁵ Though this excerpted piece is textually closest to the versions found in Jaggard’s collection (the majority of whose pieces are not by Shakespeare), two of its phrases—‘Good sooth’ (l. 12) and ‘cloudie lookes’ (l. 13)—are unique readings.

manuscript copies than any other sonnet from the 154-poem collection, *Sonnet 2*.⁶ The second was compiled by Daniel Leare, a distant cousin of that prominent Christ Church poet William Strode. In this poetical anthology, like so many others, older poetry reappears as examples of conventional wisdom or as aesthetic material to be experienced in a new way through a Caroline sensibility. Thus the basically Ovidian amorous counsel incorporated in these three stanzas of ‘When that thine eye hath chose the dame’ resembles other practical advice and cynical attitudinizing appreciated by young university men trying to acquire a veneer of sophistication and worldly wisdom. It is not just a case, however, of old wine in new bottles. Rather it is one of cultural and literary appropriation in a participatory system of manuscript literary transmission in which collectors could ‘own’ texts to a degree not possible in print culture. ‘I. A.’ or someone earlier along the line of manuscript transmission from which this text was obtained used a printed text of the poem to produce for manuscript retransmission a piece that was, in effect, a new artefact, a sampled old text put to new uses.

Shakespeare’s two narrative poems from the 1590s, *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *Lucrece* (1594) were a popular success in print. The former had some sixteen editions before 1636, while the latter had nine before 1655.⁷ This meant that both texts were readily available in print over a broad time period running from the later Elizabethan through the early Stuart eras. As Sasha Roberts points out, both poems were excerpted in printed collections such as the late Elizabethan *England’s Parnassus* (1600) and *Belvedere* (1600), the former containing some twenty-five passages from *Venus and Adonis* and thirty-eight from *Lucrece*, the latter with thirty-four and ninety-one respectively.⁸ Both printed volumes treat the Shakespearean narrative poems as sources of sententious wisdom and as, in Roberts’ words, ‘illustrations upon a range of topics, largely reflecting the poem’s themes’—enacting in print a process common in manuscript, the recording of memorable passages under commonplace categories or headings.⁹ In a practice parallel to the marking of *sententiae* in some printed plays, the first edition of *Lucrece* highlights by the use of quotation marks some of the sententious statements in that poem, stimulating, perhaps, readers’ desire to find wise and memorable sayings for their commonplace books: for example, ‘The sweets we wish for, turne to lothed sowrs, | Euen in the moment that we call them ours.’¹⁰

⁶ This compiler has been identified by Mary Hobbs, *Early Seventeenth-Century Verse Miscellany Manuscripts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1992), 118, as John Aubrey, a relative of his better-known namesake.

⁷ John Jowett, William Montgomery, Gary Taylor, and Stanley Wells, (eds.), *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), 223, 237. All passages from Shakespeare’s printed works are taken from this edition.

⁸ Sasha Roberts, *Reading Shakespeare’s Poems in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 93–4.

⁹ Roberts, *Reading Shakespeare’s Poems*, 96.

¹⁰ *Lucrece* (1594), sig. G1v [ll. 867–8]. See G. K. Hunter, ‘The Marking of *Sententiae* in Elizabethan Printed Plays, Poems, and Romances’, *The Library* 6.3–4 (1951), 171–88. Henry Woudhuysen, ‘The Foundations of Shakespeare’s Text’, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 125 (2004), 78, has noted the use in *Lucrece* of ‘double opening inverted commas to signal . . . “sentences”, that is, moral maxims to be especially noted by the reader for their serious wisdom’.

If we look at surviving seventeenth-century manuscript collections, we find an interesting group of passages recorded from the two narrative poems. As Roberts has noted, two kinds of excerpting of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* took place in manuscript and print documents: first, the memorable or shocking erotic passages, and second, the passages that might be valued for their aphoristic character.¹¹ And so, in Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 279, we find lines 17–18 and 233–4 of the poem modified to form an independent short amorous lyric:

Kissing: a song

Come sweet sit heere where neuer serpent hisses,
And being sate Ile smother thee with kisses,
Let me graze on thy lips, if those hills are too dry
Then Ile stray lower where the fountaines lye.

The section of the poem in which Venus offers an erotic tour of her body was obviously appealing to Henry Colling of St John's College, Cambridge, for he transcribed lines 229–40 in his papers, Cambridge University Library MS Mm.3.29, fol. 63v.¹² The same lines appear in a manuscript virginal book, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Département de la Musique, MS Conservatoire Rés. 1186, fol. 56v.¹³ A songbook marked 'Giles Earle his booke 1615' includes lines 517–22 set to music.¹⁴ Three different manuscripts, probably compiled at Oxford, include lines 529–34 of the poem as a free-standing nocturne: Huntington MS HM 116, p. 32; Rosenbach MSS 239/27, p. 166 and 1083/16, p. 75.

The passages from *Lucrece* found in surviving manuscript documents include a combination in Peter Le Neve's verse manuscript, British Library MS Additional 27406, fol. 74r, of erotically titillating descriptions of Lucrece asleep naked in her bedchamber subject to Tarquin's 'greedy eyeballs' (l. 368), lines 365–71, 386–99, and 419–20.¹⁵ At the other extreme, passages of moral passion and accusation uttered by Lucrece herself in her invective against 'Opportunity', lines 869–82 and 897–924, are recorded in Richard Waferer's compilation of verse and prose miscellany, British Library MS Additional 52585, fol. 54r–v. In lines 916–17, however, the original's 'My Collatine would else have come to me | When Tarquin did, but he was stayed by thee' is changed to 'my right noe wrong would ells haue falen to mee | but I perceive all this is doone by thee': it would

¹¹ Roberts, *Reading Shakespeare's Poems*, 83–4.

¹² See Hilton Kelliher, 'Unrecorded Extracts from Shakespeare, Sidney and Dyer', *English Manuscript Studies 1100–1700* 2 (1990), 163–88.

¹³ Peter Beal, to whom we are indebted for access to his online *Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts*, records this item and the other excerpts from Shakespeare's works, adding information that supplements that found in his earlier *Index of English Literary Manuscripts*, vol. 1, part 2 (London: Mansell, 1980).

¹⁴ In his *Catalogue*, Beal records this, citing for this songbook the complete facsimile found in *English Song 1600–1675*, Elise Bickford Jorgens (ed.), vol. 1 (New York: Garland, 1986).

¹⁵ Rosenbach MS 239/16, p. 146 has lines 386–95.

appear that whoever made this alteration wished to convert the narrative-specific passage into a more generally applicable set of moral observations. By appending 'Finis qd Mr Shakespeare' at the end of these selections, the compiler created the impression that what was recorded was that respected author's personal beliefs.

Very few of Shakespeare's sonnets were recorded in the manuscript anthologies, either before or after Thorpe's 1609 Quarto, which was not reissued, or after John Benson's unusual presentation of them in 1640 in conflated, titled, and lightly edited form in his *Poems: Written by Wil. Shakespeare. Gent.* Although there is internal evidence pointing to Shakespeare's sending handwritten sonnets to the male addressee of Sonnets 1–126 (in Sonnet 71, ll. 5–6, he says, for example, 'if you read this line, remember not | The hand that writ it'), we do not have manuscript copies of poems supposedly circulating before the publication of the 1609 Quarto or before Meres's 1598 reference to the sonnets' circulation. The alternate versions of Sonnets 138 and 144 in Jaggard's *Passionate Pilgrim* may be texts that were later revised, as Gary Taylor argues,¹⁶ but, as scholars such as Katherine Duncan-Jones and Colin Burrow have suggested, their differences may be the result of textual corruption, as are those of the manuscript copies of Sonnet 2.¹⁷

Twenty-one different manuscripts postdate Thorpe's 1609 edition and preserve copies of, in total, eleven whole sonnets—Sonnets 2, 8, 32, 33, 68, 71, 106, 107, 116, 128, and 138:¹⁸

- Bodleian MS Rawlinson Poetical 152, fol. 34: Sonnet 128
- British Library MS Additional 10309, fol. 143: Sonnet 2
- British Library MS Additional 15226, fol. 4v: Sonnet 8
- British Library MS Additional 21433, fol. 114v: Sonnet 2
- British Library MS Additional 25303, fol. 119v: Sonnet 2
- British Library MS Additional 30982, fol. 18: Sonnet 2
- British Library MS Sloane 1792, fol. 45: Sonnet 2
- Folger MS V.a.148, fols. 22–3v: Sonnets 33, 68, and 107, plus excerpts from others
- Folger MS V.a.162, fols. 12v and 26: Sonnets 32 and 71
- Folger MS V.a.170, pp. 1673–4: Sonnet 2
- Folger MS V.a.339, fol. 197v: Sonnet 138
- Folger MS V.a.345, p. 145: Sonnet 2
- London Metropolitan Archives MS ACC/1360/568, fol. [28v]: Sonnet 2
- New York Public Library Music Division, MS Drexel 4257, No. 33: Sonnet 116
- Univ. of Nottingham, Portland MS Pw V 37, p. 69: Sonnet 2

¹⁶ Gary Taylor, 'Some Manuscripts of Shakespeare's Sonnets', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 68 (1985–6), 210–46.

¹⁷ Katherine Duncan-Jones (ed.), *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, The Arden Shakespeare (London: Thomson Learning, 1997), 453–62, and Colin Burrow (ed.), *The Complete Sonnets and Poems*, The Oxford Shakespeare (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 106–7, 690.

¹⁸ We do not count the Drexel MS copy of Sonnet 116 because it is not, strictly speaking, the poem found in Thorpe's Quarto, but, instead, a new, longer musical version of the poem done by Henry Lawes. See Willa McClung Evans, 'Lawes' Version of Shakespeare's Sonnet CXVI', *PMLA* 51.1 (1936), 120–2.

- Pierpont Morgan Library MS MA 1057, p. 96: Sonnet 106
 Rosenbach MS 1083/16, pp. 256–7: Sonnet 106
 Rosenbach MS 1083/17, fols. 132v–3: Sonnet 2
 St John’s College, Cambridge MS S.23 (James 416), fol. 38r–v: Sonnet 2
 Westminster Abbey MS 41, fol. 49: Sonnet 2
 Yale, Osborn MS b 205, fol. 54v: Sonnet 2¹⁹

By far the most transcribed poem is Sonnet 2, found in thirteen manuscripts. Presented as an anonymous piece and made to embody conventional belief that it is good to marry and have children, this sonnet from the initial group of poems addressed to a young man who resists marrying and perpetuating his lineage is changed into a poem addressed to a female reader needing to be persuaded to grant love.²⁰ In five of the manuscripts in which the poem appears, it has the title ‘to one that would dye a Mayd’ and in a sixth ‘A Lover to his Mistres’.²¹ The title of the poem in Rosenbach MS 1083/17, ‘The Benefit of Mariage’, does not specify a female addressee, but, in the context of the love poems surrounding it, it would look like a poem addressed to a woman whose ‘beauty’ (l. 5) needs to be perpetuated. The title attached to this sonnet in several of the manuscript collections, ‘Spes Altera’, as Katherine Duncan-Jones points out, is a reference to Aeneas’ son in Vergil’s epic, the Latin phrase ‘typical of the university and Inns of Court environment to which so many of the Jacobean and Caroline miscellanies belong’.²² The most likely source text for the alternate version of Sonnet 2 appearing in manuscript is George Morley’s manuscript, Westminster Abbey MS 41, which may have introduced the textual variants.²³ In most of the manuscripts in which we find copies of Sonnet 2 (especially those connected with that centre of manuscript circulation, Christ Church, Oxford), Shakespeare’s poem is immersed in a body of witty University and cosmopolitan Caroline verse.²⁴

In Folger MS V.a.345, the title of Sonnet 2 is ‘Spes Altera A Song’ and the poem is broken into three numbered quatrains and a numbered couplet. This demonstrates an association of some of Shakespeare’s *Sonnets* with music in the seventeenth century.²⁵ In British Library MS Additional 15226, Sonnet 8 has the title ‘In laudem Musice et opprobrium Contemptorii [*sic*] eiusdem’ (‘In praise of music and in reproach of the

¹⁹ With the exception of the reference to the London Metropolitan Archive item, this list is derived from Beal’s *Index*, 1.2.452–3. The additional item is part of his online *Catalogue*.

²⁰ Duncan-Jones, 453, says that, in this new context, the poem ‘comes across as in effect an honorary “Cavalier” seduction lyric’.

²¹ The first is the title in Westminster Abbey MS 41 and in several other manuscripts with Christ Church connections: BL MSS Add. 30982 and Sloane 1792, Folger MS V.a.170, and Yale Osborn MS b 205. The second is found in the University of Nottingham Portland MS Pw V 37.

²² Duncan-Jones, 455.

²³ Duncan-Jones, 456, citing the unpublished work of Jeremy Maule.

²⁴ See Arthur F. Marotti, ‘Shakespeare’s Sonnets and the Manuscript Circulation of Texts in Early Modern England’, in Michael Schoenfeldt (ed.), *A Companion to Shakespeare’s Sonnets* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 190–3, for more detailed discussion of the manuscript contexts of Sonnet 2.

²⁵ See Mary Hobbs, ‘Shakespeare’s Sonnet II: A “sugred sonnet”?’ *Notes and Queries* 224 (1979), 112–13.

despiser of the same'), and the poem is divided into three stanzas. Henry Lawes modified and expanded the text of Sonnet 116, arranging it as three six-line stanzas and producing a musical setting (NYPL MS Drexel 4237). Colin Burrow suggests that Sonnet 128 might have been copied into Bodleian MS Rawlinson Poetical 152 because of its musical allusions.²⁶ Many manuscript collections from the period identify their items as songs, and many specifically musical manuscripts survive from the period.²⁷

The other sonnets that are recorded in manuscript are thematically varied and, like Sonnets 2, 8, and 116, take on new meanings in the context of the poems that surround them in various collections. For example, in Folger MS V.a.162, Sonnet 71 ('No longer mourne for me when I am dead') is preceded by a transcription of George Herbert's 'The Altar' (fol. 12v) and followed immediately by an anonymous poem 'Of Man' (fol. 13r-v), a context that highlights the poem's religious aspects. In the same manuscript, Sonnet 32 is preceded by a short religious poem apparently surviving in no other manuscript, 'Gods love' ('Noe mortall hath seen god, few heard him speake') (fol. 25v), which, like it, focuses on mortality. The version of Sonnet 138 transcribed in Folger MS V.a.339 seems to have been copied from *The Passionate Pilgrim*, since, in this manuscript, it comes after four other poems from that publication. It is followed by an interesting double sonnet in the Shakespearean form ('Before that antient time that man & wife') (fol. 198v) that maintains the cynical tone of Sonnet 138 and that fits the context of the other Caroline poems found in this manuscript anthology. Finally, Rosenbach Library MS 1083/16 fuses a textually variant version of Shakespeare's Sonnet 106 with a poem apparently written by William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, who is perhaps the most likely addressee of the young-man sonnets ('When in the Annales of all-wasting time').²⁸

One of the manuscripts containing verse from Shakespeare's sonnet collection (Folger MS V.a.148) is a student notebook with a variety of contents including notes on sermons and scriptural passages, on Hebrew grammar and astronomy, as well as a large number of epigrams and lyric poems by major and minor Caroline authors. Transcribing items from John Benson's edition, which includes poetry by authors other than Shakespeare, mostly from the Caroline period, the collector/scribe recorded, in addition to three complete sonnets (33, 68, 107), forty-eight poetic excerpts from the collection, including twenty-eight by Shakespeare ranging in length from a single phrase to two quatrains and a couplet. But he also occasionally modified them to craft independent clauses or memorable sayings out of grammatical fragments or compressed them to a shorter form. For example, he expanded the expression in the second line of Sonnet 97, 'the pleasure of the fleeting yeare' to 'Thou art the Pleasure of the fleeting yeare' (fol. 23). He

²⁶ Burrow, 106 n. 3.

²⁷ See Hobbs, *Versè Miscellany*, 93–6, 105–15.

²⁸ For an edition and discussion of this manuscript, see David Coleman Redding, 'Robert Bishop's Commonplace Book: An Edition of a Seventeenth-Century Miscellany' (PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1960). Both the sonnet and the Pembroke poem appear separately in Pierpont Morgan Library MS MA 1057 (pp. 96, 140).

shortened lines 9–12 of Sonnet 28 to two lines: ‘Clouds blot the heaven & make me flatter | The swart Complectiond night when sparkling stars twire’ (fol. 23), and he reduced lines 10–12 of Sonnet 29 to ‘To sing from sullen earth hymnes at heavens gate’ (fol. 23). He obviously valued some sections of sonnets as aphorisms: for instance, ‘The Canker bloomes have full as deepe a dy | As the Perfumed tincture of the roses’ (Sonnet 54, ll. 5–6; fol. 22) and ‘Love alters not with his briefe hours & weeks | But bears It out even to the Edge of Doome’ (Sonnet 116, ll. 11–12; fol. 23). He was attracted to particular felicitous expressions such as ‘Gilding the object whereupon It gazeth’ (Sonnet 20, l. 6; fol. 22v) and ‘Beaten & Chopt with Tan’d Antiquity’ (Sonnet 62, l. 10; fol. 23). In the context of this student notebook, sonnets and sonnet-excerpts functioned the way other commonplace-book items functioned—as collected knowledge and wisdom, as rhetorically artful formulations, as cultural material ready for reuse by the educated collector. The scribe did record the name ‘Shakespeare’ on the first page of his sonnet-transcriptions, indicating perhaps not just authorship, but the printed source from which he obtained the items. A commonplace-book compiler often listed the sources of collected material—both the authorities being cited and the printed texts mined for valuable quotations. What was going on in the case of the student-compiler was not literary anthologizing in the modern sense, but acts of furnishing the mind with useful knowledge and language.

Although some scholars, such as John Kerrigan, have supported Gary Taylor’s argument that the manuscript versions of the *Sonnets* show signs of the process of authorial revision, others, such as Katherine Duncan-Jones, cast doubt on this.²⁹ Given the changes to other texts resulting from memorial transcription, mistakes in copying, and deliberate scribal alteration of received material, one must be cautious about attributing textual variants to Shakespeare himself. The strongest evidence of authorial revision might be the alternate versions of Sonnets 138 and 144 appearing in the printed text, Jaggard’s *Passionate Pilgrim*, which appeared *before* rather than, like the manuscripts, *after* Thorpe’s 1609 Quarto.

There are some other poems associated with Shakespeare that appear in surviving manuscript documents from the period—for example, the epitaph on John Combe (‘Ten in the hundred here lieth engraved’), which appears in Nicholas Burghe’s large manuscript anthology, Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 180, and Shakespeare’s ‘Epitaph on Himself’ (‘Good friend, for Jesus’ sake forbear’), which was carved on his gravestone, but which also is attributed to him in Folger MSS V.a.180, fol. 79v and V.a.232, p. 63.³⁰ Other pieces have been claimed either in the seventeenth century or later as Shakespeare’s, but, on the whole, the manuscript record of his verse is quite limited—a fact hard for modern admirers of Shakespeare to accept, since they think his culturally central status as an English author would have made his verse, especially his sonnets, more sought after by manuscript

²⁹ See John Kerrigan, (ed.), *The Sonnets and A Lover’s Complaint* (New York: Viking, 1986), 428; Duncan-Jones, *Shakespeare’s Sonnets*, 453. Kerrigan, 442, suggests that the Bod. MS Rawl. Poet. 152 version of Sonnet 128 is ‘likely’ an early version of that poem.

³⁰ See Burrow, 726–8.

compilers. The inescapable conclusion, as far as the first half-century following his death is concerned, is that his poetry, particularly his lyrics, did not have a strong presence in the manuscript literary culture of the time.

SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPTS

We do not have any of Shakespeare's plays or poems written in his own hand. Some scholars long for a Shakespearean holograph manuscript; as Leah Marcus puts it, the assumption is 'that if only we possessed some or all of the manuscript evidence, whether fair copy or foul papers, we would be brought considerably closer to the plays as the author intended them.'³¹ Marcus points out, however, that having a holograph manuscript would not solve all editorial or interpretive problems with Shakespeare's works: rather, it could serve to complicate our understanding of Shakespeare. Furthermore, we do not have any of the Shakespearean manuscript part books that Elizabethan and Jacobean actors used to rehearse and perform, though we do have some manuscripts and printed texts that were marked up for possible use in the theatre.³² Here we focus on the extant manuscripts that contain Shakespeare's poetic and dramatic work.³³

Studies of the six surviving signatures of Shakespeare³⁴ have led to the identification of Shakespeare as a collaborator in the play *Sir Thomas More*. Beal asserts that the attribution of Hand D to Shakespeare in *Sir Thomas More* (British Library MS Harley 7386), found on folios 8 and 9, is 'virtually certain', although Peter Stallybrass and Margreta de Grazia argue that it 'rests upon shaky ground'.³⁵ *Sir Thomas More* was a collaborative effort, with Anthony Munday as the primary author, and revisions possibly made by Thomas Dekker, Thomas Heywood, Henry Chettle, and Shakespeare.³⁶ It is a text that reminds scholars that early modern theatre was inherently collaborative and challenges modern conceptions of authorship and authority.³⁷

³¹ Leah Marcus, 'The Veil of Manuscript', *Renaissance Drama*, NS, 30 (1999–2000), 116.

³² See Simon Palfrey and Tiffany Stern, *Shakespeare in Parts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

³³ For a listing of known extracts and songs from Shakespeare's plays in manuscript not discussed in this chapter, see Beal's *Index*, 1.2.449–63. For a discussion of how Shakespeare's manuscripts might have circulated and an analysis of the documentary evidence surrounding Shakespeare, see Grace Ioppolo, *Dramatists and Their Manuscripts in the Age of Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton and Heywood* (London: Routledge, 2006).

³⁴ See Beal, *Index* 1.2.449, for the list of these.

³⁵ Beal, *Index*, 1.2.449; Margreta de Grazia and Peter Stallybrass, 'The Materiality of the Shakespearean Text', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 14.3 (Fall 1993), 277.

³⁶ Vittorio Gabrieli and Giorgio Melchiori (eds.), *Sir Thomas More* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990).

³⁷ See Jeffrey Masten's *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Early modern manuscript collections were also often the product of the scribal activities of more than one person.

There are nine seventeenth-century copies of entire Shakespeare plays in manuscript, all of which have received scholarly attention. Folger MS V.a.73 is a version of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* based on the Second Folio. Folger MS V.b.34, also called the Dering manuscript, contains an adaptation that combines both parts of *Henry IV*. The Douai manuscript (Bibliothèque Municipale, Douai, France, MS 787) contains six entire plays: *The Comedy of Errors*, *Twelfth Night*, *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *As You Like It*. Folger MS V.a.85 has a copy of *Julius Caesar*, most likely related to the Douai manuscript. Each manuscript offers information that adds to our understanding of early modern theatrical practices and enhances our knowledge of oral and literate culture, while also deepening our understanding of Shakespeare's plays.

Based on the Second Folio of 1632, Folger MS V.a.73 (compiled c.1648–60) contains 500 variants from that text. Folger MS V.a.73 attempts to imitate a print version of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* with its format, which includes such elements as regular running titles, commendatory verse by Hugh Holland, and a hand that mimics print fonts. G. Blakemore Evans effectively argues that it is a literary manuscript because the writing is too cramped for a potential prompt book, yet he still believes that this manuscript might have been used indirectly in performance.³⁸ This manuscript also contains the first known list of 'drammatis persona' [sic] (fol. 1v) for this play, which suggests that it was designed for reading and not performance. The list gives a brief description of each character, which shows how the characters were perceived in the seventeenth century. Bardolfe, Nym, and Pistoll are described as 'Hangers on'; the Host is 'A merry, conceited, ranting Inn-holder' (fol. 1v). These character descriptions offer clarification that would not be available to an early modern theatregoer (or someone reading the play in early print versions).

Folger MS V.a.73 shows how scribes changed the plays, making textual emendations and adding paratextual materials: the Dering MS (Folger MS V.b.34) offers a more drastic example of a play's malleability in manuscript culture. It contains a version of both parts of *Henry IV* abridged and adapted into one five-act play, using roughly 90 per cent of part one and 30 per cent of part two.³⁹ There are two hands in this manuscript: the first is generally accepted to be that of Edward Dering (1598–1644) and the second is probably that of a professional scribe. The manuscript was written in 1622 or in the first few months of 1623, before Shakespeare's works were published in the 1623 First Folio.⁴⁰ There were six quarto versions of *1 Henry IV* but only one quarto of

³⁸ G. Blakemore Evans, 'The Merry Wives of Windsor: The Folger Manuscript', in Bernhard Fabian and Kurt Tetzeli von Rosador (eds.), *Shakespeare: Text, Language, Criticism: Essays in Honour of Martin Spevack* (Zurich: Olms-Weidman, 1987), 57–79.

³⁹ John Baker, 'Found: Shakespeare's Manuscript of *Henry IV*', *Elizabethan Review* 4 (1996), 14–46.

⁴⁰ George Walton Williams and Gwynne Blakemore Evans (eds.), *The History of King Henry the Fourth, as revised by Sir Edward Dering, Bart.* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1974), viii; Laetitia Yeandle, 'The Dating of Sir Edward Dering's Copy of "The History of King Henry the Fourth"', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 37.2 (Summer 1986), 224–6.

2 *Henry IV* published between 1598 and 1622. Dering's revision of the play shows that he, like the play-buying public, preferred the first part.

Unlike Folger MS V.a.73 and the Dering MS, the Douai MS was probably used for performances. Douai Public Library MS 787 contains complete copies of six Shakespearean plays (see above), as well as transcriptions of three Restoration plays: *Mithridates* by Nathaniel Lee, *The Indian Emperor* by John Dryden, and *The Siege of Rhodes* by William Davenant.⁴¹ These plays were copied separately around 1694–5 and then bound into a single volume around 1697–9.⁴² The Shakespeare plays were copied from the 1632 Second Folio, or from manuscripts copied from it. Evans suggests that the plays were copied from a marked-up version of the Second Folio, as there are few revisions on the page, but numerous alternate readings.

Like Cambridge and Oxford, the English college at Douai used 'dramatic exercises' as a way to test students.⁴³ The plays may also be related to the Catholic seminary and convent in Douai, perhaps demonstrating Catholic revision through the removal of jokes about 'holy bread' and nuns.⁴⁴ Many of the changes made to the plays in these manuscripts would have been helpful for performance and add to our knowledge of theatre history. For the Shakespeare plays, stage directions were often added to clarify the play; for the Restoration plays, the scribe simplified and corrected the stage directions.⁴⁵ The plays were also generally shortened: the longest play in the collection, *Romeo and Juliet*, was reduced the most (by 971 lines), and the shortest play, *The Comedy of Errors*, lost only eighteen lines. Ann-Mari Hedbäck suggests that certain emendations (such as altering the word 'ravish' in *Mithridates*) reflect Restoration tastes by making the plays more decorous. The changes made to the Douai manuscript suggest an English scribe concerned with Roman Catholic values, audience reception, and the realities of staging a play. These plays in manuscript shed light on theatricals in schools, Shakespeare on the Continent, and amateur performances of Shakespeare's plays.

Folger MS V.a.85 is the final extant manuscript containing an entire Shakespearean play (*Julius Caesar*), and is closely related to the Douai manuscript. This copy, like the copy at Douai, seems to have a theatrical provenance. In Folger MS V.a.85, *Julius Caesar* was originally attributed to 'Dyden' [*sic*], which meant that it was taken as the Dryden-Davenant *Caesar*.⁴⁶ Dryden's name was later erased and Shakespeare written in above it. Folger MS V.a.85, like the Douai manuscript, often modernizes Shakespeare's language. Along with the eighteenth-century manuscripts that follow it, Folger MS V.a.85 cuts 4.3.139–55, the scene where Brutus first tells the audience that Portia is

⁴¹ G. Blakemore Evans, 'The Douai Manuscript—Six Shakespearean Transcripts (1694–95)', *Philological Quarterly* 41 (1962), 158–72.

⁴² Ann-Mari Hedbäck, 'The Douai Manuscript Reexamined', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 73.1 (1979), 1–18.

⁴³ Evans, 'The Douai Manuscript', 165.

⁴⁴ Evans, 'The Douai Manuscript', 164.

⁴⁵ Evans, 'The Douai Manuscript', 164, and Hedbäck, 'The Douai Manuscript Reexamined', 17.

⁴⁶ G. Blakemore Evans, 'Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*—A Seventeenth-Century Manuscript', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 41 (1942), 401–17.

dead. Evans suggests that this reflects seventeenth-staging practices.⁴⁷ This resolves the practical issue of Portia's 'repeated' death: later in the scene when Messala tells Brutus that Portia has died, it is news to the audience.

While there are only nine manuscripts with complete (or almost complete) versions of Shakespeare's plays, there are more than thirty extant manuscripts that contain parts of Shakespeare's plays. These vary in length from a single couplet (Bodleian MS English Poetry e. 97) or a single song (Folger MS V.a.38) to pages of extracts from multiple Shakespeare plays (British Library MS Lansdowne 1185). In the *Hesperides* manuscripts (Folger MSS V.b.93, V.a.75, and V.a.79–80), John Evans transcribed items from over 300 works, including thirty-six Shakespeare plays.⁴⁸ He arranged his excerpts under headings: for instance, below 'Condemne/d to death' (p. 143), he includes Hermione's proud, 'If I shall bee condemn'd upon surmizes (all proofes sleeping else; but what your jealousies awake), I tell you tis rigor & not law' (*WT* 3.2.110–14) and Buckingham's hopeless, 'My life is span'd allready, I am the shadow of poor Buckingham' (*HVIII* 1.1.224–5).

Other manuscript commonplace books arrange the extracts by play or author, rather than by subject matter. In Bodleian MS Sancroft 97, Archbishop Sancroft (1617–1693) chose to excerpt from a seemingly incongruous combination of plays, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2 and 3 *Henry VI*, and *King Lear*. It is not unusual that he copies from a comedy, two histories, and a tragedy, since he does not copy for plot but for witty and sententious phrases. At times, like the student compiler of Folger MS V.a.148, Sancroft copies only a brief phrase, such as Puck's evocative image of 'black browd night' (*MND* 3.2.388; p. 79), and other times he copies longer passages, such as the fool's clever advice to *King Lear*, 'Have more than thou shewest, speake less than thou knowest, lend less than owest, ride more than thou goest, learn more than thou trowest, sett less than thou throwest, & thou shall have more than 2 tens to a score' (1.4.116–23; p. 81). Both Puck's phrase and the fool's speech are commonplace formulations.

Like many early modern manuscript compilers, Sancroft adapted Shakespeare's text when it suited him. He excerpted Isabella's soliloquy from *Measure for Measure* on her brother's support of her chastity:

That had he twenty heads to tender down
On twenty bloody blocks, he'd yield them up,
Before his sister should her body stoop
To such abhorr'd pollution. (2.4.180–3)

Sancroft changed the speech to a first person utterance: 'Nay had I 20 heads to tender down on 20 bloody blocks, | I'd yeeld them up, before I'd do't', and linked it with Isabella's later wish, 'Were it but my Life, | I'd throw it down as frankly as a pin' (3.1.102–4; p. 85). Like most students in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century grammar

⁴⁷ Evans, 'Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*', 411.

⁴⁸ For a detailed discussion of the relation of these manuscripts, see Tianhu Hao's dissertation, *Hesperides, or the Muses' Garden: Commonplace Reading and Writing in Early Modern England* (Columbia University, 2006).

schools, Sancroft was probably taught to keep a commonplace book to provide material for later use in conversation or writing.⁴⁹ John Marston satirizes this practice with his character Luscus in *The Scourge of Villainy*, who 'hath made a common-place booke out of plaies', which he uses to embellish his daily speech; he 'speakes in print'.⁵⁰ Sancroft probably altered Shakespeare's text to make it more useful to him. For instance, he took Launcelot's emphatic denial of Shylock, 'if I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground' (*MV* 2.2.104–5) and rearranged it into a general expression of dislike: 'I'll run as far as G. hath any ground rather than—', a phrase that could be completed in different ways to suit a variety of situations (p. 85).

Sancroft kept multiple manuscripts with dramatic excerpts. Bodleian MS Sancroft 97 is a primarily prose miscellany that contains excerpts from religious tracts and romances as well as Shakespearean excerpts. In MS Sancroft 97, he copied as prose short commonplaces from plays. In MS Sancroft 53, a verse miscellany, he collected longer extracts from plays rather than commonplaces; he copied the song 'Hark, hark, the lark' from *Cymbeline* (2.3.19–25) and Iago's speech, 'She that was ever fair and never proud' from *Othello* (2.1.151–63). He treated these excerpts like poems, titling them and writing them as verse. Unlike Sancroft MSS 97 and 53, Sancroft MS 29 mainly consists of drama, including more than thirty pages of Shakespearean extracts that have been overlooked by scholars to date. In it, Sancroft primarily collected commonplaces, arranging the first sixty pages under commonplace headings: for instance, 'Go kindle Fire with Snow' (2.7.19), a phrase from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, is listed under the heading 'Impossible' (p. 29). Most of the Shakespearean extracts, however, are gathered by play instead of under headings. Sancroft's manuscripts demonstrate multiple ways compilers copied selections from Shakespeare: verbatim or altered, in prose or in verse, by heading or by play, in brief phrases or entire speeches.

Like Sancroft, Abraham Wright (1611–1690), in British Library MS Additional 22608 made editorial changes when copying texts. Roberts points out that Wright changed Iago's 'Even now, now, very now, an old black ram | Is tuppung your white ewe' to 'A ramme is said to tupp ye ewe. And a horse to couer a mare' (fol. 83v), which removes the racial slur.⁵¹ Wright not only excerpts from many plays (including Shakespeare's) but also comments on them. These include eleven plays by James Shirley and six plays by Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, but only two by Shakespeare, *Othello* and *Hamlet*.⁵² *Hamlet* is afforded only about two pages of manuscript, whereas Wright

⁴⁹ For more on the role of commonplacing in education, see Mary Thomas Crane, *Framing Authority: Sayings, Self, and Society in Sixteenth-Century England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), and Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Bookes and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

⁵⁰ See Tiffany Stern's *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page* (New York: Routledge, 2004) for more examples of seventeenth-century references to theatre and commonplace books.

⁵¹ Roberts, *Reading Shakespeare's Poems*, 122.

⁵² For a complete transcription of Wright's extracts from *Hamlet* and *Othello*, see James G. McManaway, 'Excerpta Quaedam per A. W. Adolescentem', in Thomas P. Harrison et al. (eds.), *Studies in Honor of DeWitt T. Starnes* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967), 117–29.

focuses on *Othello* for about three pages, which is about the average length he devoted to each play (Shirley's *Hyde Park* and Webster's *White Devil* receive only one page, but Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* six pages). Wright famously criticizes *Hamlet* as 'But an indifferent play, [the] lines but meane' (fol. 85v), but is more generous in his description of *Othello*, which he sees as 'A very good play both for lines and plot, but especially [the] plot' (fol. 84v).⁵³

While it is clear that Wright and Sancroft used print sources for their Shakespearean extracts (at times giving page numbers for their sources), some compilers took notes while attending performances. For example, Edward Pudsey's Bodleian MS English Poetry d. 3 (compiled c.1600–13) includes excerpts from *Othello* (written *circa* 1603, published 1622).⁵⁴ He might have taken a table-book to the performance, then recopied his notes into his commonplace book.⁵⁵ Pudsey's book, unlike Sancroft MS 29, is not composed primarily of dramatic extracts: he demonstrates his passion for reading by excerpting from a wide spectrum of genres and topics: poetry (Sidney, Raleigh), history (Livy, Guicciardini), morals (Bacon), geography (Torquemada), religion (Lodge), and drama (Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton, and others).

While finding extracts from Shakespeare alongside other selections from literature, science, and religion is not unusual, it is unusual to find illustrated Shakespearean extracts. The Longleat manuscript is one folio leaf with a drawing at the top that includes extracts from *Titus Andronicus* below it. It contains Tamora's speech pleading for her son's life (1.1.104–20) and Aaron revelling in his wickedness (5.1.124–44). It begins with a stage direction that does not appear in any of the early print versions of the play: 'Enter Tamora pleadinge for her sonnes going to execution', and ends with a speech-prefix for Alarbus, who does not have any lines in the play. The drawing at the top of the manuscript, as many scholars point out, does not dramatize an actual moment that would have occurred on stage during a performance of *Titus*. It depicts two guards in Roman garb on the left: these are sometimes identified as two of Titus' sons. In the middle stands a man, often identified as Titus, wearing laurels and holding a large staff, facing a woman on her knees with her hands clasped, Tamora, 'pleadinge' for Alarbus. On the right are two men, bound and on their knees, probably Chiron and Demetrius. On the far right stands a black man holding a sword, pointing, probably Aaron the Moor. This manuscript has been interpreted many ways: as representing

⁵³ For a complete transcription of Wright's comments on *Othello*, *Hamlet*, and other plays, see Arthur C. Kirsch, 'A Caroline Commentary on the Drama', *Modern Philology* 66.3 (1969), 256–61.

⁵⁴ See Juliet Rees, 'Shakespeare and Edward Pudsey's Booke, 1600', *Notes and Queries* 39.3 (1992), 330–1. See also Rees's (née Gowan) 'An Edition of Edward Pudsey's Commonplace Book (c. 1600–1615) from the Manuscript in the Bodleian Library' (MPhil thesis, University of London, 1967).

⁵⁵ For more information on table-books, see Peter Stallybrass, Roger Chartier, J. Franklin Mowery, and Heather Wolfe, 'Hamlet's Tables and the Technologies of Writing in Renaissance England', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 55.4 (2004), 379–419.

more than one scene from the play, as symbolically reflecting the action in the play, or as portraying the staging and theatricality of the play.⁵⁶

Songs from Shakespeare's plays circulated in both literary and musical manuscripts, sometimes with music. Tracing the manuscript transmission of songs from plays, however, differs from tracing manuscript transmission of speeches or dialogue because Renaissance playwrights, including Shakespeare, often used pre-existing songs. This means that a compiler might be deliberately including the song from the play, or that he might not even have known the song was associated with Shakespeare. For instance, Desdemona's 'The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree' (*Othello* 4.3.40–8), is a fragment of a song that Shakespeare probably did not write. A more complete version of this song is found in British Library MS Additional 15117.⁵⁷ This manuscript, however, does not offer a clear source for Shakespeare, simply an analogue. John H. Long explains how Shakespeare manipulated the source song and shows other 'Willow songs' contemporary to this ballad.⁵⁸

While 'The Willow Song' from *Othello* offers a clear example of Shakespeare's use of a popular ballad in his plays, the attribution of other songs is more problematic. For example, 'It was a lover and his lass' from *As You Like It* (5.3.15–38) might have been written by Shakespeare or by Thomas Morley, or it might have been a collaboration.⁵⁹ Morley published the song with music in *The First Book of Ayres* in 1600, close to the date of the play's composition and original performance. This song is found in the Leyden MS, a verse miscellany with Scottish provenance (National Library of Scotland Advocate's Library MS 5.2.14, fol. 18r–v).⁶⁰ This manuscript contains only a vocal line (that matches Morley's print source), but, since some critics believe that Morley's tune was used for the original performance of the play, or that Morley borrowed the lyrics from Shakespeare, they can only speculate whether the compiler considered this song one of Shakespeare's when copying it. It is entirely possible that the compiler of the Leyden manuscript did not include this as a specifically Shakespearean piece, as there is no attribution, the music is Morley's, and there are no other songs from Shakespeare play in this songbook.⁶¹

Unlike the compiler of the Leyden MS, the compiler of British Library MS Egerton 2421 (perhaps Francis Norreys and/or Henry Balle) deliberately collected Shakespeare's songs in his verse miscellany, grouping five songs from *The Tempest* and titling them

⁵⁶ Richard Levin, 'The Longleat Manuscript and *Titus Andronicus*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 53.3 (2002), 323–40.

⁵⁷ This version is transcribed in Peter J. Seng, *The Vocal Songs in the Plays of Shakespeare: A Critical History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 195–6.

⁵⁸ John H. Long, *Shakespeare's Use of Music: The Histories and Tragedies* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1971), 98–9.

⁵⁹ See Seng, *Vocal Songs*, 87–90 and 97–100 for a summary of the authorship problems of this song.

⁶⁰ The Leyden manuscript is reproduced in Jorgens, *English Song*, vol. 11.

⁶¹ In Morley's print edition, 'It was a lover and his lass' is attributed to Morley without mention of Shakespeare or *As You Like It*.

'Songs [out of] Shakespeare,' with the subtitle, 'The Tempest'.⁶² The compiler numbers each song and lists the character who sings it. Similarly, Anne Twice's manuscript, New York Public Library Drexel MS 4175, shows an interest in collecting songs from plays, by collecting six songs from plays and masques including *The Winter's Tale*. Bodleian MS Mus. D. 238 contains sixteen songs from dramatic sources, including *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*. Twice's music book and Bodleian MS Mus. D. 238 include musical notations for the songs, which implies that they were copied from print music books, whereas British Library MS Egerton 2421 both records the lyrics and the names of the singers, implying that a print version of the play was used as a source. Songs from *The Tempest* circulated more widely than other songs and extracts from Shakespeare's plays: they are also found in Edinburgh University Library MS Dc.1.69, pp. 87–8;⁶³ Bodleian MSS Donation c. 57 fol. 75 and Music d. 238, 87–8; British Library MSS Additional 29396, fol. 110, and Harley 3991, fol. 83v; Folger MSS V.a.411, fols. 9v–13v, and W.b.515, 5; New York Public Library MS Drexel 4041, fols. 67v–8, Yale Music Library Misc. MS 170 Filmer MS 4, 4/a fol. 20v, 4/b fol. 14v, 4/c fol. 20; and University of Texas at Austin MS (Killigrew, T)/Misc./B, fol. 65v.

The print music for Shakespeare's songs often copied into music manuscripts was written by noted seventeenth-century composers. John Wilson (1595–1674) wrote settings for 'Take, oh take these lips away' (4.1.1–7) from *Measure for Measure*, a song that also appears in Fletcher's *The Bloody Brother or Rollo, Duke of Normandy*. Robert Johnson (c.1583–1633) composed music for performances of Shakespeare's plays; he perhaps wrote the original music to *The Winter's Tale*. At times, even Shakespeare's non-musical works were used as libretti for composers: for instance, Cesare Morelli set Hamlet's speech 'To be or not to be' to music in the late seventeenth century (Magdalene College, Cambridge, Pepys Library MS 2591).⁶⁴ In both music manuscripts and miscellanies, complete songs are more common than extracts from songs. In general, songs from plays were more popular than other dramatic extracts, possibly because they could be more easily memorized.

If we look at the range of manuscript documents in which Shakespeare's poetic and dramatic writing is preserved, we see different purposes at work, different marks of authorship, different cultural and literary contexts in which the texts were defined and recoded. Some collectors and scribes copied poems and extracts for their aphoristic value; others for their aesthetic merit; others for both purposes, treasuring the felicitous expression of conventional (or unconventional) wisdom. Some submerged the items as anonymous pieces in a larger collection of both ascribed and unascribed work, while others invoked Shakespeare's name either to identify a source or to acknowledge his

⁶² The songs collected are 'Full fathom five thy father lies' (1.2.399–409); 'The master, the swabber, the boatswain, and I' (2.2.45–54); 'No more dams I'll make for fish' (3.1.179–86); 'Honour, riches, marriage-blessing' (4.1.106–17); and 'Where the bee sucks, there suck I' (5.1.88–96), fols. 6v–7.

⁶³ Following 'Where the Bee Sucks' (p. 88) are additional stanzas on a second page also numbered 88. See the facsimile in Jorgens, *English Song*, vol. 8.

⁶⁴ MacDonald Emslie discusses this and other blank verse speeches used as recitatives in 'Pepys' Shakespeare Song', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 6.2 (1955), 159–70.

cultural prestige. Some jotted down only a brief phrase or couplet from Shakespeare; others diligently copied out entire plays. Some recorded texts that either they or their sources verbally changed or adapted for new purposes, treating the Shakespearean text not as a pure original not to be corrupted, but as something to be appropriated, altered, and used as one saw fit. The texts in their printed forms, which were the sources for almost all of the manuscript copying, thus became more malleable in the system of manuscript transcription and transmission, an environment in which textuality, authorship, and reader-roles were defined differently than they were in print culture.

CHAPTER 4

QUARTO AND FOLIO

ANN THOMPSON

WHICH SHAKESPEARE?

As audience members, we are used to a play such as *Hamlet* being different every time we see it. Of course every production is different, but even different performances of what is ostensibly the same production will be slightly different on different nights, sometimes in trivial ways (an actor skips a line), sometimes in more important ones (an understudy takes on a major role). Film might seem to offer a greater degree of stability, but even then we find variations such as the longer and shorter versions of Kenneth Branagh's 1996 film, and there has been a bewildering variety of recent adaptations. In a piece published in *Around the Globe*, the magazine of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, a few years ago, Tony Howard wrote

Recently, details emerged of five forthcoming films to be based on *Hamlet* alone: a version set in Spain at the time of the Armada, a rewrite told from the King's point of view (with William Shatner as Claudius), a Japanese cartoon, an experimental update set in a gay bar, and a comedy *Hamlet* featuring Halle Berry as Ophelia in a fast-food joint.

He went on to reassure his readers

I'm not sure if I was more disappointed or relieved to find that these rumours all originated in a website 'dedicated to the dissemination of misleading information'. But Christopher Walken really *has* just appeared in a *Macbeth* set in a hamburger franchise, and the point of the hoax was that it could easily be true.¹

But beyond the fact that there have always been different readings, interpretations, and adaptations of *Hamlet*, what I intend to focus on in this essay is that, from early on in the seventeenth century, there have always been different versions of the text itself. And this is true, not just of *Hamlet*, but of about half of the plays in the Shakespeare canon.

¹ Tony Howard, 'Tragedy Transplanted', *Around the Globe* 23 (Spring 2003), 28–9.

Film and theatre directors today are likely to be explicit about the textual choices they have made. Kenneth Branagh indicates in the published screenplay of his 1996 film that it is based on the First Folio of 1623: ‘Nothing has been cut from this text, and some passages absent from it (including the soliloquy “How all occasions do inform against me” . . .) have been supplied from the Second Quarto (an edition of the play which exists in copies dated 1604 and 1605).’² In 2004, two stage versions demonstrated a similar awareness of conscious decisions having been made. In the programme for Trevor Nunn’s production at the London Old Vic starring Ben Whishaw, an essay significantly entitled ‘Director’s Cut’ (an allusion of course to cinema where we have become used to different versions, alternative endings, and so forth), explains that Nunn

has used the First Folio as his main text, with occasional divergences. However, in the case of Hamlet’s famous lines to Horatio about there being ‘more things in heaven and earth’ which goes on in the Folio: ‘Than are dreamt of in your philosophy’ he prefers another edition [in fact the Second Quarto] which uses instead ‘our philosophy’, because this tells us more about their relationship; they are two close friends and students studying the same subject.³

Many, if not most, audience members would not have been aware of this choice, but they might have noticed one of larger significance. The programme essay continues

[Nunn] is also very conscious of the fact that, in this production, he is contributing to the ongoing debate as to where the most famous speech in the English language should come in the play. Hamlet’s soliloquy, ‘To be or not to be’, traditionally appears in a place which is difficult to justify in terms of either the character or the narrative itself. . . . [It] comes only a few lines after the previous soliloquy, ‘O what a rogue and peasant slave am I’, at the end of which Hamlet has a positive plan of campaign: ‘The play’s the thing | Wherein I’ll catch the conscience of the King’. He is patently intent on action here. Then, only 50 lines later, he is discussing whether or not he should take his own life. This is an uncomfortable development. . . . So Nunn has taken the controversial decision to move the soliloquy.

Although the essay is not explicit on this point, Nunn moved ‘To be or not to be’ to one scene (but about 500 lines) earlier, to precisely where it appears in the First, so-called ‘Bad’, Quarto of 1603. Michael Boyd, directing Toby Stephens for the Royal Shakespeare Company in the same year, made the same decision about ‘To be or not to be’, a ‘controversial decision’, which has in fact become almost conventional: British examples in the second half of the twentieth century include Michael Benthall directing John Neville at the Old Vic in 1957, Tony Richardson directing Nicol Williamson at the Roundhouse in 1969, Ron Daniels directing Mark Rylance at the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1989, and Matthew Warchus directing Alex Jennings at the Royal Shakespeare Company in

² Kenneth Branagh, *Hamlet: Screenplay and Introduction* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1996), 175. For more on quartos and folios, see below, pp.76–8.

³ Unpaginated theatre programme for this production. The actor Samuel West has said to me that when he played Hamlet in the Royal Shakespeare Company production in Stratford-upon-Avon and London in 2001–2, his director, Steven Pimlott, made the same change for the same reason.