

SHAKESPEARE LECTURE

# The Foundations of Shakespeare's Text

H. R. WOULDHUYSEN

*University College London*

EIGHTY YEARS AGO TODAY my great-grandfather, Alfred W. Pollard, delivered this Annual Shakespeare Lecture on 'The Foundations of Shakespeare's Text', the lecture coinciding with the tercentenary of the publication of the First Folio. To compare great things to small, this year all we can celebrate is the quatercentenary of the first quarto of *Hamlet*—a so-called 'bad' quarto. Surveying current knowledge about the quarto and Folio editions of Shakespeare's plays, Pollard argued that, compared to the fate of *Dr Faustus* ('a few fine speeches overladen with much alien buffoonery') or the texts of the plays of Greene and Peele ('scanty and mangled'), Shakespeare's plays 'have come down to us in so much better condition', the texts presenting 'to the sympathetic reader, and still more to the sympathetic listener . . . very few obstacles'. No wonder he called himself 'an incurable optimist'—a characteristic I have not fully inherited from him.<sup>1</sup>

That general optimism about the state of Shakespeare's texts was largely shared by Pollard's friends and followers R. B. McKerrow and W. W. Greg, the proponents of what became known as the 'New Bibliography'. The three of them elaborated an essential model of textual transmission, involving two sorts of lost manuscript—autograph drafts (called in contemporary documents 'foul papers') and the theatrical 'promptbook'—and two types of quarto. There were 'bad' quartos, containing shorter,

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<sup>1</sup> Alfred W. Pollard, *The Foundations of Shakespeare's Text*, The British Academy Annual Shakespeare Lecture, (London, [1923]), pp. 8, 14–15. The lecture was printed in the *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 10 (1921–3), 379–94, and in a slightly revised form with a postscript in *Aspects of Shakespeare: Being British Academy Lectures* (Oxford, 1933), pp. 1–22.

garbled versions of more familiar texts, and 'good' quartos, apparently based on Shakespeare's own 'foul papers'. Most of the 'bad' quartos were superseded by 'good' ones, but it was not always certain to which category a quarto belonged (Q1 *King Lear* was a case in point). The complexity of their possible origins was compounded by the theory that the texts were cut and adapted for provincial touring.

The 'new' bibliographers' optimism was inspired by the belief that their discipline could identify the manuscripts which lay behind Shakespeare's texts, unravel the relationships between them, and reconstruct the changes made to them in the process of transforming authorial manuscript to print: the bibliographer's task was to aid the editor in taking away that 'veil' of print from the text.<sup>2</sup> Yet despite the powerful analytical tools that bibliography brought to the editorial task, Pollard's incurable optimism did not survive in his contemporaries or their heirs. 'If we have learned to approach the editing of Shakespeare in a spirit of restrained optimism,' Greg wrote at the end of his influential account of *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare* thirty years later, 'we have also learned to understand more thoroughly the complexities of the task, and still find ourselves confronted by a position both difficult and uncertain.'<sup>3</sup> The investigation of those complexities was taken up by American scholars, in particular by Fredson Bowers and Charlton Hinman. While Hinman minutely reconstructed the printing history of the First Folio down to the number of compositors involved in its setting, their stints and characteristic habits, Bowers applied rigorous thought to the relations between Shakespeare's manuscripts and printed texts, and between bibliography and textual criticism. He did not think he would live to see 'what may be called a definitive text of Shakespeare, although many provisional results will be attained'.<sup>4</sup> To the end of his life he was calling for the gathering and evaluation of more factual evidence to inform textual criticism.<sup>5</sup>

The challenge of Bowers's 'definitive' text seemed to be accepted by the editors of the Oxford Shakespeare, principally Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, but was hastily put down. Referring to the incomplete and abandoned Oxford old-spelling Shakespeare, which McKerrow began

<sup>2</sup> The rather misleading word is apparently Fredson Bowers's, cited by David Scott Kastan, 'The Mechanics of Culture: Editing Shakespeare Today', *Shakespeare Studies*, 24 (1996), 30–7 at 32.

<sup>3</sup> W. W. Greg, *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare*, 3rd edn. (Oxford, 1954), p. 156.

<sup>4</sup> Fredson Bowers, *On Editing Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Dramatists* (University of Pennsylvania Library, 1954), p. 100.

<sup>5</sup> Fredson Bowers, 'A Search for Authority: The Investigation of Shakespeare's Printed Texts', in Gerald P. Tyson and Sylvia S. Wagonheim (eds.), *Print and Culture in the Renaissance: Essays on the Advent of Printing in Europe* (Newark, Del., London, and Toronto, 1986), pp. 17–44.

and which Alice Walker took on, Wells and Taylor wrote that, 'We have learned from the misfortune of our predecessors . . . that an ambition to answer every question leads in practice to the answering of none, and that the pursuit of a definitive edition only results in an edition indefinitely postponed.'<sup>6</sup> Instead, a fresh examination of the evidence led the Oxford editors to prefer 'promptbook', theatrical performance texts to ones based on authorial 'foul papers', to accept that Shakespeare revised some of his plays, and to realise the limits of analytical bibliography. In this they were influenced by developments in literary theory, which challenged the role of the author—his very existence—and by new ideas, particularly associated with the work of Jerome J. McGann and Don McKenzie, about the social production of texts.<sup>7</sup>

For Pollard the foundations of Shakespeare's text took the form of a 'Pleasant Comedy of the Fate of Shakespeare's Plays'; to which one might respond (adapting Horace Walpole's words) that their fate is a comedy to those that think, read, or watch, but a tragedy to those that edit.<sup>8</sup> Few editors would now share Pollard's optimism or his confident positivism. The current editorial mood alternates between an invigorating scepticism and a distinctly pessimistic agnosticism. 'The shattering of the dream of the master text', Stephen Greenblatt has written, 'is no cause for despair', or for believing that 'one text is as good as another'; rather it encourages readers to interrogate the 'editorial principles that underlie the particular edition that he or she is using'.<sup>9</sup> That interrogation has sometimes been markedly severe—the third degree, perhaps—and I want to look at some of the hard questions which have been asked recently about Shakespeare's texts, and to review some of the answers.

## I

Even at this late stage it is possible, but probably unlikely, that new texts of Shakespeare's plays will be discovered—either entirely new quartos or new copies of known editions, with otherwise unrecorded variant readings.

<sup>6</sup> Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor with John Jowett and William Montgomery, *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (Oxford, 1987), p. 61.

<sup>7</sup> The two most convenient statements of their positions on this subject are Jerome J. McGann's *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (Charlottesville, Va., and London, 1983) and D. F. McKenzie's *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (London, 1986).

<sup>8</sup> Pollard, *Foundations*, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> *The Norton Shakespeare*, gen. ed. Stephen Greenblatt (New York, 1997), p. 72.

The work of collating the substantive quartos of the plays has been largely undertaken.<sup>10</sup> Their later reprints have not been investigated as vigorously, and they may possibly preserve variant readings which do not survive in earlier editions. It is well known that Charlton K. Hinman's work at the Folger Shakespeare Library led him to collate some forty or fifty copies of the First Folio, and thereby to uncover as many as seventy-seven substantive and semi-substantive variant readings.<sup>11</sup> Yet in spite of the thirty years Hinman spent on the texts, in fact 228 copies of the Folio exist and a fuller examination of these has already revealed new variants and readings which can be corrected.<sup>12</sup> If new texts of the plays or readings from them have proved elusive, evidence for the existence of lost editions does occasionally surface. T. W. Baldwin's examination of the day-book of an Exeter stationer, Christopher Hunt, showed that in 1603 he may have owned a copy of *Love's Labour's Won*, a play which in 1598 Francis Meres had attributed to Shakespeare.<sup>13</sup> Whether *Love's Labour's Won* was a lost play by Shakespeare, or can be found in one form or another among his extant works, remains disputed.<sup>14</sup> Its title alone indicates it must stand in some relation to *Love's Labour's Lost*. The 1640 library catalogue of Edward Conway (1594–1655), second Viscount Conway, recently re-examined by Arthur Freeman and Paul Grinke, lists a copy of that play dated 1597.<sup>15</sup> It is lost, but if the date is correct and

<sup>10</sup> See Thomas L. Berger, 'Press Variants in Substantive Shakespearian Dramatic Quartos', *Library*, 6th ser., 10 (1988), 231–41; for some strictures on the limits of conventional accounts of collation, see Joseph A. Dane, *The Myth of Print Culture: Essays on Evidence, Textuality, and Bibliographical Method* (Toronto, 2003), pp. 97–113.

<sup>11</sup> These are conveniently listed in his edition of *The Norton Facsimile: The First Folio of Shakespeare*, 2nd edn., with a new introduction by Peter W. M. Blayney (New York and London, 1996), pp. xxi–xxii.

<sup>12</sup> Anthony James West, *The Shakespeare First Folio: The History of the Book*, I. *An Account of the First Folio Based on its Sales and Prices, 1623–2000* (Oxford, 2001); Paul Werstine, 'More Unrecorded States in the Folger Shakespeare Library's Collection of First Folios', *Library*, 6th ser., 11 (1989), 46–51. However, the existence of a variant Folio reading, described by Jeanne Addison Roberts in "'Wife" or "Wise"—*The Tempest*, I. 1786', *Studies in Bibliography*, 31 (1978), 203–8, has been convincingly challenged, on the basis of research by Peter Blayney, by Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan in their edition of the play for *The Arden Shakespeare Third Series* (Walton-on-Thames, 1999), pp. 136–8.

<sup>13</sup> T. W. Baldwin, *Shakespeare's 'Love's Labor's Won': New Evidence from the Account Books of an Elizabethan Bookseller* (Carbondale, Ill., 1957).

<sup>14</sup> Lukas Erne, 'Shakespeare and the Publication of His Plays', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 53 (2002), 1–20 at 8 n. 39. Several subjects touched on here are pursued at greater length in Lukas Erne's excellent study *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge, 2003), which appeared just before this lecture was given.

<sup>15</sup> Arthur Freeman and Paul Grinke, 'Four New Shakespeare quartos? Viscount Conway's lost English Plays', *Times Literary Supplement*, 5 April 2002, 17–18.

the play existed, then it precedes the first extant edition of 1598, published by Cuthbert Burby. Its title-page advertised it as 'Newly corrected and augmented', suggesting that the earlier, lost edition may have been an abbreviated text of some kind, in other words a 'bad' quarto.

More substantial and tangible additions to the Shakespeare canon have been made in the past few years. Arguments concerning the attribution of passages in the manuscript of the play of *Sir Thomas More* to Shakespeare have become embedded in disputes over the nature of the manuscript itself, the play's date, its censorship and revision, and the company which performed or intended to perform it. Disputes over two poems, the short lyric 'Shall I die' and the longer *A funeral elegy*, have been less good-tempered than the current stalemate over *More*. The lyric and the elegy have found homes in various collected editions, but have not been offered much space in single-volume editions of the poems. Brian Vickers's recent book on them argues convincingly that they deserve no place in the Shakespeare canon.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, *Edward III* has been almost universally and warmly welcomed as at least in part by Shakespeare.<sup>17</sup>

There have also been some subtractions. Disputes about the authorship of other plays in the canon rumble on, and have been freshly investigated, again by Brian Vickers.<sup>18</sup> Peele is identified as writing parts of *Titus Andronicus*. Fletcher's and Shakespeare's contributions can be discriminated in *Henry VIII* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Middleton's hand is evident in *Timon* and George Wilkins's in *Pericles*. Some Middletonians have also pressed a case for their author's involvement in *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth*.<sup>19</sup> It has been suggested that Nashe and others unknown may have collaborated on *1 Henry VI*.<sup>20</sup> New attributions of

<sup>16</sup> Brian Vickers, 'Counterfeiting' *Shakespeare: Evidence, Authorship, and John Ford's 'Funerall Elegy'* (Cambridge, 2002).

<sup>17</sup> It has been included in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd edn. (Boston, Mass., 1987) and as a separate volume in the New Cambridge Shakespeare, ed. Giorgio Melchiori (Cambridge, 1998); the play is also due to appear in *The Arden Shakespeare Third Series*, ed. Richard Proudfoot and Nicola Bennett.

<sup>18</sup> Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author: A Historical Study of Five Collaborative Plays* (Oxford, 2002).

<sup>19</sup> See in particular John Jowett and Gary Taylor, "'With New Additions': Theatrical Interpolation in *Measure for Measure*", in Gary Taylor and John Jowett, *Shakespeare Reshaped 1606–1623*, Oxford Shakespeare Studies (Oxford, 1993), pp. 107–236; the case for Middleton's hand in *Macbeth* rests largely on unpublished work by Roger Holdsworth which has attracted some criticism; see Jonathan Hope, *The Authorship of Shakespeare's Plays: A Socio-Linguistic Study* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 55–64, 104–5.

<sup>20</sup> Gary Taylor, 'Shakespeare and Others: The Authorship of Henry the Sixth, Part One', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 7 (1995), 145–205; cf. Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, pp. 145–6.

scenes or parts of scenes, even to Middleton or to Nashe, do not sell editions of plays, but they do have editorial implications. Should an editor of a collaborative play seek to expose the different literary styles of the authors, or should an attempt be made to edit the play so as to minimise them, to create a homogeneous work? Changing ideas about authorship in the Renaissance, and the challenges posed by literary theory to the importance of the individual writer, have been used to cast the whole question of attribution and its value into doubt. Yet for editors to dismiss the question of who wrote what as in some way irrelevant shows a fundamental lack of understanding of their task.

## II

New ideas and new disciplines pose new questions for editors and bibliographers. That peculiar hybrid, ‘the history of the book’, raises fundamental issues about the making, production, distribution, and consumption of books and manuscripts. It has stimulated a renewed attention to the material forms that literary works take.<sup>21</sup> Dramatic publications have been more exhaustively investigated than any other kinds of books produced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Yet this investigation has been based on an agreed assumption that plays were among the least important and most ephemeral items committed to print—plays, it is now usual to argue, were designed for the stage not for the page. Printed plays were cheap and cheerful productions, just the sort of ‘idle bookes, & riffe raffes’ or ‘baggage’ books which Sir Thomas Bodley rightly excluded from his new library in Oxford.<sup>22</sup> It is not entirely clear that this was in fact the case. In the production of any book or manuscript its most expensive element was the paper used in its manufacture—according to one estimate, it comprised as much as half of the book’s

<sup>21</sup> D. F. McKenzie, ‘Typography and Meaning: The Case of William Congreve’, in Giles Barber and Bernhard Fabian (eds.), *Buch und Buchhandel in Europa im achtzehnten Jahrhundert: The Book and the Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, Wolfenbütteler Schriften zur Geschichte der Buchwesens, 4 (Hamburg, 1981), 81–125; the piece is reprinted in D. F. McKenzie, *Making Meaning: “Printers of the Mind” and Other Essays* (Amherst and Boston, Mass., 2002), pp. 198–236; see also Maureen Bell’s introduction to the section ‘*Mise-en-page*, illustration, expressive form’, in John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie with the assistance of Maureen Bell (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, 4. 1557–1695* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 632–5.

<sup>22</sup> Cited by Heidi Brayman Hackel, ‘“Rowme of Its Own”: Printed Drama in Early Libraries’, in John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (eds.), *A New History of Early English Drama* (New York, 1997), pp. 113–30 at p. 121.

total cost.<sup>23</sup> Publishers determined how much paper was ordered for the printer, and they paid for it. Yet despite having their eyes on costs, they seem to have been quite willing to include blank pages and leaves in early play texts. At the beginning and end of a book, blank leaves were probably intended to protect the unbound volume; however, they occur with surprising frequency in plays.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, our familiar impression of early play texts as flimsy, well-used, trimmed and cropped quartos, either magnificently rebound or sandwiched into fat volumes containing ten or twenty plays, may be equally misleading. In the Bibliotheca Bodmeriana in Switzerland there is an uncut copy of the first quarto of *Troilus and Cressida* (1609), measuring nearly eight and a quarter inches by exactly six (about twenty-one centimetres by seventeen). It is a fairly large book, and although a rare survival, quite a number of other Shakespeare quartos are of a good size.<sup>25</sup> Some play quartos were quite handsome books, on whose production money had been spent, suggesting that they were not always seen as 'unconsider'd trifles', meanly produced and easily disposable items.

Surviving collections and the evidence of contemporary booklists show that playbooks were generally gathered together in larger groups in a single volume or a series of volumes. Peter Blayney is probably right in saying that at the booksellers, who received the plays in quires, 'few copies (if any) would be actually bound'; rather, when the folded sheets were stabbed and stitched, they might have paper wrappers attached to them.<sup>26</sup> This cheap and temporary form of binding would accord well with our current notion that plays were ephemeral. Yet some plays, containing more than twelve sheets, were long enough to come into the category of

<sup>23</sup> Peter W. M. Blayney, 'The Publication of Playbooks', in Cox and Kastan (eds.), *A New History of Early English Drama*, pp. 383–422 at pp. 408–9.

<sup>24</sup> H. R. Woudhuysen, 'Early Play Texts: Forms and Formes', in Ann Thompson and Gordon McMullan (eds.), *In Arden: Editing Shakespeare: Essays in Honour of Richard Proudfoot* (London, 2003), pp. 48–61.

<sup>25</sup> The title-page is reproduced, in a much reduced form, as the frontispiece to Alice Walker's New Shakespeare edition of the play (Cambridge, 1957). Further examples can be taken from the measurements given in Henrietta C. Bartlett and Alfred W. Pollard, *A Census of Shakespeare's Plays in Quarto 1594–1709*, rev. edn. by Henrietta C. Bartlett (New Haven, Conn., 1939), hereinafter referred to as 'B&P'; references are generally to the numbers assigned to individual copies. For example, the British Library copy of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1602) measures  $7\frac{5}{8} \times 5\frac{5}{16}$  inches (B&P, 690), one of the Huntington copies of *Much Ado About Nothing* (1600) measures  $7\frac{11}{16} \times 5\frac{3}{8}$  inches (B&P, 791), and the Elizabethan Club copy of two gatherings of *Richard III* (1597), also said to be uncut, measures  $7\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{9}{16}$  inches (B&P, 1024) or  $28.2 \times 19.7$  cm (Stephen Parks, *The Elizabethan Club of Yale University and its Library*, The Elizabethan Club Series, 8 (New Haven, Conn., and London, 1986), p. 225; the list can be extended.

<sup>26</sup> Blayney, 'The Publication of Playbooks', p. 413.

books which the Stationers' Company, the body which sought to control and regulate the book trade, seems to have ordered to be sold bound rather than stitched.<sup>27</sup> If the ordinance of 1586 which set this limit was still being enforced in the next century, then several of Jonson's plays, together with Barnaby Barnes's *The Devil's Charter* (1607), John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (1623), and the second quarto of *Hamlet* (1604–5) would have been sold bound.

Few early Shakespeare quartos survive in what appear to be their original bindings—morocco has taken its toll. The evidence of early ownership is almost equally sparse, but it shows that individual collectors put some value on copies of single plays: enough, for example, for the antiquary Scipio Le Squyer to bother to write his name and the date on the title-page of his copy of *Pericles* (1609).<sup>28</sup> We know of other early purchasers of quarto plays, like the lawyer Thomas Twysden (1602–83) who owned a copy of the third quarto of *I Henry IV* (1604), and William Freke of the Middle Temple, who in June 1624 bought copies of *Othello* (1622) and Thomas Tomkis's *Lingua* for 8d.<sup>29</sup> William Drummond of Hawthornden owned at least four early Shakespeare quartos, later presented to Edinburgh University Library—evidently a less exclusive institution than the Bodleian.<sup>30</sup> The scrivener and collector Humphrey Dyson

<sup>27</sup> David Foxon, 'Stitched Books', *Book Collector*, 24 (1975), 111–24, esp. at 111, 115–17; Mirjam M. Foot, 'Bookbinding' in Barnard, McKenzie, and Bell (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, 4, 620–31 at p. 622. On the practice of stabbing and stitching play quartos, see D. F. Foxon, *Thomas J. Wise and the Pre-Restoration Drama* (London, 1959), esp. pp. 7–8. *OED*'s earliest citation for the use of the verb to stitch in bookbinding (v.<sup>1</sup> 5) is from a Stationers' Company decree of 1566, for which, see Edward Arber, *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London; 1554–1640*, 5 vols. (London and Birmingham, 1875–94), 1, 322.

<sup>28</sup> Parks, *The Elizabethan Club*, pp. 221–3; it is not in his library catalogue, for which, see F. Taylor, 'The Books and Manuscripts of Scipio Le Squyer, Deputy Chamberlain of the Exchequer (1620–59)', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 25 (1941), 137–64, at 156–8. T. A. Birrell, 'Reading as Pastime: the place of light literature in some gentlemen's libraries of the 17th century', in Robin Myers and Michael Harris (eds.), *Property of a Gentleman: The formation, organisation and dispersal of the private library 1620–1920*, (Winchester, 1991), pp. 113–31 at pp. 119–20. This suggests he lent or gave the play away before 1632. Another play, Edward Sharpham's *The fleire* (1607), now in the Huntington Library (HEH 69418) is similarly absent from the library catalogue.

<sup>29</sup> For Twysden, see B&P, 222; for Freke, see Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Eng. misc. c. 338, p. 19, printed in G. W. Prothero, 'A Seventeenth-Century Account Book', *English Historical Review*, 7 (1892), 88–102 at 97, and see also Wilfrid R. Prest, *The Inns of Court under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts 1590–1640* (London, 1972), pp. 161–2. The particular edition of *Lingua* is not specified, but may have been one which was printed, like *Othello*, in 1622.

<sup>30</sup> Robert H. MacDonald (ed.), *The Library of Drummond of Hawthornden* (Edinburgh, 1971), nos. 907–9, and for his copy of *Titus Andronicus* (1600), see B&P, 1189.

had a copy, now in the Huntington, of the first issue of *Troilus and Cressida* (1609). After the printed title-page ascription, 'Written by William Shakespeare', he added in his own hand '& printed amongst his workes', which may indicate he bought the book after the publication of the First Folio.<sup>31</sup> This might even suggest that there was a market in second-hand copies of early play quartos. When Thomas Skynner bought a copy of the 1619 *Merry Wives of Windsor* in 1621, it may still have been available a year or two after its surreptitious publication, and simply not have sold well.<sup>32</sup> A lost volume is more tantalising: a copy of the 1600 first quarto of *2 Henry IV* had the price of five pence and the date 11 December 1610 written in a contemporary hand.<sup>33</sup> Unless this was another very slow seller, which is quite possible given that there was no call for a reprint of the play, perhaps it was being sold as a second-hand book.

### III

Attention to the material forms of books has contributed to renewed interest in the wider context of the production and use of manuscript and print. In turn this has led, as we shall see, to a more sceptical analysis of received ideas about authorship and publication during the English Renaissance.

It may be that Shakespeare's supposed aversion to print has been overstated. He took his earliest acknowledged works, the two narrative poems, to his fellow Stratfordian Richard Field, who had become a successful printer in London. The design of *Venus and Adonis* (1593) seems no more but no less carefully thought out than other contemporary volumes of verse. However, *The Rape of Lucrece*, published the next year, exhibits some remarkable and distinctive typographical features. The most prominent of these is the printer's use of a large capital letter followed by small capital letters for some proper nouns: the capital letters are usually individually spaced, except where the tightness of the measure of the line prevents this. This capitalising of proper nouns ('Lucrece', 'Tarquin', 'Collatine') and a few words like 'Lord(s)' and 'God(s)' may be taken to suggest a classical, inscriptional form. The book's printer, Richard Field, had a fondness (probably inherited from his master Thomas Vautrollier),

<sup>31</sup> B&P, 1209.

<sup>32</sup> Balliol College, Oxford, B&P, 695.

<sup>33</sup> B&P, p. 127; it was last recorded in 1871.

for using big and small capitals, especially on the title-pages and among the preliminary pages of his books and occasionally in running-titles.<sup>34</sup> His use of them in a book of verse is much rarer.<sup>35</sup> Certainly, they do not occur in Field's earlier poetical publications, for example among the illustrative extracts in George Puttenham's *The arte of English poesie* (1589), or in John Harington's translation of *Orlando Furioso* (1591), or (except for the author's name at the end of the dedication) in George Chapman's *The shadow of night* (1594). I have not so far found a consistent use of big and small capitals in the main text of an English poem printed in England before Shakespeare's: it is tempting to think that Field's use of them may have met with his approval.<sup>36</sup> Perhaps their appearance in *Lucrece* was influential. They also appear in poems published in the following year by two authors with an interest in Shakespeare: in the title poem of Richard Barnfield's *Cynthia* and in the 1595 editions of Samuel Daniel's *Delia and Rosamond* and of the first printing of *The first fowre bookes of the ciuile warres*—the edition of *Delia* is merely a reprint of the edition of 1594 where the capitals do not occur. The books were the work of at least two different printers, suggesting the use of these types of capitals originated with the author.<sup>37</sup>

Another feature of the poem has received little attention: the beginnings of some twenty-five lines in it are marked by double opening inverted commas to signal them as 'sentences', that is moral maxims to be especially noted by the reader for their serious wisdom. These marks of what Puttenham calls 'the Sage sayer' do not occur in *Venus and Adonis*, and their presence in *Lucrece* suggests Shakespeare may have selected

<sup>34</sup> A brief examination of over ninety books out of about 120, produced by Field during the period 1589 to 1594, indicated that about thirty-five were produced without the use of big and small capitals. Their use in the text of the two editions of Walter Bigges's *A summarie and true discourse of sir Frances Drakes West Indian voyage* (1589) is perhaps closest to that in *Lucrece* and may be compared to Vautrollier's employment of them in the same way in Charles Merbury's *A briefe discourse of royall monarchie* (1581).

<sup>35</sup> They occur in the French dedicatory acrostic sonnet before G. Delamothe's *The French alphabet* (1592) on sig. A4r. They are also used in the speech prefixes in Buchanan's plays in the 1592 edition of his Psalm paraphrases.

<sup>36</sup> Such capitals do, however, occur in the poems in Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes* (1586), but this was printed at Leiden by Christopher Plantin, and conforms to Continental rather than native traditions.

<sup>37</sup> John Roberts printed this edition of *Delia* and Peter Short printed *The ciuile warres*; the printer of Barnfield's *Cynthia* remains unidentified. The presence of a prefatory poem to Barnfield's *Cynthia* signed 'T. T.', which also makes use of big and small capitals for figures such as 'Cynthia' and 'Ianus', is intriguing, given the use 'T. T.', or Thomas Thorpe, made of such conventions in the 1609 *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. There are no caps in a further 'T. T.'s' prefatory poem to John Trussell's *The first rape of faire Hellen* (1595).

them.<sup>38</sup> They do not seem to occur in Field's other publications of this period, nor in the poems by Harington and Chapman or collected by Puttenham, which he printed.<sup>39</sup> If Shakespeare had a hand in the design of *The Rape of Lucrece*, or at least approved its use of big and small capitals, marked the *sententiae* himself, even perhaps authorised the use of the monumental form of the word 'LVCRECE' alone on the title-page (a design without parallel in Field's books of the early 1590s), then he anticipated Jonson's interest in what might be called expressive typography.

It is not hard to imagine a Shakespeare concerned to present *Lucrece*, the 'graver labour' of his pen, with especial care and attention. The nature of his connection with the publication of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, which bore his name on its title-page, is harder to fathom. This collection of twenty-one poems, only five of them certainly by Shakespeare, was published by William Jaggard in two editions in 1599. Writing in 1612, Thomas Heywood reported that 'the Author [was] I know much offended with M. Jaggard (that altogether vnknowne to him) presumed to make so bold with his name'.<sup>40</sup> It is uncertain whether it was the publication of some of his poems or the appearance of his name on the volume's title, which reportedly so irritated Shakespeare. The poems were carefully arranged between sets of type ornaments. The design is like that adopted for several Elizabethan collections of poetry, such as Henry Constable's *Diana* [1594] or Spenser's *Amoretti and Epithalamion* of 1595, except that a decision also seems to have been taken to keep the pages as uncluttered as possible with no headings for the poems, few signature marks, and a

<sup>38</sup> George Puttenham, *The arte of English poesie* (1589), sig. 2D1r; Gladys Doidge Willcock and Alice Walker (eds.), *'The Arte of English Poesie' by George Puttenham* (Cambridge, 1936), pp. 235–6. The subject needs further investigation, especially in relation to the marking of *sententiae* in Shakespearian play quartos (Q1 and Q2 *Hamlet*, Q1 *Troilus and Cressida*) and in the Folio, see G. K. Hunter, 'The Marking of *Sententiae* in Elizabethan Printed Plays, Poems, and Romances', *Library*, 5th ser., 6 (1951–2), 171–88, and N. W. Bawcutt, 'Renaissance Dramatists and the Texts of Their Plays', *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama*, 40 (2001), 1–21 at 9–10.

<sup>39</sup> They do, however, occur in Vautrollier's printing of Thomas Drant's collection of neo-Latin verse, *Praesul* [1576?]; rather unexpectedly, the book does not contain big and small capitals.

<sup>40</sup> Thomas Heywood, *An apology for actors* (1612), sig. G4r–v; the passage is reproduced in S. Schoenbaum, *William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life* (Oxford, 1975), p. 219. I take it that Heywood is referring to the earlier publication of 1599, not to the new edition of *The passionate pilgrime* which Jaggard published in 1612, otherwise his remark 'and hee to doe himselfe right, hath since published them in his owne name' makes no sense. The poems Heywood asserts were published 'in his owne name' must be the Sonnets of 1609; cf. *The Complete Sonnets and Poems*, The Oxford Shakespeare, ed. Colin Burrow (Oxford, 2002), p. 79, where the editor argues rather weakly that 'Heywood's chronology in any case is wrong here'.

single catchword in the whole volume.<sup>41</sup> Most unusually, the majority of the poems were printed only on rectos.<sup>42</sup>

This printing on rectos only is usually said to be no more than the result of a wish to bulk out what would otherwise be a slim volume indeed. Yet the book, or at least the unique copy of it which survives, still has a feeling of something 'special' and distinctive about it. Books printed on one side of the sheet only are relatively unusual; perhaps the closest comparison to *The Passionate Pilgrim* volumes is the Edinburgh [1614?] edition of William Drummond of Hawthornden's *Poems*, which appears to have been published for private use or for presentation.<sup>43</sup> The possibility that Shakespeare may have had a part in the publication of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, and that his objection was to the unwarranted presence of his name on the title-page, is worth considering.<sup>44</sup>

The design of the Sonnets volume of 1609 can also be read in varying ways. The familiar version notes the book's poor layout resulting in the awkward division of poems between pages, links this to Thorpe's 'piratical' tendencies and to the work's controversial subject-matter, and condemns the volume as unauthorised and possibly suppressed.<sup>45</sup> A different view holds that the printing was not surreptitious, that Shakespeare at worst may not have objected to its publication and at best may have commissioned it. Indeed, its very design can be taken as evidence of a

<sup>41</sup> The fragmentary state of the surviving copy of the first edition makes it difficult to establish its original form. In the second edition the following leaves are signed: A1, A3-4, B1, B3, C1, D1. All these leaves are lacking in the first edition, with the exception of sigs. A3-4 which are unsigned in it. There are no catchwords in the surviving leaves of the first edition, which lacks the only leaf in the second edition with one (sig. B8).

<sup>42</sup> Only sigs. C3 and C5-6 in the surviving leaves of the first edition and sigs. D5-7 in the second edition are printed on both rectos and versos; it is likely that four other leaves in the first edition were printed on both rectos and versos. See the conjectural reconstruction in *The Passionate Pilgrim by William Shakespeare*, ed. Joseph Quincy Adams (New York and London, 1939), pp. xxxiii-xxxv.

<sup>43</sup> *STC* 7253-4, cf. the note to *STC* 7247. There is a Scholar Press facsimile of the [1614?] *Poems* (Menston, 1969), and see *The Poetical Works of William Drummond of Hawthornden*, ed. L. E. Kastner, 2 vols. (Manchester, 1913), 1. lii-lxiv. John Day's 1570 folio edition of John Foxe's commonplace book *Pandectae locorum communium* is printed on rectos only.

<sup>44</sup> Francis Meres's reference in *Palladis tamia. Wit's treasury* (1598), sigs. 201v-2r, to Shakespeare's 'sugred Sonnets among his priuate friends' could be taken to suggest that Jaggard either was a private friend or knew somebody who was.

<sup>45</sup> The compositors sought to avoid finishing pages with just a sonnet number at their foot (sigs. B2v, H1r) and once (G2r) set a longer page to avoid a single concluding line on a verso. The short pages on sigs. B4r and H4r and the long page on G3v are anomalous; the long page sig. G2r was probably caused by a failure to notice that Sonnet 99 on G1v has fifteen lines. However, there are two particularly unsightly pages which end with a sonnet number followed by only the first line of the poem (sigs. G1v, I1r).

conscious desire on someone's part to evoke at least two earlier volumes. The arrangement of sonnets followed by 'A Lover's Complaint' echoes the 1592 edition of Daniel's *Delia* published with *The Complaint of Rosamond*. A closer examination of the 1609 volume's appearance also points to links with the first quarto of Philip Sidney's sequence *Astrophil and Stella*, published seventeen or eighteen years earlier in 1591. This was, notoriously, a pirated or unauthorised volume, but Shakespeare's Sonnets appear to emulate its design. Both books have titles taking genitive forms (*Syr P. S. His Astrophel and Stella*); both have dedications not by their authors; both arrange the individual poems awkwardly so that many are divided between pages; both have running-titles, variously spelled and punctuated, across the head of each opening proclaiming the author and his work—'Sir P.S. his | Astrophel and Stella.' and 'SHAKE-SPEARES | SONNETS.' (the presence here of big and small capitals, again, is relatively unusual). There are differences between the two collections: Shakespeare's Sonnets are numbered, Sidney's were not, and the layout of the endings of the two volumes differs. Yet the association between them can be strengthened if it is accepted that the central section of Shakespeare's sequence addressed to a young man, the 108 poems with an incomplete envoi, deliberately refers to the 108 sonnets which make up *Astrophil and Stella*.<sup>46</sup>

From the point of view of its typography and format the 1609 edition of the Sonnets is a relatively straightforward work to comprehend visually. Besides the enigmatic presentation of T. T.'s dedication, there are coded matters in it, such as unexpected italicisation ('*Rose*' in Sonnet 1, '*Hews*' in 20, '*Will*' in 135–6) and the two pairs of italic brackets at the end of 126. Yet if the book were placed before an imaginary reader from the fourteenth century, after the initial shock of roman type and printing, he or she would have few difficulties in working out how the individual

<sup>46</sup> The link is even more explicit in the Trinity College, Cambridge, copy of the first quarto of *Astrophil and Stella* (VI. 7. 51), which has the running-title on the versos of the inner forme of gathering F in an uncorrected state, spelling out the author's name as 'Syr Phillip Sidneys'. For structural and typographical links between the first quarto of Sidney's sequence and the 1609 Sonnets, see Katherine Duncan-Jones, 'Was the 1609 *Shake-Speares Sonnets* Really Unauthorized?', *Review of English Studies*, NS, 34 (1983), 151–71 at 165–7, 'What are Shakespeare's sonnets called?', *Essays in Criticism*, 47 (1997), 1–12 at 10–11, and her edition of *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, The Arden Shakespeare Third Series (1997), pp. 85, 99; Arthur F. Marotti, 'Shakespeare's Sonnets as Literary Property', in Elizabeth D. Harvey and Katharine Eisaman Maus (eds.), *Soliciting Interpretation: Literary Theory and Seventeenth-Century English Poetry* (Chicago, Ill., and London, 1990), pp. 143–73 at pp. 154–5; Colin Burrow, 'Life and Work in Shakespeare's Poems', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 97 (1998), 15–50 at 41–2, and his edition of *The Complete Poems and Sonnets*, pp. 97–8.

poems were to be read. The same would not be true for a play, such as the first quarto of *Troilus and Cressida*, printed in the same year. The typographic codes used in dramatic works are complex and require that the reader has some essential knowledge and understanding of what a play is and how its text can be represented on the page.

Despite the existence of Greg's *Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration*, the material forms plays took between, say, 1565 and 1640 or even during the 1590s and 1600s, have attracted surprisingly little attention.<sup>47</sup> Don McKenzie, who pioneered the investigation of such questions, wrote in relation to Congreve's plays, of 'the language of visual display' and of 'design as means to the finer articulation of the text'. Yet of the great age of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, he argued that the 'modes' of the theatre 'were oral and visual', and that 'print was not the proper medium for plays'.<sup>48</sup>

Dramatists who sold their plays to theatrical companies lost financial interest in them: the literary property was no longer theirs. The case is slightly complicated with Shakespeare because he was a sharer in his theatrical company, and so seems to have been entitled to a share of the profits from any manuscripts the company sold to printers. It is not entirely clear how this system worked, yet the general point should be clear: as Samuel Johnson put it, 'When his plays had been acted, his hope was at an end; he solicited no addition of honour from the reader.'<sup>49</sup> Most scholars have taken it for granted that Shakespeare had no direct part in the printing and publication of his plays, either in quarto or folio; it follows that it is pointless to examine them for what McKenzie engagingly called 'typographic respect' in relation to their author.<sup>50</sup>

However, Shakespeare's association with the printing of his plays may not have been as tenuous as is usually thought. Lukas Erne has argued persuasively against this traditional idea that the Lord Chamberlain's Men were reluctant to publish his plays.<sup>51</sup> Instead, he suggests that the company had a fairly regular practice of selling manuscripts of Shakespeare's plays

<sup>47</sup> W. W. Greg, *A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration*, 4 vols. (London, 1939–59).

<sup>48</sup> McKenzie, 'Typography and Meaning', pp. 89, 100; cf. Harold Love, 'Oral and scribal texts in early modern England', in Barnard, McKenzie, and Bell (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, 4, 97–121 at p. 101.

<sup>49</sup> *Samuel Johnson on Shakespeare*, ed. H. R. Woudhuysen (Penguin, 1989), p. 147.

<sup>50</sup> McKenzie, 'Typography and Meaning', p. 83.

<sup>51</sup> Erne, 'Shakespeare and the Publication of His Plays'; see also Richard Dutton's important account of 'The Birth of the Author', in R. B. Parker and S. P. Zitner (eds.), *Elizabethan Theater: Essays in Honor of S. Schoenbaum* (Newark, Del., and London, 1996), pp. 71–92 esp. at p. 80.

to stationers more or less two years after they were written. The two-year lapse may be accounted for either by the sale of manuscript copies of the play or because it coincided—and was designed to coincide—with a revival. Nor did the company sell its manuscripts of 'good' texts only when they were meant to supersede 'bad' quartos: entries in the Stationers' Register indicate that 'good' texts were sold before 'bad' ones had been published. The decline in the publication of new plays by Shakespeare after 1600—thirteen plays between 1594 and 1600, five between 1601 and 1616—can be attributed to a market over-supplied with playbooks.

The theory that the Lord Chamberlain's Men, later the King's Men, were in favour of the publication of plays should make us question our ideas concerning Shakespeare himself. As Erne points out, in their address 'To the Great Variety of Readers' before the First Folio Shakespeare's friends and colleagues, Heminges and Condell, wished 'that the Author himselfe had liu'd to haue set forth, and ouerseen his owne writings'.<sup>52</sup> In other words, they had no difficulty imagining a Shakespeare who wanted to see his plays in print. Anyone in search of such a Shakespeare might, perhaps, look again at the career of the professional scribe Ralph Crane, whose hand has been identified behind the copy of at least five or six plays in the Folio. Crane's earliest known literary transcript is of Jonson's masque *Pleasure Reconci'd to Virtue* in 1618; in the early 1620s he worked for the King's Men, probably on the First Folio. Then, in Trevor Howard-Hill's words, 'something went wrong'; his links with the company ended, and in 1624–5 he turned to Thomas Middleton, especially to *A Game at Chess*, for work. There is, however, something puzzling about Crane and the Shakespeare Folio, his sudden engagement in the project, followed by his equally sudden disengagement. Was he too old and too slow to keep pace with the press's demand for copy? Or was his editing style too individual? He seems to have had little difficulty during the rest of his career churning out playbooks and other manuscripts of various kinds. A further examination of all Crane's copying may suggest that his work on Shakespeare's plays began some time before the Folio was even contemplated, was perhaps even started while Shakespeare was alive, but ended with his death.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Erne, 'Shakespeare and the Publication of His Plays', 19.

<sup>53</sup> See T. H. Howard-Hill, 'Shakespeare's Earliest Editor, Ralph Crane', *Shakespeare Survey* 44 (1992), pp. 113–29 at p. 128; H. R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts, 1558–1640* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 189–95; E. A. J. Honigmann, *The Texts of 'Othello' and Shakespearean Revision* (London and New York, 1996), esp. pp. 59–76, 165–8.

Shakespeare's possible interest in the typographic form of his plays is hard to assess. The case would, of course, be much altered if we were dealing with Jonson.<sup>54</sup> He understood that type can give differing effects, studying and learning from Continental models as assiduously as Pope was to do a century later. Jonson was not unique in the control he was able to exercise over the typographic appearance of his plays—John Ford provides another example.<sup>55</sup> Yet we shall not get very far if we look for such obvious effects in Shakespeare's substantive quartos. Shakespeare may have disliked the idea of transforming his plays from living performances to literature, or he may have longed for this to happen. But he cannot have been entirely indifferent to the phenomenon of seeing plays, including his own, printed. Even so it is not easy to find any positive evidence of Shakespeare's thinking a play into print in the way that we can observe Jonson or Congreve doing.

Perhaps we can detect some typographical ingenuity where material has been set within the measure of the line, but ranged right in the outer margins of the text. One of the most interesting examples of this occurs in *Hamlet* Q2 (1604/5).<sup>56</sup> Hamlet twice interrupts the play within the play with the interjections, 'That's wormwood' and 'If she should breake it now', remarks which are set in the margin. These seem to have an expressive function: there is a conscious attempt here to represent two plays at once and to embody the way Hamlet is both involved in, and yet is outside, *The Murder of Gonzago*. They are not simple interruptions, necessitating a new speech prefix for the Player Queen, but designed to suggest simultaneous or at least antiphonal performance.<sup>57</sup> A less complicated effect is achieved in *Romeo and Juliet* Q2 (1599) where two unassigned marginal 'Madam's are usually given to the Nurse as if she is speaking 'Within'—in fact the Folio supplies the stage-direction and again ranges the two 'Madam's right.<sup>58</sup> It could always be argued that these settings

<sup>54</sup> See, for example, John Jowett, 'Jonson's Authorization of Type in *Sejanus* and Other Early Quartos', *Studies in Bibliography*, 44 (1991), 254–65; Jennifer Brady and W. H. Herenden (eds.), *Ben Jonson's 1616 Folio* (Newark, Del., London, and Toronto, 1991); Mark Bland, 'William Stansby and the Production of *The Workes of Benjamin Jonson, 1615–16*', *Library*, 6th ser., 20 (1998), 1–33; and Martin Butler (ed.), *Re-Presenting Ben Jonson: Text, History, Performance*, (London, 1999).

<sup>55</sup> See e.g., Bawcutt, 'Renaissance Dramatists and the Texts of Their Plays', 8–10.

<sup>56</sup> Sig. H2r: 3. 2. 181; sig. H2v: 3. 2. 224. All references are to the *Riverside Shakespeare*.

<sup>57</sup> Some editors believed that these might be late additions to the play, written in the margin of the manuscript, see *Hamlet*, ed. John Dover Wilson, *The New Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 1934, rev. 1954), 3. 2. 180 n., and Gary Taylor, 'Revising Shakespeare', *Text*, 3 (1987), 285–304 at 291.

<sup>58</sup> Sig. D4r: 2. 2. 149, 151; sig. 266v in F, TLN 952, 954. Through Line Numbers are taken from the Norton Facsimile of the First Folio.

were determined by a need to save space, but this may not be the only explanation for them.

Space determines a great deal in the setting and appearance of such texts, but I hardly think that saving space alone can have induced the compositor of *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598) in 1. 1 to set Costard's interruptions of Armado's letter, which the King reads, within the text of the letter itself.<sup>59</sup> I suspect that the speech stood this way in the printer's copy. Again, the need to make space does not seem to have determined the division of one of Troilus' speeches in the 1609 quarto into two paragraphs, the second ('This the monstrosity in loue Lady') unindented: there is no possible confusion here between prose and verse.<sup>60</sup> Similar anomalous paragraphings occur in two 'bad' quartos. In the gravedigger scene Hamlet breaks off his speech (which is clearly in prose) about Yorick:

. . . alas poore *Yoricke*

I knew him Horatio.  
A fellow of infinite mirth . . .<sup>61</sup>

The speech is again unindented, and unless space is being deliberately wasted, there seems to be some sort of intelligent design behind it. In Thaliard's soliloquy at the beginning of 1. 3 of Q1 *Pericles* the prose passage is set out with each of the four separate sentences indented.<sup>62</sup>

I am also struck by instances where the last short line of a speech is considerably indented: again, *Pericles* supplies a good example.<sup>63</sup> The longest speech of Cleon, the governor of Tharsus, describing the effects of famine on the city, ends with the heavily indented words 'Is not this

<sup>59</sup> Sig. B1r: 1. 1. 231–61; the arrangement is followed in the Folio, sig. L2v, TLN 242–61. Hotspur's comments on the letter he is reading in 1 *Henry IV* are signalled in the first quarto by being set in separately paragraphed italic type (sigs. C4v–D1r: 2. 3. 1–35). In the Folio the first comment at the beginning of the speech is set in the same way; the second and third are set in italics but continuously within the rest of the paragraph (TLN 850–82).

<sup>60</sup> Sig. F2v: 3. 2. 77–83. Other examples of this particular feature occur in parts of this gathering (F) which have been assigned to compositor A, see W. Craig Ferguson, 'Compositor Identification in *Romeo Q1* and *Troilus*', *Studies in Bibliography*, 42 (1989), 211–18 at 216. For three further instances on sig. F1r: 3. 1. 131–43, see also Peter Alexander, '*Troilus and Cressida*, 1609', *Library*, 4th ser., 9 (1928–9), 267–86 at 271–2.

<sup>61</sup> Sig. I1r: 5. 1. 184–5.

<sup>62</sup> Sig. B3r: 1. 3. 1–9; the gathering is usually taken to have been reset for some unknown reason.

<sup>63</sup> These are different from, but may be related to, the 'waist' or short line which 'often appears in the middle of long speeches in Shakespeare's mature plays at a point of strong transition and usually of strong emotion', see Eleanor Prosser, *Shakespeare's Anonymous Editors: Scribe and Compositor in the Folio Text of 2 Henry IV* (Stanford, Cal., 1981), p. 151.

true?<sup>64</sup> This comes in 1. 4, part of the play not usually attributed to Shakespeare, but there is a comparably indented arrangement at the end of the speech in which Berowne steps forth in *Love's Labour's Lost* 4. 3, calling for 'A Caudle hou!', as though to mark off this part of the speech from the rest of it.<sup>65</sup> There may be something of the same kind at the beginning of the second act in *Titus Andronicus* Q1 (1594). Aaron's speech describing Tamora's ascent of Olympus ends with an elaborate simile comparing her to the sun, and is concluded with a stop, followed by a heavily indented 'So *Tamora.*' He then continues with his plots.<sup>66</sup>

Of course, in all of this we cannot be certain whether the arrangement of the words on the page reflects the compositor's whim or what he found in the copy—and if the latter whether Shakespeare or a scribe was thinking about how the work might look in print. Our understanding of Shakespeare's interest in the dissemination of his own works, in their typographical arrangement and form, is still developing in the light of our widening perceptions of publication in print and manuscript at this time. Yet there are limits to this. His interest did not extend to attending the press, for there seems to be no compelling evidence that he ever read proofs either of his plays or of his poems. A more detailed investigation of typographic practices in plays and poems between, say, 1575 and 1625 will, I believe, yield important results for how we think about the works of writers of the period.

#### IV

Plays did not assume their familiar conventions and format all at once. The two principal influences on the presentation of dramatic texts in print were the native manuscript tradition and Continental ways of printing classical, chiefly Latin, dramatists.<sup>67</sup>

The forms Shakespeare's printed plays took were not unusual. They were predominantly set in roman type, with italic used for speech prefixes

<sup>64</sup> Sig. B4r: 1. 4. 50.

<sup>65</sup> Sig. E4v: 4. 3. 172. The indentation is retained in F: TLN 1511.

<sup>66</sup> Sig. C3r: 2. 1. 9. The line is not indented in F, sig. 2c6r, TLN 563. On the typographical layout of what is taken to be Peele's part of the play, see MacD. P. Jackson, 'Stage Directions and Speech Headings in Act I of *Titus Andronicus* Q (1594): Shakespeare or Peele?', *Studies in Bibliography*, 49 (1996), 134–48.

<sup>67</sup> Greg, *Bibliography of the English Printed Drama*, 4. clviii; T. H. Howard-Hill, 'The Evolution of the Form of Plays in English During the Renaissance', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 43 (1970), 112–45 at 138.

and stage directions, for foreign languages, letters, poems, and (with the curious exception of some of Valentine Simmes's Shakespeare quartos) for most proper names.<sup>68</sup> The one exception to the quarto format of all the plays is *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* (better known as *3 Henry VI*), issued as an octavo in 1595—part of a sudden rash of octavo dramatic texts in the 1590s.<sup>69</sup> Only *Othello* in 1622 and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* of 1634 have page numbers, which are relatively unusual in printed plays until the 1630s: their presence may suggest something about how plays came to be read. Shakespeare's sole play containing an address to the reader, 'A neuer writer, to an euer reader. Newes.', is the second issue of the 1609 quarto of *Troilus and Cressida*. The authorship of this deeply puzzling address—Shakespeare himself, John Marston, or some other—remains uncertain, but it is worth pointing out how unusual a preliminary piece still was in 1609: such features only became frequent in dramatic texts after about 1612 or 1613.<sup>70</sup> *Troilus and Cressida* was the

<sup>68</sup> Simmes's substantive Shakespeare quartos show some disparity in their use of italics for proper names. None appear in Q1 *2 Henry IV* (1600) and Q1 *Much Ado* (1600), a few in only one gathering in Q1 *Richard II* (1597), a few in only three gatherings of his part of Q1 *Richard III* (1597), while they appear fairly regularly in Q1 *Hamlet* (1603). In all the other play texts he printed between 1597 and 1607, with three exceptions italics are regularly used for proper names. The exceptions are: Q1 of *The Shoemakers' Holiday* (1600) where they appear irregularly; they are used sparingly in Q1 *Sir John Oldcastle* (1600) and very irregularly in Q2 of *The First Part of the Contention* (1600). It may simply be that towards the beginning of his play-printing career Simmes was sparing in his use of italics in this way, although they appear regularly in two plays of 1599, *A Warning for Fair Women* and *An Humorous Day's Mirth*.

Peter Short's sparing use of italic for proper names in his part of Q1 *Richard III* and all of Q1 *1 Henry IV* is also worth noting; these italics are used regularly in his other substantive Shakespearian publications, *The Taming of a Shrew* (1594) and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York (3 Henry VI)* of 1595. The sparing use of them in *Richard III* is briefly noted by Susan Zimmerman, 'The Uses of Headlines: Peter Short's Shakespearian Quartos *1 Henry IV* and *Richard III*', *Library*, 6th ser., 7 (1985), 218–55 at 237, otherwise this feature has been passed over in recent discussions of Short's work, for which, see MacD. P. Jackson, 'Two Shakespeare Quartos: *Richard III* (1597) and *1 Henry IV* (1598)', *Studies in Bibliography*, 35 (1982), 173–90, and his 'Finding the Pattern: Peter Short's Shakespeare Quartos Revisited', *Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand Bulletin*, 25 (2001), 67–86, and Akihiro Yamada, *Peter Short: An Elizabethan Printer* (Mie, 2002).

<sup>69</sup> Both parts of *Tamburlaine* are octavos in 1590, 1593, and 1597; so is *The Massacre at Paris* in 1594, and Samuel Brandon's closet play *The Virtuous Octavia* in 1598. *The Massacre* and *True Tragedy* are both, of course, short plays with no more than thirty-two and forty leaves respectively; but Brandon's play and *Tamburlaine* are full length. *Octavia* and the *Massacre* share the same printer, Edward Allde, but there is otherwise no explanation for this eruption of octavos.

<sup>70</sup> See generally, Virgil B. Heltzel, 'The Dedication of Tudor and Stuart Plays', in Siegfried Korninger (ed.), *Studies in English Language and Literature Presented to Professor Dr. Karl Brunner*, Wiener Beiträge zur Englischen Philologie, 65 (1957), 74–86; on commendatory verses, Franklin B. Williams, Jr., 'Commendatory Verses: The Rise of the Art of Puffing', *Studies in Bibliography*, 19 (1966), 1–14 at 5; and Alexander Leggatt, 'The Presence of the Playwright, 1580–1640', in Parker and Zitner (eds.), *Elizabethan Theater*, 130–46 esp. 132–6.

last new play entirely from his own pen which Shakespeare may have seen in print.<sup>71</sup>

Our conventional image of early play texts as ephemeral items can again be called into question by the care taken over their typographic appearance. None of Shakespeare's plays has a title-page woodcut, but they are often supplied with ornaments of some kind on their titles or (most elegantly in *Much Ado About Nothing* (1600)) above the head-title or at the end of the play. There was a mechanical reason for the use of ornaments, but they also made the books look attractive.<sup>72</sup> The first word spoken in a play also gave printers a chance to use decorative initials. These affected the appearance of the page, resulting in unusual settings, which compositors tried to make visually attractive.<sup>73</sup> Plays were often printed from cast off copy: that is, the pages were set by the compositor not in sequential order, but by formes according to which pages appeared on one side of the unfolded sheet. Casting off a play entirely in verse was easier than casting off a prose play or one which mixed prose and verse, but mistakes were frequent and could result in either an unsightly over-crammed page or an empty-looking one which contained too much white space. Printers had to go to a certain amount of trouble to avoid inaccu-

<sup>71</sup> Dutton, 'Birth of the Author', p. 84, argues that the address suggests that this is a reading text; see also *Troilus and Cressida*, ed. David Bevington, The Arden Shakespeare Third Series (Walton-on-Thames, 1998), pp. 1–3, 87–8, 400–1.

<sup>72</sup> Woodcuts and ornaments helped prevent the press's platen from damaging the type, breaking free from the hose, or making an uneven impression on the pages in the forme which were not filled with type: cf. Richard-Gabriel Rummonds, *Printing on the Iron Handpress* (New Castle, Del., and London, 1998), pp. 205–7. See also 'random cloud' (i.e. Randall McLeod), 'Where Angels fear to read', in Joe Bray, Miriam Handley, and Anne C. Henry (eds.), *Ma(r)king the Text: The presentation of meaning on the literary page* (Aldershot and Burlington, Vt., 2000), pp. 144–92, and Peter W. M. Blayney's letter, 'Trissino's *De La Volgare Eloquenzia*: A Question of Bearing', *Library*, 6th ser., 5 (1983), 175–6. A clear example of the use of bearing type on the title-page of the British Library copy of Q3 of *The Play of the Weather* [c.1573] is reproduced in *The Play of the Weather 1533*, ed. T. N. S. Lennam, The Malone Society Reprints (Oxford, 1977 for 1971), p. xv.

<sup>73</sup> See Steven Urkowitz, 'Back to Basics: Thinking about the *Hamlet* First Quarto', in Thomas Clayton (ed.), *The Hamlet First Published (Q1, 1603): Origins, Form, Intertextualities* (Newark, Del., London, and Toronto, 1992), pp. 257–91 at pp. 270–5; cf. Jackson, 'Stage Directions and Speech Headings in Act I of *Titus Andronicus* Q (1594): Shakespeare or Peele?', 137. For first lines split because of speech prefixes in the Folio, see esp. Ronald B. McKerrow, *Prolegomena for the Oxford Shakespeare: A Study in Editorial Method* (Oxford, 1939), pp. 47–9, noting their presence in all of the plays and their particular frequency in the three parts of *Henry VI* and *Titus*. Although, as he points out, the practice often seems to indicate 'at the end of the part-line a more than usually important pause, either for emphasis or when a new person is addressed', nevertheless, especially when quarto copy-texts are considered, it is clear that the practice was 'purely typographical in origin', and that it was 'the compositor alone, who may for some reason have disliked the appearance of a turnover in the first line of a speech' (pp. 48, 49).

rate casting off and its consequences. They also often took trouble to avoid unsightly 'widows' and occasionally even 'orphans'—pages beginning with short last lines of speeches and pages ending with first lines of speeches. They were equally concerned sometimes to avoid beginning new scenes, signalled by entrances, at the foot of the page. An attractive opening of two pages in a book was evidently deemed important, and to achieve this, facing pages were expected to contain equal numbers of lines. I have drawn attention elsewhere to a set of anomalous page depths in Q1 of *Love's Labour's Lost*, just at the point where the quarto prints Shakespeare's first and second versions of Berowne's great 'women's eyes' speech in defence of love: both pages have only 37 lines to the page rather than the usual number of 38 lines.<sup>74</sup> Another example might be taken from the opening in Q2 *Romeo and Juliet* which contains Romeo's dying speech.<sup>75</sup> There is something clearly wrong with it, for L2v has only 36 lines but L3r has 38. The compositor obviously did not want the end of the speech to appear on the next page, which begins with a stage direction for Friar Laurence's entry. Nevertheless, the imbalance in this opening is curious and made more so because L3r contains the repetition of 'Depart againe . . . Depart againe . . .', which is usually taken to be a false start or a rejected earlier version.<sup>76</sup>

These rather technical matters suggest something of the difficulty printers faced in transforming manuscript into printed copy. It is worth stressing that the presentation of play texts in print, what might be called their grammar, was a constantly evolving process. One example of this is the way in which interruptions were signalled. In describing *aposiopesis* or 'the figure of silence' ('This figure is fit for phantasticall heads and such as be sodaine or lacke memorie'), Puttenham says that it is used 'when we begin to speake a thing, and breake of in the middle way, as if either it needed no further to be spoken of, or that we were ashamed, or afraide to speake it out. It is also sometimes done by way of threatning, and to shew a moderation of anger.'<sup>77</sup> None of the examples he gives of the figure is punctuated unusually or has distinctive typographical marks. Similarly, three of the four bracketed interruptions Costard makes while the King reads Armado's letter in the quarto of *Love's Labour's Lost* are simply

<sup>74</sup> *Love's Labour's Lost*, ed. H. R. Woudhuysen, The Arden Shakespeare Third Series (Walton-on-Thames, 1998), pp. 324–7.

<sup>75</sup> Sigs. L2v–3r: 5. 3. 51–120.

<sup>76</sup> 5. 3. 108: see Wells and Taylor, *Textual Companion*, p. 301.

<sup>77</sup> Puttenham, *The Arte of English poesie*, sig. T4r; Willcock and Walker (eds.), 'The Arte of English Poesie', pp. 166–7.

preceded by commas.<sup>78</sup> That is one way of indicating broken speech. At the play's climactic moment, when Marcadé tells the Princess about 'The King your father', she breaks in with 'Dead for my life': Marcadé's line is unpunctuated.<sup>79</sup> In early quartos interrupted lines end with no punctuation or with commas, colons, semi-colons, or just unhelpful full points. These practices are illustrated in Percy Simpson's unsurpassed *Shakespearian Punctuation* of 1911.<sup>80</sup> But he does not deal with the dash, whose history has yet to be written: perhaps like the story of the giant rat of Sumatra, the world is not yet ready for it. I suspect that Jonson pioneered the use of dashes, and his early quartos show how responsive he is to their effect. They first appear in one of Shakespeare's substantive quartos in *King Lear* in 1608, which contains thirteen of them. In *Troilus and Cressida*, printed the next year, there are sixteen, many set from solid rules. There is also a development: for dashes are used when speakers interrupt themselves, lose the thread of what they are saying, or are simply overwhelmed with emotion. With the first quarto of *Othello* (1622), a play which makes much use of interruption, the text is rendered almost telegraphic by some sixty-nine dashes, including eight on one page.<sup>81</sup> In time the dash became a major feature of expressive typography.

In the Folio extensive use is made of dashes to indicate interruption, heightened emotion, or confused thought.<sup>82</sup> Yet in some plays (*Hamlet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*) they occur only at the ends of speeches.<sup>83</sup> The

<sup>78</sup> Sig. B1r: 1. 1. 248–57; one of the four interruptions has no preceding punctuation.

<sup>79</sup> Sig. I3v: 5. 2. 719.

<sup>80</sup> Percy Simpson, *Shakespearian Punctuation* (Oxford, 1911), pp. 98–9; see also M. B. Parkes, *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* (Aldershot, 1992), p. 56, and Anthony Graham-White, *Punctuation and Its Dramatic Value in Shakespearean Drama* (Newark, Del., and London, 1995), esp. p. 32.

<sup>81</sup> Honigmann, *The Texts of 'Othello'*, pp. 32, 41, 129, would attribute these to scribal rather than authorial habits; but the point remains the same, that in later play texts the dash became an important way of conveying a character's thought and feelings. Other plays exhibit an even greater reliance on the dash: Tourneur's *The Atheist's Tragedy* (1611) contains around 140 dashes, not including those related to stage directions.

<sup>82</sup> Hinman used shorter and longer dashes to distinguish between compositors: despite changes in the assignment of stints his conclusion that Compositor B preferred solid dashes of various lengths (between 3mm and 15mm), while A generally preferred to set two, three, four, or even five hyphens together or short dashes, still stands, see Charlton Hinman, *The Printing and Proof-Reading of the First Folio of Shakespeare*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1963), 1. 185, 2. 215. See also T. H. Howard-Hill, 'The Compositors of Shakespeare's Folio Comedies', *Studies in Bibliography*, 26 (1973), 61–106 at 71, and his 'New Light on Compositor E of the Shakespeare First Folio', *Library*, 6th ser., 2 (1980), 156–78 at 167.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Gary Taylor, "'Praestat difficilior lectio': *All's Well that Ends Well* and *Richard III*", *Renaissance Studies*, 2 (1988), 27–46 at 29, where he refers to 'the unusual dash and the incomplete syntax' of the Countess's speech in *All's Well* at 1. 1. 51–3 (sig. V1v, TLN 53–5 in the

degree to which the Folio's compositors followed quarto use of dashes remains to be investigated, and is complicated by uncertainties over which texts served as copy.<sup>84</sup> Perhaps the most striking feature of the use of dashes in the Folio is that some plays are entirely or almost entirely free from them. *Troilus and Cressida* has the most with fourteen, next comes *Merry Wives* with eleven, then *King Lear* with nine. With only one exception in the whole of the Folio dashes never occur in both columns of any page.<sup>85</sup> Yet for long stretches—in all the comedies from *Measure for Measure* to *As You Like It*—dashes disappear altogether: there are none in *Twelfth Night*, *King John*, *Henry V*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, while *Titus Andronicus* and *Richard II* have one each, 2 and 3 *Henry VI* and *Macbeth* just two each. In other plays, dashes are used on the first page alone, as in *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*, which has five sets of dashes on its first page and then no more. Similarly, there are a few sudden outbreaks of dashes on some pages: five again on one page of *Merry Wives*, four on one of *All's Well*. All of these plays were set from a wide variety of copy and by a good selection of different compositors.<sup>86</sup>

Our understanding of the uses to which typographic effects were put in early printed play texts is still developing. If we are to read the bibliographical and literary signals they send us, we need to attend to their

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Folio). This is not at all unusual in the Folio; the dashes and broken lines suggested 'cuts or alterations' to W. W. Greg, *The Shakespeare First Folio: Its Bibliographical and Textual History* (Oxford, 1955), p. 353, but Fredson Bowers denied the dashes such a significance, see his 'Foul Papers, Compositor B, and the Speech-Prefixes of *All's Well that Ends Well*', *Studies in Bibliography*, 32 (1979), 60–81 at 60 n. 2.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Michael J. Warren, 'Textual Problems, Editorial Assertions in Editions of Shakespeare', in Jerome J. McGann (ed.), *Textual Criticism and Literary Interpretation* (Chicago, Ill., and London, 1985), pp. 23–37, at p. 33 and p. 209 n. 15, where he notes F's preference for points over dashes in *The Tempest* TLN 765 (2. 1. 95) and *King Lear* TLN 2123 (3. 7. 52), 2144 (3. 7. 72), where Q has dashes.

<sup>85</sup> The exception is in *Troilus and Cressida* (sig. para 5r), which was set by Compositor H.

<sup>86</sup> It does not seem that compositors' type-cases played a significant part in this discrepant use of dashes. Hinman distinguished three sets of type cases (x, y, and z) used in the setting of the Folio. A broad analysis of their use shows that both longer or shorter dashes and hyphens were set from x, that only longer or shorter dashes were set from y, and that no dashes or hyphens were set from z. Since case z was only used in the setting of part of the Comedies, their absence (with the single exception noted below) from that part of the Folio could be explained by the possibility that the case contained no dashes—although it did contain hyphens. In 'Cases and Compositors in the Shakespeare First Folio Comedies', *Studies in Bibliography*, 35 (1982), 206–34, Paul Werstine has shown that case z was used more widely in the Comedies than Hinman believed, in fact from the beginning of work on the Folio. However, the presence of two short dashes in column b on D3v, tentatively assigned to compositor D and therefore set from case z, may be anomalous or may suggest that the compositor attribution of this page (or part of the page) needs further consideration.

evolving forms. The early printings of Shakespeare's plays do not suggest that he was closely involved in their design and layout as was Jonson, whose exploitation of print is now well known. Yet Shakespeare must have been aware that his plays had reached print, and this may have influenced the ways in which he wrote. Further study of the quartos and the Folio may still uncover new evidence for the foundations of Shakespeare's text.

## V

Concern with the physical appearance of books, with the relationship between form and content, represents one area in which new approaches have changed how editors and scholars think about Shakespeare's texts. It is in part a reaction against the sort of analytical bibliography promoted by the 'New Bibliography' through its close attention to the production history of individual books.

In recent years, two other key areas associated with the findings of the 'New Bibliography' have been challenged, and old certainties have given way to new uncertainties. Pollard, McKerrow, and Greg had sought to classify theatrical manuscripts and to distinguish between different sorts of printed texts. The categories that have traditionally been used in these accounts are, on the whole, binary ones. Manuscripts are either authorial 'foul papers' or theatrical 'promptbooks'; quartos are either 'good', being set from 'foul papers', or 'bad', the result of what has generally been diagnosed as memorial reconstruction. These simple and exclusive categories came to dominate textual studies, but their usefulness has been increasingly questioned. The 'new' bibliographers are charged with arguing in a circular fashion. According to their critics, they examined the original evidence, set up various specific categories, and confirmed that those categories existed on the basis of the very same evidence they had previously examined: 'foul-paper' texts can be identified by their having the features which are characteristic of 'foul-paper' texts.

Authorial 'foul papers' will, Greg argued, include evidence of uncertainty about characters' names, false starts in composition, unclear action, vague and permissive stage directions, and characters that never speak. The compilers of the original 'promptbooks' resolved these problems so that the play could be presented without difficulty.<sup>87</sup> This taxonomy has been challenged from several directions. One argument is that none of the

<sup>87</sup> Greg, *Shakespeare First Folio*, esp. pp. 141–2.

theatrical documents described and categorised by Greg in *Dramatic Documents from the Elizabethan Playhouses*, or in more recent discoveries, has all the features which Greg believed 'foul papers' and 'promptbooks' should have.<sup>88</sup> Indeed, the very existence of 'foul-paper' manuscripts has been doubted.<sup>89</sup> When we look at an authorial manuscript, are we really looking at the author in the act of composition, or is he in fact revising what he has already transcribed in a fair copy? (The Witches' chant from *Macbeth*, 'Fair is foul and foul is fair', inevitably comes to mind.) Equally, by paying particular attention to stage directions and the issue of licensing, theatre historians have questioned how practical a promptbook would be, or needed to be, for putting on a play—they have questioned whether that was in fact its use. These difficulties and uncertainties find their natural home in the deep and shifting sands surrounding debate over the manuscript of the play of *Sir Thomas More*.

Editors and bibliographers like neatness: the multiplication of entities, unless it is strictly necessary, is frowned upon. The two-manuscript model of 'foul papers' and/or 'promptbook' seems to cover all the eventualities—unless, that is, we have misunderstood the variety of manuscripts and the uses to which they might be put. Some scholars, including Fredson Bowers, believe this has been done.<sup>90</sup> Others argue that theatrical manuscripts, instead of existing in neat categories, show a heterogeneous lack of uniformity.<sup>91</sup> Anyone who looks at the extant manuscripts may well be troubled by the various forms they take and the different sorts of information they contain. Yet this should not lead to a counsel of despair—rather, it calls for a fresh examination of the physical documents themselves and a deeper understanding of their uses.<sup>92</sup> The documents matter because they alone can help us to understand the sorts of copy which underlie the printed texts of plays of the time.<sup>93</sup>

The two-manuscript model for plays no longer adequately reflects our knowledge of the scribal publication of manuscripts.<sup>94</sup> In particular,

<sup>88</sup> W. W. Greg, *Dramatic Documents from the Elizabethan Playhouses: Stage Plots, Actors' Parts, Prompt Books*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1931).

<sup>89</sup> Paul Werstine, 'Narratives About Printed Shakespeare Texts: "Foul Papers" and "Bad" Quartos', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 41 (1990), 65–86, and his 'Plays in Manuscript', in Cox and Kastan (eds.), *A New History of Early English Drama*, pp. 481–97.

<sup>90</sup> See esp. Bowers, *On Editing Shakespeare*, pp. 3–32.

<sup>91</sup> Werstine, 'Plays in Manuscript', pp. 482, 492, 493.

<sup>92</sup> Grace Ioppolo, '“The foule sheet and y<sup>e</sup> fayr”: Henslowe, Daborne, Heywood and the Nature of Foul-Paper and Fair-Copy Dramatic Manuscripts', *English Manuscript Studies*, 11 (2002), 132–53.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Werstine, 'Plays in Manuscript', p. 492.

<sup>94</sup> Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 65–70; Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts*, pp. 134–45.

Greg's argument that the making of private transcripts of plays for sale only really began with the demand for copies of Middleton's *A Game at Chess* in the mid-1620s seems unconvincing.<sup>95</sup> There were other reasons for the proliferation of manuscripts. Authors, Shakespeare included, presumably had reasons for keeping private copies of their plays. Companies of players worked in Europe for long periods and travelled widely. Often they may have merely been involved, as Fynes Moryson reported, in 'pronouncing peeces and Patches of English playes', probably from memory, yet it is also reasonable to believe they took playbooks of one kind or another with them, some of which must have been manuscript ones.<sup>96</sup>

Much of our understanding of how an author's handwritten words were turned into a dramatic event has been based on the extant theatrical playbooks: their survival has rightly made them prime documents. But perhaps we have invested playbooks with too much authority, making them the key to the business of putting on plays, when they may have been used in a more limited way, to deal with props and entrances.<sup>97</sup> Instead, it might have been the players' parts, their rolls, which really mattered. Unfortunately, almost all of these have been lost (Edward Alleyn's part for Orlando at Dulwich College is the sole real example from the popular theatre), and so questions about their production and use cannot be easily answered. But they may have had a more direct influence on what was said and done on stage than the playbook: theatrical and even authorial changes may have been entered on them. Without wishing to revive arguments about 'assembled' texts, if we wish to account for the actors' interpolations and ad libs found in some plays, notably the Folio text of *Hamlet*, then a reconsideration of actors' parts might be rewarding.

And what of 'bad' quartos, those roses which 'By any other word would smell as sweet', as the second quarto of *Romeo and Juliet* has it, while the first, the 'bad' one, has the more familiar 'name'?<sup>98</sup> Their most

<sup>95</sup> Werstine, 'Narratives About Printed Shakespeare Texts', 85–6; Dutton, 'Birth of the Author', pp. 80–8. T. H. Howard-Hill has challenged such responses to Greg's argument in "'Nor Stage, Nor Stationers Stall Can Show": The Circulation of Plays in Manuscript in the Early Seventeenth Century', *Book History*, 2 (1999), 28–41.

<sup>96</sup> See June Schlueter, 'English Actors in Kassel, Germany, during Shakespeare's Time', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 10 (1998), 238–61 at 242.

<sup>97</sup> William B. Long, "'A bed / for woodstock": A Warning for the Unwary', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 2 (1985), 91–118 at 106, 114; cf. Antony Hammond, 'Encounters of the Third Kind in Stage-Directions in Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama', *Studies in Philology*, 89 (1992), 71–99.

<sup>98</sup> 2. 2. 44.

prominent features are relative brevity, misplaced action and scenes, echoes or quotations from other works, inconsistencies in plot, and above all garbled, incoherent, and metrically flawed speeches—'Hamlet by Dogberry' as the heading for a review by Brian Vickers memorably called them.<sup>99</sup> Again, the questioning of categories has led to a sort of vacuum into which all sorts of strange theories, old and new, have rushed. They may be authorial first drafts of plays; or later versions, cut, revised and adapted, the work of the author, a scribe, the company, or another writer altogether; they may have been intended for provincial or for London production, for performance to down-market, less literate audiences; they may be pirated publications or they may be authorised by the company which owned them, driven by the plague to sell them, or not; they may have been transmitted by acts of memorial reconstruction by one or more members of the cast, paying greater, or less, attention to the scenes in which they had parts, or by the whole company; they may have been taken down by members of the audience, or by members of the company, using shorthand or a mixture of long- and shorthand.<sup>100</sup>

If nothing now seems certain about the 'bad' quartos, then at least their numbers can be limited. In *Shakespearean Suspect Texts* Laurie Maguire's interpretation of the evidence does not lead her to do away with the category of 'memorial reconstruction' entirely, but to limit severely the instances in which it can be detected. Starting with forty-one suspect texts, she will not allow that any are 'unquestionably' the product of memorial reconstruction; for four, including *The Taming of a Shrew* (1594) and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1602), a strong case can be made for memorial reconstruction; for a further three, including *Hamlet* (1603) and *Pericles* (1609), a case can be made.<sup>101</sup> This leaves several first printings of Shakespearian texts—*The First Part of the Contention* (2 *Henry VI*), *Henry V*, *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* (3 *Henry VI*)—rejected as memorial reconstructions. Further detailed investigation of some of the quartos suggests that Maguire's doubts about the process may well be correct.<sup>102</sup> In theory the

<sup>99</sup> Brian Vickers, 'Hamlet by Dogberry', *Times Literary Supplement*, 24 Dec. 1993, 5–6.

<sup>100</sup> The use of shorthand has been reinvestigated and supported by Adele Stevenson in 'Shakespeare and Stenography Reconsidered', *Analytical and Enumerative Bibliography*, ns, 6 (1992), 77–100, and in "'Some by Stenography'?" Stationers, Shorthand, and the Early Shakespearean Quartos', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 90 (1996), 417–49.

<sup>101</sup> Laurie E. Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts: The 'bad' quartos and their contexts* (Cambridge, 1996), esp. pp. 324–5.

<sup>102</sup> Paul Werstine, 'A Century of "Bad" Shakespeare Quartos', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 50 (1999), 310–33.

quality of the reporting ought to be better when the alleged reporter, if he can be identified, was on stage—but this is by no means always the case, and the quality of the ‘bad’ text may vary considerably. It follows from this that if they are not memorial reconstructions, then they may not be directly related to performances.<sup>103</sup> In other words, the details of contemporary stage action they appear to record may not have taken place in early performances.

Maguire’s account is much more carefully argued than those of some scholars who are certain they know what these ‘suspect’ texts are. She is not certain, and is fully aware that not all of these quartos represent the same kind of phenomenon. She does, however, share something of the new scepticism not just about what is known but about what can be known. At the moment the ‘bad’ quartos seem to evade both categorisation and explanation.

One of the great achievements of the ‘new’ bibliographers was to devise and establish a terminology for the scholarly examination and editing of dramatic texts. The categories of ‘foul papers’, ‘promptbooks’, ‘good’ and ‘bad’ quartos have been subjected to such close and critical scrutiny that their immediate usefulness has collapsed. The work of rethinking ‘suspect’ quartos has begun; the equally difficult task of trying to sort out and make sense of theatrical manuscripts will be just as, if not more, demanding.

## VI

The foundations of Shakespeare’s texts have changed greatly during the last eighty or so years. The development of analytical bibliography reinvigorated the editing of his plays and poems. This sort of work was generally concerned with the production history of a single text, from manuscript to print, usually undertaken with the preparation of an edition in mind. As the techniques of analytical bibliography became more refined, it was hoped that the text of Shakespeare’s plays could be improved. If individual compositors and scribes could be identified, for example, the editorial process could take into account their characteristic habits, preferences, and errors. Editing as a practice moved from the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century world of eclectic literary judgement,

<sup>103</sup> Werstine, ‘A Century of “Bad” Shakespeare Quartos’, 329. Cf. Janette Dillon, ‘Is there a Performance in this Text?’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 45 (1994), 74–86.

which placed a high value on conjectural emendation, to one of bibliographical logic.

Logic also demanded that since Shakespeare was the greatest of all writers (he still is), the editorial task was to recover as closely as possible the single, unitary original work that he, the poet, the solitary man of genius, had written. A contrary view of Shakespeare as the man of the theatre, has developed apace during the last twenty or thirty years. It found its fullest expression, perhaps, in the Oxford edition of his works, which consistently preferred 'promptbook' performance texts to 'foul-paper' ones—in effect, where there was a choice, the Folio rather than the quarto. This preference can be related to developments in the field of literary studies. Some literary theorists have questioned the nature of authorship and the very existence of the author; the history of the book has challenged traditional ideas about the nature and function of bibliography. The theatre and the printing house have come to be seen as the prime sites for the collaborative, socialised production of works of art. 'All recorded texts', as Don McKenzie put it, can be seen 'as collaborative creations—the product of social acts involving the complex interventions of human agency acting on material forms'.<sup>104</sup>

In this new orthodox view what starts off in the author's mind turns into a script that can only be fully realised on the stage, that is, in an event which can never be recovered. Similarly, printing and publication may socialise the script, but cannot represent the work itself. This is because the old idea of the single play is judged to be as anachronistic as the idea of the solitary author. Shakespeare wrote plays which were or are in a continuous state of coming into being. They are most fully realised when performed in the theatre, but they can never reach a perfected state of completion, for by their very nature plays are indeterminate, provisional, and unstable. The key to this understanding of Shakespeare's art has been the argument that he was a revising author.

Such theories of revision have attracted much attention for at least two reasons. First, according to them, if Shakespeare did revise some of his plays, it casts doubt on his all-commanding genius. He becomes instead a socialised function, part of a series of accommodations reached between a play-provider and the demands and experience of dramatic presentation. 'In place of notions of authoritative, singular authorship or

<sup>104</sup> D. F. McKenzie, 'What's Past is Prologue': *The Bibliographical Society and History of the Book* (1993), p. 8; my debt in this last section to R. A. Foakes, 'Shakespeare Editing and Textual Theory: A Rough Guide', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 60 (1999), 425–42, is very great.

genial creativity,' as Michael Bristol has written, 'revisionism inserts the idea of a socially interactive authorial consciousness'.<sup>105</sup> Secondly, a doctrine of revision chimes with ideas about the instability and indeterminacy of language and human communication:<sup>106</sup> these link up neatly with the current preference for an evolving, socialised performance text. If, for example, quarto and Folio *Lear* are different plays, it becomes impossible to say which is the 'real' one, indeed which is to be read first. The certainty of a single conflated *Lear* can be replaced by two or more texts, offering distinctive works in the process of becoming, rather than a single finished and evolved masterpiece. Yet those who advocate unstable, socialised texts have the problem of how editions can represent those aspects of plays. As David Greetham, who might be thought to be naturally sympathetic to such a project, has put it, 'you cannot actually produce a social textual edition'.<sup>107</sup> Multiple-text editions of works like *King Lear* present the reader with a degree of uncertainty, but the process necessarily switches attention away from the author to the editor.<sup>108</sup> A theory of revision subjects the original texts and their differences to minute bibliographical and critical analysis. Their origins, as well as their printing and proof-reading (about both of which Shakespeare was so allegedly indifferent) become fraught with meaning and significance.

These ideas have promoted a doctrine of 'unediting': since all editions betray the texts they aspire to present, it is best to interfere with them as little as possible. The editorial task is to lay the materials as faithfully as possible before the reader, so that a text can be constructed according to differing sets of uses and requirements. This approach has found particular favour with editors of poems from the Romantic period. Hence, 'unediting' is akin to versioning, leaving the reader to choose whichever

<sup>105</sup> Michael D. Bristol, *Shakespeare's America, America's Shakespeare* (London and New York, 1990), p. 113. Despite his rather loose use of language, Bristol is critical of the revisionist view of Shakespeare.

<sup>106</sup> For a trenchant exposition and rebuttal of these ideas, see Brian Vickers, *Appropriating Shakespeare: Contemporary Critical Quarrels* (New Haven, Conn., and London, 1993), esp. pp. 3–162.

<sup>107</sup> D. C. Greetham, *Theories of the Text* (Oxford, 1999), p. 396, and cf. his earlier comment on the same problem in 'The Manifestation and Accommodation of Theory in Textual Editing', in Philip Cohen (ed.), *Devils and Angels: Textual Editing and Literary Theory* (Charlottesville, Va., and London, 1991), pp. 78–102 at p. 85. One of the best considerations of the practical editorial consequences of these problems is Peter L. Shillingsburg, 'An Inquiry into the Social Status of Texts and the Modes of Textual Criticism', *Studies in Bibliography*, 42 (1989), 55–79, esp. 60–8; but see also G. Thomas Tanselle, 'Textual Criticism and Literary Sociology', *Studies in Bibliography*, 44 (1991), 83–143, esp. 140–2.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. Susan Zimmerman, 'Afterword', *Shakespeare Studies*, 24 (1996), 71–4 at 72.

version is wanted. There is no 'right' or 'correct' text of a work, only greater or lesser betrayals of it. The author's careful concern with revision is transformed into a seemingly endless multiplicity of different versions, which are said to be the result not of a series of intentional acts, but of the material circumstances in which the author operates. Electronic editions and hypertext, more and better facsimiles, may make such 'unediting' possible, but hardly desirable, for it leaves the reader, especially the student reader, with a bewildering range of choices: in effect, editorial responsibility is moved from the editor, who may be presumed to be knowledgeable about the subject, even to be mildly interested in it, to the reader whose grasp of the issues involved may well be limited.<sup>109</sup>

The new uncertainties—about revision, about 'foul papers', prompt-books', and 'bad' quartos—have helped produce a lack of confidence about editing which seems simply debilitating. The conflation of Shakespearian texts—a Folio *Lear*, say, pumped up with quarto additions—now appears unacceptable to most editors, who gladly prefer to edit texts, rather than works.<sup>110</sup> The despair voiced by some writers about the very possibility of editing, a despair which has led to this theory of 'unediting', seems too pessimistic.

Yet there are some gains to be made, as I hope I have shown, by thinking about Shakespeare's texts in fresh ways. Quartos may not have been the ephemeral items we generally take them to have been. Shakespeare's general lack of interest in print has been exaggerated: the poems show how engaged he may have been with the possibilities of print. A fresh examination of the typography and layout of his plays may yet have more to reveal. Reconsidering the evolution of the forms taken by printed plays can stimulate thought about what they represent—the signals they send us. It is possible to argue, on textual as well as aesthetic or historical grounds, that distinct authorial versions of the plays were produced for reading rather than performance. The differences in length of some of Shakespeare's plays have often puzzled scholars: why *Macbeth*, for example, is just over two thousand lines long and *Hamlet* just under four thousand lines. Perhaps there was an expectation that some texts were to be

<sup>109</sup> Cf. Peter L. Shillingsburg, *Scholarly Editing in the Computer Age: Theory and Practice*, 3rd edn., (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1996), pp. 124, 165, where he argues that 'a "mere" archive of source materials will strike most new readers and researchers from other fields as an undigested chaos of material in which everyone must become an editor before proceeding', yet that electronic technology can 'provide a rich resource for textual study of a work'.

<sup>110</sup> However, the Norton Shakespeare admitted a conflated version of the play to its text which was otherwise based on the Wells and Taylor Oxford version, while R. A. Foakes's edition for the Arden Shakespeare Third Series (Walton-on-Thames, 1997) combines the two.

read, while others were to be performed.<sup>111</sup> This may shed light on the question of revision, but it may also indicate that the circulation of Shakespeare's plays in manuscript took place within his own lifetime. If he was happy to see some of his own plays published in manuscript and some printed, if different texts served different occasions and readerships, then a preference for performance texts ceases to be justified. The challenge of imagining—as has always been possible—a Shakespeare who revised his plays has not yet altogether been met. The difficulty with dealing with material that, notoriously, was never meant to be read becomes less problematic.

Yet readers still need editions of works they can understand, interpret, and enjoy. In the same way, Reg Foakes has argued that 'actors cannot simply display textual indeterminacy'.<sup>112</sup> Both types of users want larger decisions to be taken for them and, at the local level, cruxes resolved.<sup>113</sup> It is the editor's (slightly tautological) task to produce critical editions, and even when producing facsimiles and electronic texts there can be no such thing as what Jack Stillinger has wittily called "'no-fault" editing'.<sup>114</sup> Editors and textual scholars may not get everything right, they may never produce an edition that is definitive, but to abandon humane, empirical scholarship, to cease to think about how and why texts take the material forms in which they have come down to us, is a counsel of despair. Perhaps there is cause for optimism after all.

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<sup>111</sup> Dutton, 'Birth of the Author', pp. 82–90.

<sup>112</sup> Foakes, 'Shakespeare Editing and Textual Theory', 440.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Gary Taylor, 'Inventing Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Jahrbuch 1986*, 26–44, at 44.

<sup>114</sup> Jack Stillinger, *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius* (New York and Oxford, 1991), p. 82.