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IN THE CHARACTER OF SHAKESPEARE: CANON, AUTHORSHIP, AND ATTRIBUTION IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

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Abstract

At various points between 1709 and 1821, Shakespeare's scholarly editors called into question the authenticity—either in whole or in part—of at least seventeen of the plays attributed to him in the First Folio. Enabled largely by Alexander Pope's attack, in his 1723–25 edition of Shakespeare, on the Folio's compilers, eighteenth-century textual critics constructed a canon based upon their own critical senses, rather than the 'authority of copies'. They also discussed the genuineness of works that had been excluded from the 1623 Folio—*Pericles*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, *Edward III*, the *Sonnets*, and the poems published in *The Passionate Pilgrim.* Although these debates had little effect on the *contents* of the variorum edition—by 1821, only *Pericles*, the *Sonnets*, and the narrative poems had been added to the canon—arguments and counter-arguments about the authenticity of Shakespeare's works continued to abound in the notes. These would, in turn, influence the opinions of new generations of critics throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In this thesis, I return to these earlier canonical judgements, not in order to resuscitate them, but to ask what they reveal about eighteenth-century conceptions of authorship, collaboration, and canonicity. Authorship in the period was not understood solely in terms of 'possessive individualism'. Neither were arguments over Shakespeare's style wholly contingent upon new discourses of literary property that had developed in the wake of copyright law. Instead, I argue, the discourse of personal style that editors applied to Shakespeare emerged out of a pre-existing classical-humanist scholarly tradition. Other commentators adopted the newly fashionable language of connoisseurship to determine where Shakespeare's authorial presence lay. Another group of scholars turned to contemporary stage manuscript practices to ascertain where, and why, the words of other speakers might have entered his plays.

If, however, Shakespeare's plays were only partly his, this implied that Shakespeare had written alongside other writers. In the last part of my thesis, I examine the efforts of eighteenth-century critics to understand the social contexts of early modern dramatic authorship. Pope represented the theatre as an engine of social corruption,

whose influence had debased Shakespeare's standards of art and language. Other eighteenth-century commentators, however, had a more positive understanding of the social aspects of authorship. Drawing on contemporary discourses of friendship and sociability, they imagined the Elizabethan stage as a friendship-based authorial credit network, where playwrights collaborated with their contemporaries in the expectation of a return on their own works. This language of sociable co-authorship in turn influenced the way in which Shakespearean collaboration was understood. Conceptions of Shakespearean authorship and canonicity in the period, I conclude, were—like authorship in the Shakespeare canon itself—not singular, but manifold and multivocal.

Contents

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Note on the Text

Original spelling and punctuation in quoted material have been retained. Long *ſ*, however, has been silently modernized. In accordance with Chicago style, publishers' details have been omitted from references to books issued before the nineteenth century. All Act, scene, and line references to Shakespeare's plays are keyed to the Oxford edition of the *Complete Works*, 2nd ed. (2005).

A version of Chapter 3 appears as 'Pope's 1723–25 *Shakespear*, Classical Editing, and Humanistic Reading Practices', in *Rewriting the Long Eighteenth Century: Selected Papers from the Thirteenth David Nichol Smith Seminar* (a special issue of *Eighteenth-Century Life*), edited by Jocelyn Harris and Shef Rogers (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 3–13.

Introduction:
The Eighteenth Century and the Shakespeare Canon

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In 1623, thirty-six plays were assembled under the imprint of Isaac Jaggard and Edward Blount and published as *Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies.* Almost two hundred years later, the last of the eighteenth-century variorum editions, the 1821 Malone-Boswell set, included thirty-seven plays—the Folio canon plus *Pericles*—along with the *Passionate Pilgrim*, Shakespeare's Sonnets, and the narrative poems. Seen only in these terms, the passage of Shakespeare's dramatic canon across the eighteenth century seems almost uneventful. Only *Pericles*, published as Shakespeare's in 1609 and included in the 1664 second issue of the Third Folio, had gained a canonical status that it did not have in 1623. Yet a glance beneath the covers of the 1821 edition reveals that these surface continuities are highly misleading. Eighteenth-century editors of Shakespeare devoted enormous energies to debating the authorship and canonical status of his plays. Many of these controversies are in turn gathered together and preserved as notes in the 1821 variorum.

At various points in the eighteenth century, critics expressed doubts about Shakespeare's authorship of *Love's Labours Lost*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and the three parts of *Henry VI*.[1] Other plays were suspected of containing non-Shakespearean interpolations. The French dialogue in 3.4 *Henry V*, the songs in *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth*, the masque in *Cymbeline*, the play-within-a-play in *Hamlet*, the prologues and epilogues to

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[1] On *Love's Labours Lost* and *The Winter's Tale*, see Alexander Pope, ed., *The Works of Shakespear*, 6 vols. (London, 1723–25), 1:xx. On the *Comedy of Errors*, see Alexander Pope, ed., *The Works of Shakespear*, 9 vols. (London, 1728), 1:xxi. For *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, see Sir Thomas Hanmer, ed., *The Works of Shakespear*, 6 vols. (1744; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1969), 1:[145n]. On Warburton and *The Taming of the Shrew*, see S. Schoenbaum, *Internal Evidence and Elizabethan Dramatic Authorship: An Essay in Literary History and Method* (London: Edward Arnold, 1966), 16. On the *Henry VI* plays, see Lewis Theobald, ed., *The Works of Shakespeare*, 7 vols. (London, 1733), 5:308n, and Edmond Malone, ed., *The Plays and Poems of William Shakspeare*, 10 vols. (London, 1790), 6:[377]–429.

Troilus and Cressida and *Henry VIII*, and the final song in *Twelfth Night* were all identified as actorly insertions rather than Shakespearean originals.[2] A similar debate arose over the authenticity of the 'apocrypha'—the seven plays added by publisher Philip Chetwind to the 1664 Third Folio. Although most editors dismissed these pieces, with the partial exception of *Pericles*, as misattributions, a minority of editors continued to advocate on their behalf. Lewis Theobald, for instance, believed that Shakespeare had had some role in writing each of them. Of 'those Seven', he wrote in the Preface to his 1733 *Shakespeare*, 'I can, beyond all Controversy, prove some Touches in every one of them to have come from his Pen'.[3]

While many textual critics occupied themselves with disintegrating the Folio canon, others made new Shakespearean attributions. In 1727, Theobald claimed to have found a 'lost' Shakespearean manuscript play, *Double Falshood*, and had a revised version of it staged at Drury Lane Theatre. The original play was, however, never published, and the manuscripts that Theobald claimed to own have since disappeared.[4] Later in the century, Edward Capell published the anonymous Elizabethan play *Edward III* with a brief foreword attributing it to Shakespeare.[5] In the Introduction to his edition of the Complete Works, he ascribed no fewer than fifty-eight plays to Shakespeare, although only the conventional thirty-six actually appeared in the text.[6] Theobald's and Capell's versions of the Shakespeare canon may have been more inclusive than those of their contemporaries, yet both sets of editors shared an essentially dismissive attitude to

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[2] On *Henry V*, see Hanmer, ed., *Works 1744*, 1:iii, and Richard Farmer, *An Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1767), 84–85. On *Measure for Measure*, see Edmond Malone and James Boswell, eds., *The Plays and Poems of William Shakspeare*, 21 vols. (London, 1821), 20:420n. For *Macbeth*, see Steevens's note in Isaac Reed, ed., *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 21 vols. (London, 1803), 10:208n. On *Cymbeline*, see Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 1, pt. 1:407n. On *Hamlet*, see Farmer, *Essay*, 69. On *Troilus and Cressida*, see George Steevens, ed., *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 15 vols. (London, 1793), 11:214n, 449–50n. For *Henry VIII*, see Arthur Sherbo, ed., *Johnson on Shakespeare*, 2 vols., The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 8:658. On *Twelfth Night*, see Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 4:173n.

[3] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 1:vii.

[4] See John Freehafer, '*Cardenio*, by Shakespeare and Fletcher', *PMLA* 84, no. 3 (1969): 501–13.

[5] Edward Capell, ed., *Prolusions; Or, Select Pieces of Antient Poetry* (London, 1760), ix–xi.

[6] See Edward Capell, ed., *Mr William Shakespeare His Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies*, 10 vols. (London, 1767–8), 1:x.

the canonical authority of the First Folio. The 1623 Folio, and the eighteenth-century Shakespeare, canons were not interchangeable. As the sheer number of alternative attributions indicates, Augustan observers did not regard the Folio editors as reliable witnesses to what Shakespeare had originally written. Were it not for Heminge and Condell's 'ignorance', asked Alexander Pope in 1725, 'how many low and vicious parts and passages might no longer reflect' on Shakespeare, 'but appear unworthily charged upon him?'[7] Most of Pope's editorial successors during the eighteenth century would share his attitude of scepticism and contempt towards the compilers of the First Folio.[8]

The Folio play that appeared most resolutely uncanonical to Augustan critical senses was undoubtedly *Titus Andronicus*. *Titus* was the only work in the Folio for which there was external evidence suggesting that Shakespeare had not been the original author. In 1687, Edward Ravenscroft wrote in the Preface to his adapted version of the play that,

> I have been told by some anciently conversant with the Stage, that it was not originally [Shakespeare's], but brought by a private Author to be Acted, and he only gave some Master-Touches to one or two of the Principal Parts or Characters; this I am apt to believe, because it is the most incorrect and undigested piece in all his Works; It seems rather a heap of Rubbish then a Structure.[9]

Almost without exception, eighteenth-century commentators accepted Ravenscroft's unsourced theatre anecdote unquestioningly. Charles Gildon, in the supplementary volume to Rowe's 1709 *Shakespear*, dismissed *Titus Andronicus* as 'this bloody butchering play', and suggested that it be removed from the canon of Shakespeare's accepted works.[10] Theobald, writing to William Warburton in 1730, echoed Ravenscroft's response to the play. 'There is something so barbarous and unnatural in the fable', he observed, 'and so much trash in the diction … that I am very much inclined to believe, it was not one of our Author's own compositions; but only introduced by him,

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[7] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xxi.

[8] See Robert E. Scholes, 'Dr. Johnson and the Bibliographical Criticism of Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 11, no. 2 (1960): 164, and Chapter Seven below.

[9] Quoted in John W. Velz, 'Topoi in Edward Ravenscroft's Indictment of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*', *Modern Philology* 83, no. 1 (1985): 45.

[10] Charles Gildon, ed., *The Works of Mr. William Shakespeare*, vol. 7 (London, 1710), 368.

and honoured with some of his masterly touches'.[11] Even Edmond Malone, who was often scathing about the evidentiary value of anecdotes, was willing to accept Ravenscroft's word:

> On what principle the editors of the first complete edition of our poet's plays admitted this into their volume cannot now be ascertained. The most probable reason … is, that he wrote a few lines in it, or gave some assistance to the authour, in revising it, or in some other way aided him in bringing it forward on the stage. The tradition mentioned by Ravenscroft … warrants us in making these suppositions.[12]

Eighteenth-century critics did not limit their rejection of *Titus Andronicus* to the first Act, which is now thought to have been written by George Peele.[13] Their disgust at the play was total, and what they objected to most were what Johnson called 'the barbarity of the spectacles, and the general massacre'.[14] The Augustan critical response to *Titus Andronicus* was mirrored in the notes variorum. The perceived barbarity and indecorum of *Titus Andronicus* not only marked the play as inauthentic, but also disqualified it from the right to serious textual criticism. There are, for instance, only thirty-eight notes on *Titus* in Johnson's 1765 edition, far fewer than for any other play.[15] *Titus*, alone of all the Folio plays, received no notes or emendations in Malone's 1780 *Supplement* to the 1778 variorum edition. George Steevens remarked upon 'the barren desart of our comments on this tragedy', and observed that 'we shall always do little

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[11] John Nichols, ed., *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 2 (London, 1817), 512.

[12] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 10:[375n]. On Malone and the scholarly value of anecdotes, see Thomas Postlethwait, 'The Criteria for Evidence: Anecdotes in Shakespearean Biography, 1709–2000', in *Theorizing Practice: Redefining Theatre History*, ed. William B. Worthen and Peter Holland (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 63–64.

[13] For Peele's part in the play, see Brian Boyd, 'Common Words in *Titus Andronicus*: The Presence of Peele', *Notes and Queries* 240, no. 3 (1995): 300–7; 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; and Brian Boyd, 'Mutius: An Obstacle Removed in *Titus Andronicus*', *Review of English Studies* n.s. 55, no. 219 (2004): 196–209.

[14] Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, eds., *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 10 vols. (London, 1778), 8:559n.

[15] See Arthur Sherbo, *Samuel Johnson, Editor of Shakespeare: With an Essay on The Adventurer* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956), 135.

where we desire but little should be done'.[16] In the case of *Titus Andronicus*, the withholding of critical expertise became a judgement upon the play's moral and aesthetic value, which was itself inextricably bound up with the question of authenticity.

The editorial reception of *Titus Andronicus* also illustrates some the critical hazards involved in attribution during the eighteenth century. Steevens dubbed the play 'a Thersites babbling among heroes … introduced only to be derided', and he conspired to represent the only major editor who vouched for *Titus*' authenticity during the century as a similarly clownish figure.[17] In the Introduction to his 1767–8 edition, Capell had allowed that Shakespeare's 'models' for the play were 'truly execrable throughout', but argued that, nevertheless, 'the genius of it's [sic] Author breaks forth in some places, and … SHAKESPEARE stands confess'd', particularly in the Third Act.[18] In a note in the 1778 variorum that he mischievously assigned to Malone, Steevens ridiculed Capell's attribution, and with it, Capell's editorial personality.[19] 'It must prove a circumstance of consummate mortification to the … criticks on Shakespeare', wrote Steevens,

> when it shall appear from the sentiments of one of their own fraternity (who cannot well be suspected of asinine tastelessness or Gothic prepossessions) that we have all been mistaken as to the merits and the author of this play. It is scarce necessary to observe that the person exempted from these suspicions is 𝔐𝔯. 𝔆𝔞𝔭𝔢𝔩𝔩 …. It were injustice not to remark that the grand and pathetic circumstances in this *third act*, which we are told cannot fail to excite such vehement emotions, are as follows.—Titus lays down in the dirt.—Aaron chops off his hand.—Saturninus sends him the heads of his two sons and his own hand again, for a present.—His heroic brother Marcus kills a fly.[20]

Because of his partiality to *Titus Andronicus*, Steevens implies, Capell could indeed be accused of 'asinine tastelessness' and 'Gothic prepossessions'. Both play and critic are on the same level. Steevens's sly use of black letter, rather than the usual italic, as a differentiation font for Capell's name emphasizes this point by rendering Capell himself

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[16] Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 8:489n, 8:462n.

[17] Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 8:463n.

[18] Capell, ed., *Comedies 1767*, 1:45.

[19] For the authorship of the note, which not surprisingly 'got all the Capells upon [Malone's] back', see Boswell's gloss in Malone and Boswell, eds., *Plays 1821*, 21:384n.

[20] Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 8:561–62n.

as, literally, gothic. Just as the main body of eighteenth-century scholarship agreed that *Titus* should be excluded from the canon, so too, Steevens implies, should Capell be restricted from the community of Shakespearean scholars.

'READING READINGS': THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EDITORIAL PROJECT IN CRITICAL RETROSPECT

In the last century or so, Augustan theories of Shakespearean authorship have undergone a similar elision. The New Bibliographers were willing to engage with their eighteenth-century predecessors, but their aims were resolutely 'whiggish', or present-centred.[21] That is, they set their own assumptions and methodologies as the criteria of value, and used them to assess the editorial practices of the past.[22] Like the Whig historians of the nineteenth century, the New Bibliographers were looking in the editorial past for 'roots' or 'anticipations' of current practice.[23] In *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century*, for instance, David Nichol Smith divides the Augustan editors into opposing camps—those 'pursuing a wrong method' against those 'striving towards the right' one.[24] The last part of his narrative is devoted to showing how the second camp of editors 'had been there before us'.[25] R. B. McKerrow's 1933 British Academy Lecture on Augustan Shakespeare editing has a similarly retrospective outlook. 'One and all', he writes of the earlier editors, 'contributed to the honour of the master to whom they devoted their service, and to all of them we owe our gratitude to-day'.[26]

The flip-side of the present-centred approach to history writing, however, is the tendency to ignore those aspects of the past that do not accord with current

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[21] See Simon Jarvis, *Scholars and Gentlemen: Shakespearian Textual Criticism and Representations of Scholarly Labour, 1725-1765* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 7.

[22] T. G. Ashplant and Adrian Wilson, 'Present-Centred History and the Problem of Historical Knowledge', *Historical Journal* 31, no. 2 (1988): 253–54.

[23] Cf. Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (London: Bell, 1931), 11–12.

[24] David Nichol Smith, *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928), 38.

[25] Smith, *Shakespeare*, 60.

[26] R. B. McKerrow, 'The Treatment of Shakespeare's Text by his Earlier Editors, 1709–1768', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 19 (1933): 117–18.

expectations.[27] To a large extent, both Nichol Smith and McKerrow omitted the eighteenth-century editors' preoccupation with canonicity from their narratives. Both discuss Pope's degradations of 'suspect' material.[28] However, the fact that Johnson, Steevens, and Malone—editors whom both regard as the precursors of modern, 'scientific' bibliography—shared some of Pope's canonical scepticism goes unremarked.

This virtual disappearance of the eighteenth-century 'higher criticism' from later accounts may be related to another development. In his highly influential lecture on editing and authorship, 'The Disintegration of Shakespeare', E. K. Chambers dismissed Augustan efforts to divide the Shakespearean canon as hopelessly wrong-headed. Earlier editors had, he wrote, been 'misled' by their poor grasp of the chronology of Shakespeare's plays. As a result, their conclusions were deemed simply unimportant. 'It would', he concluded, 'be idle to raise the dust of the resultant controversies', and these 'mutterings' were, at any rate, 'silenced by the authority of Malone'.[29] In the aftermath of Chambers's devastating attack on the 'disintegration' movement, editors largely shied away from the question of multiple authorship in Shakespeare.[30] A near consensus arose among both literary and textual critics that Shakespeare had written the thirty-six plays in the First Folio, along with *Pericles*, alone. For those who agreed with these assumptions, the canonical scepticism of the eighteenth-century editors seemed merely 'laughable'.[31]

Over the past twenty years or so, this consensus that Shakespeare was the sole originator of his plays has largely dissolved. The growing visibility of attribution scholarship, particularly marked since the publication of the 1986 *Oxford Shakespeare* and its *Companion*, has engendered a new interest in 'Shakespeare, co-author'.[32] However, there has been no corresponding reassessment of Augustan approaches to

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[27] See Adrian Wilson and T. G. Ashplant, 'Whig History and Present-Centred History', *Historical Journal* 31, no. 1 (1988): 15.

[28] Smith, *Shakespeare*, 35; McKerrow, 'Treatment', 108.

[29] E. K. Chambers, 'The Disintegration of Shakespeare', in *Aspects of Shakespeare: Being British Academy Lectures* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), 26.

[30] Grace Ioppolo, *Revising Shakespeare* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 38.

[31] Hugh Grady, 'Disintegration and its Reverberations', in *The Appropriation of Shakespeare: Post-Renaissance Reconstructions of the Works and the Myth*, ed. Jean I. Marsden (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), 114.

[32] See Eric Rasmussen, 'Editions and Textual Studies', *Shakespeare Survey* 59 (2006): 377.

Shakespearean canonicity. Instead, many features of the earlier historiography have persisted. Marcus Walsh, in his recent account of eighteenth-century editorial theory, follows Nichol Smith and McKerrow in dividing the field into two opposing camps. Using a typology derived from Peter Shillingsburg's *Scholarly Editing in the Computer Age*, Walsh separates Augustan editors into two categories—those with 'aesthetic' and those with 'authorial' orientations. The former, whom he identifies as Pope, Hanmer, and Warburton, freely 'corrected' Shakespeare according to contemporary linguistic standards and the criterion of subjective taste.[33] The latter, by contrast, sought to recover 'what Shakespeare intended to write and what Shakespeare intended to mean'.[34]

In this separation of the editorial 'sheep' from the 'goats', Walsh is confident in identifying where victory ultimately rested.[35] 'Despite some early and persistent aesthetic tendencies', he writes, 'the authorial orientation was increasingly dominant in eighteenth-century scholarly editing'.[36] However, Walsh limits his study almost completely to the 'lower criticism', and thus avoids aspects of the Augustan editorial project that might have problematized his historical schema. The only sustained account of the higher criticism as practised on Shakespeare occurs in a discussion of Pope.[37] Walsh's narrative would thus seem to imply that doubts about the integrity of Shakespeare's works were restricted to the aesthetically oriented editors. Yet, many of those in Walsh's 'authorial' category, such as George Steevens—whom Walsh describes as 'often strikingly "modern"'—shared at least some of Pope's scepticism.[38] Indeed, Steevens's criticism embodies some of the complexities and paradoxes inherent within Walsh's 'authorial orientation'. Steevens's opinions about authorship were manifestly shaped by his own moral and aesthetic criteria, as his argument about the authorship of Pandarus' epilogue to *Troilus and Cressida* indicates:

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[33] Marcus Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing: The Beginnings of Interpretative Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 113–14.

[34] Walsh, *Shakespeare*, 117.

[35] For the metaphor, see Shef Rogers, review of *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing*, by Marcus Walsh, *Shakespeare Quarterly* 50, no. 4 (1999): 534.

[36] Walsh, *Shakespeare*, 10.

[37] Walsh, *Shakespeare*, 127.

[38] For the description, see Walsh, *Shakespeare*, 18.

our author would scarce have trusted the conclusion of his piece to a subordinate character whom he had uniformly held up to detestation. It is still less probable that he should have wound up his story with a stupid outrage to decency, and a deliberate insult to his audience.—But in several other parts of this drama I cannot persuade myself that I have been reading Shakspeare.[39]

Steevens's most retrospectively notorious critical judgement—his belief that the *Sonnets* should be suppressed—indicates the extent to which other considerations, besides recovering 'what Shakespeare intended to write', came into play when ascribing Shakespearean authorship in the eighteenth century. Steevens never denied that Shakespeare had written the *Sonnets*. Indeed, it was their very *genuineness* that Steevens found troubling. For Steevens, the ultimate criterion for canonical inclusion was not intentionality but authorial reputation. The *Sonnets*, he believed, should be denied canonical status because of what they threatened to reveal about Shakespeare's character and, in particular, his sexuality.[40]

Even scholars who have examined eighteenth-century arguments about attribution in Shakespeare have tended to gloss over these complexities. In *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, Brian Vickers briefly discusses Steevens's and Malone's debate, in the *Supplement* to the 1778 Johnson-Steevens edition, over the authorship of *Pericles*. Noting that Malone had followed Farmer in believing the play to be Shakespeare's sole composition, Vickers describes how Steevens had convinced Malone that it was of divided authorship. Steevens, Vickers writes, had made a 'perceptive observation' about the distribution of 'stylistic inequalities' in the play that pointed to Shakespeare being the play's reviser, not its original writer.[41] In doing so, he concludes, Steevens anticipated the work of much later scholars, who reached the same conclusion without knowing of Steevens's work.

However, Vickers's portrayal of Steevens as a forward-looking pioneer cannot account for other aspects of Steevens's performance in the 1780 *Supplement*. In a long digression on the authorship of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Steevens noted the many

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[39] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 11:450n.

[40] See Peter Stallybrass, 'Editing as Cultural Formation: The Sexing of Shakespeare's Sonnets', *Modern Language Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (1993): 94–96.

[41] Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author: A Historical Study of Five Collaborative Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 292.

echoes of Shakespeare and 'stylistic inequalities' in the text. Yet, rather than attribute this to Shakespeare's collaborating on the play with Fletcher, Steevens argued that this evidence proved that Shakespeare could not have been involved. Using 'highly marked expressions' in a collaborative work was, for Steevens, a violation of the rules of authorship. Shakespeare, he wrote,

> cannot be suspected of so pitiful an ambition as that of setting his seal on the portions he wrote, to distinguish them from those of his colleague. It was his business to coalesce with Fletcher, and not to withdraw from him.[42]

Steevens's ideas about collaboration, like those of many of his contemporaries, were strongly influenced by contemporary friendship discourses. Shakespeare, Steevens believed, had improved *Pericles* as a favour to a friend—perhaps the playwright Thomas Kyd.[43] However, the 'mercenary player' Shakespeare and the genteel Fletcher were, he thought, unlikely to have been acquainted.[44] Because he assumed that collaboration depended upon amity between social equals, Steevens concluded that Fletcher and Shakespeare could not have written plays together. Vickers's 'scissors and paste' literary history effectively removes Steevens from this intellectual context.[45] Yet, I would argue, without a sense of how eighteenth-century friendship and politeness theory shaped his thinking, any account of Steevens's discussions of multiple authorship is likely to be incomplete.

Perhaps most striking has been the absence of the eighteenth-century authorship debates from recent Foucauldian and materialist criticism on editing in the period. This is especially noteworthy in the light of Foucault's own emphasis on the origins of attribution studies. Near the beginning of his enormously influential essay, 'What Is an Author?', Foucault wrote,

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[42] Edmond Malone, ed., *Supplement to the Edition of Shakspeare's Plays Published in 1778*, 2 vols. (London, 1780), 2:170n.

[43] See below, Chapter Nine.

[44] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:169n.

[45] For a definition of 'scissors and paste' history, see R. G. Collingwood, *An Autobiography* (1939; reprint, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 79–81.

> Certainly it would be worth examining how the author became individuated in a culture like ours, what status he has been given, at what moment studies of authenticity and attribution began, in what kind of system of valorization the author was involved, at what point we began to recount the lives of authors rather than of heroes, and how this fundamental category of 'the man-and-his-work criticism' began.[46]

Margreta de Grazia's study of eighteenth-century Shakespeare editing, *Shakespeare Verbatim*, systematically sets out to address Foucault's questions. Yet her own treatment of attribution is surprisingly perfunctory. Indeed, the fact that editors in the early part of the century attempted to determine Shakespeare's individual shares in various plays poses problems for de Grazia's historical model. For de Grazia, following Foucault, Shakespeare's individuation does not take place until the very end of the century, with the so-called 'invention of man'.[47] She briefly mentions that early eighteenth-century critics had debated the authorship of the Shakespearean 'apocrypha' using 'internal' evidence—their sense of Shakespeare's personal style.[48] In keeping with her wider argument, however, de Grazia essentially discounts these earlier explorations. Only with Malone's 1790 *Shakspeare*, she argues, did 'modern' attribution methods—those that supplement stylistic arguments with evidence drawn from external sources—appear.[49] In doing so, she considerably overstates the extent to which Malone broke with the past.[50] Both Capell, in 1760, and John Upton, in 1746, had commented on the distinction between external and internal proofs of authorship.[51] Malone's use of archival evidence to back up stylistic arguments was, at any rate, by no means novel. At least a century before Malone, Italian art historian Sebastiano Resta made extensive use of documentary

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[46] Michel Foucault, 'What Is an Author?', in *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism*, ed. Josué V. Harari (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979), 141.

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

[48] de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim*, 51–52.

[49] de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim*, 52, 109.

[50] See also Jarvis, *Scholars and Gentlemen*, 9; Peter Seary, 'Lewis Theobald, Edmond Malone, and Others', in *Reading Readings: Essays on Shakespeare Editing in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Joanna Gondris (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1998), 103–22.

[51] See Capell, ed., *Prolusions*, ix; and John Upton, *Critical Observations on Shakespeare* (London, 1746), 275.

records in order to construct biographies of artists and determine the attribution of their works.[52]

Oddly, perhaps, considering their quite different theoretical perspectives, de Grazia's and Vickers's accounts have similar effects *historiographically*. They both anachronistically collapse the eighteenth-century authorship debates into the category of the modern. For Vickers, the efforts of editors like Steevens to discern co-authorship in the Shakespeare canon were simply precursors to present practice.[53] For de Grazia, the impulse to attribute authorship *at all* is itself a symptom of modernity. The desire of scholars to attach a unique style and a fixed canon of works to a particular author is merely a function of 'our post-Enlightenment critical tradition'.[54] De Grazia's belief is shared by a number of recent scholars. Mark Rose has written that 'a literary work in the eighteenth century was coming to be seen as …. the objectification of a writer's self'.[55] For Martha Woodmansee, it was the Enlightenment's invention of the concept of 'original genius' that made the work 'peculiarly and distinctively the product—and the property—of the writer'.[56]

All of this work presupposes that the 1709/10 'Copyright' Act played a central role in bringing modern concepts of authorship into existence. As Peter Jaszi and Martha Woodmansee put it,

> the modern regime of authorship, far from being timeless and universal, is a relatively recent formation—the result of a quite radical reconceptualization of the creative process that culminated less than 200 years ago in the heroic self-presentation of the Romantic poets. As they saw it, *genuine* authorship … results

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[52] For Resta's seventeenth-century document-based connoisseurship, see Genevieve Warwick, *The Arts of Collecting: Padre Sebastiano Resta and the Market for Drawings in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 93–107.

[53] See Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, 433–34; Brian Vickers, 'Incomplete Shakespeare: Or, Denying Coauthorship in *1 Henry VI*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 58, no. 3 (2007): 318–19.

[54] Margreta de Grazia and Peter Stallybrass, 'The Materiality of the Shakespearean Text', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 44, no. 3 (1993): 273.

[55] Mark Rose, *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 121.

[56] Martha Woodmansee, 'The Genius and the Copyright: Economic and Legal Conditions of the Emergence of the "Author"', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 17, no. 4 (1984): 427.

> … in an utterly new, unique … work which, accordingly, may be said to be the property of its creator and to merit the law's protection as such.[57]

Rose writes similarly that both copyright and twentieth-century 'modes of aesthetic thinking' rely upon the same 'romantic and individualistic assumptions'.[58] Before the eighteenth century's interventions, these theorists suggest, art and literature were much more communal and collaborative endeavours.[59] From here, it is a short step to supposing that *any* concept of individual authorship or personal style is a post-Enlightenment development. Jeffrey Masten has suggested that attributing parts of early modern collaborative plays to particular authors is an inherently anachronistic act.[60] De Grazia has likewise argued that only after a 'concept of intellectual property' was in place could words become 'assignable'.[61]

Materialist textual criticism would therefore seem to suggest that the preoccupation with assigning individual authorship displayed by many of Shakespeare's eighteenth-century editors was a relatively new phenomenon. The appropriate context for understanding the rise of attribution studies during the period, according to this view, would be the appearance of a legal concept of literary property in 1709. It will be one of my main contentions here that this is not the case. I certainly would not want to deny the importance of copyright legislation as a context for understanding Shakespeare *publishing* during the eighteenth century. Indeed, as McKerrow observed, the fact that the Tonsons chose to produce an edition of Shakespeare in 1709 is probably not coincidental. Such a venture may have been 'undertaken … with a view to calling

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[57] Peter Jaszi and Martha Woodmansee, 'Introduction', in *The Construction of Authorship: Textual Appropriation in Law and Literature*, ed. Martha Woodmansee and Peter Jaszi (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994), 3.

[58] Rose, *Authors and Owners*, 2.

[59] See, especially, Martha Woodmansee, 'On the Author Effect: Recovering Collectivity', *Cardozo Arts and Entertainment Law Journal* 10, no. 2 (1992): 281.

[60] Jeffrey Masten, '*More* or Less: Editing the Collaborative', *Shakespeare Studies* 29 (2001): 114.

[61] Margreta de Grazia, 'Sanctioning Voice: Quotation Marks, The Abolition of Torture, and the Fifth Amendment', in *The Construction of Authorship: Textual Appropriation in Law and Literature*, ed. Martha Woodmansee and Peter Jaszi (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994), 290.

attention' to the Tonsons' ownership of their Shakespearean copyrights.[62] However, I shall suggest, eighteenth-century attribution techniques drew upon an older set of rhetorics and idioms about authorship and personal style that were quite independent of copyright law.[63]

RECOVERING THE 'MAN HIMSELF': EDITING AND THE DISCOURSES OF STYLE

In this thesis, I will excavate some of these linguistic contexts, and examine how they shaped and influenced eighteenth-century conceptions of Shakespearean authorship. J. G. A. Pocock has likened this kind of study to archaeology. It is the process of 'uncovering the presence of various language contexts in which discourse has from time to time been conducted'.[64] Authors, he writes, produce their works within 'matrices of language and rhetoric within which they are constrained to speak'.[65] These language contexts in turn provide a kind of 'conceptual lens through which the world and its problems are perceived and explained'.[66] Eighteenth-century editors of Shakespeare, I shall argue, likewise drew upon a persistent set of idioms for describing the relationship between authors and texts, and the relationships between authors and the social worlds in which they lived. The most basic of these was the concept of personal style.

Originally classical in origin, the rhetoric of style migrated into the eighteenth century by way of classical and biblical editing.[67] 'As each individual has his own appearance, his own voice, his own character and disposition, so each has his own style

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[62] McKerrow, 'Treatment', 93. See also Chapter Six.

[63] See, especially, Barbara Mowat, 'Constructing the Author', in *Elizabethan Theater: Essays in Honor of S. Schoenbaum*, ed. R. B. Parker and S. P. Zitner (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1996), 93–110.

[64] J. G. A. Pocock, 'The Concept of a Language and the *Métier D'historien*: Some Considerations on Practice', in *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 23.

[65] J. G. A. Pocock, '*The Machiavellian Moment* Revisited', *Journal of Modern History* 53, no. 1 (1981): 50.

[66] David Boucher, 'Language, Politics and Paradigms: Pocock and the Study of Political Thought', *Polity* 17, no. 4 (1985): 762.

[67] See below, Chapter One.

of writing', Erasmus observed in his edition of Saint Jerome.[68] Shakespeare's eighteenth-century editors likewise assumed that a distinctively Shakespearean style existed, and that their editorial senses could detect it. 'If I may judge from all the distinguishing marks of [Shakespeare's] style', wrote Alexander Pope in his 1725 edition, 'I make no doubt to declare that those wretched plays, *Pericles*, *Locrine*, *Sir John Oldcastle*, *Yorkshire Tragedy*, *Lord Cromwell*, *The Puritan*, and *London Prodigal*, cannot be admitted as his'.[69] Malone attributed the putatively Shakespearean *Locrine* to Christopher Marlowe, 'whose style', he surmized, 'it appears to … resemble more than that of any other known dramatick author of that age'.[70] Editors and textual critics in turn prescribed this critical mode to their audiences as the most sophisticated way of *reading* Shakespeare.[71] In a 1796 letter to his uncle, Joseph Ritson's nephew remarked on how easy he found it to 'understand' Shakespeare. 'I am surprised to find the very slight necessity there is for any notes', he wrote. Ritson retorted,

> What do you mean by understanding him? Can you distinguish [Shakspeare's] style and manner from those of the dramatists upon whom he has improved, or of the players by whom he has been interpolated? Read over the *First part of Henry the sixth*, *Pericles*, *Titus Andronicus*, and the rest of what are called his disputed plays, and tell me which parts of them were written by Shakspeare. Read *Coriolanus*, and see if you can detect those interpolations, from which, perhaps, very few even of his undisputed productions are entirely free.[72]

For Ritson, a key aspect of truly 'understanding' Shakespeare was having the stylistic sense necessary to distinguish Shakespeare's hand from those of other writers. To understand Shakespeare was to read critically, and part of performing this act was making judgements about authorship.

Of course, matters of style, authenticity, and authorship in the eighteenth century were not limited to the world of literary texts. Contemporary art-historical

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[68] Desiderius Erasmus, *The Collected Works of Erasmus*, ed. James F. Brady and John C. Olin, vol. 61 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 71.

[69] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xx.

[70] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 1:190.

[71] Cf. Trevor Ross, *The Making of the English Literary Canon: From the Middle Ages to the Late Eighteenth Century* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 244.

[72] Joseph Ritson, *The Letters of Joseph Ritson, Esq.*, 2 vols. (London, 1833), 2:128.

discourses—particularly the 'science of connoisseurship' popularized by Jonathan Richardson—also grappled with these issues.[73] A number of Shakespearean textual critics duly appropriated the language of connoisseurship in order to express the idea of stylistic individuality. Drawing explicitly on Richardson's writings, John Upton defended his own deattributions of *Titus Andronicus*, *Love's Labours Lost*, and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* from the Shakespearean canon using the analogy with painting. 'How otherwise does the painter distinguish copies from originals', he asked. 'Have not authors their peculiar style and manner, from which a true critic can form as unerring a judgment as a painter?' With respect to discerning individual style, he concluded, 'the critic and the connoisseur are on a level'.[74] In 1778, Boswell recorded a conversation with Johnson and Thomas Percy where similarly confident claims were made:

> We talked of the styles of different painters, and how certainly a connoisseur could distinguish them. I asked, if there was as clear a difference of styles in language as in painting … so that the composition of every individual may be distinguished? JOHNSON. 'Yes. Those who have a style of eminent excellence, such as Dryden or Milton, can always be distinguished'. I had no doubt of this; but what I wanted to know was, whether there was really a peculiar style to every man whatever, as there is certainly a peculiar hand-writing, a peculiar countenance … always enough to be distinctive …. JOHNSON. 'Why, Sir, I think every man whatever has a peculiar style, which may be discovered by nice examination and comparison with others: but a man must write a great deal to make his style obviously discernible …'[75]

Two years later, Steevens, a keen amateur draftsman who would later practise connoisseurship on the Hogarth canon, made a similar argument about the *Yorkshire Tragedy*.[76] The 'characteristicks' of Shakespeare were visible in the play, he wrote, but the work was only a 'sketch which the author would at leisure have transplanted to a

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[73] Postlethwait, 'Criteria for Evidence', 63; Brian Cowan, 'An Open Elite: The Peculiarities of Connoisseurship in Early Modern England', *Modern Intellectual History* 1, no. 2 (2004): 163.

[74] Upton, *Critical Observations*, 275. For a discussion of Richardson's 'proofs' for distinguishing originals from copies, see Carol Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson: Art Theorist of the English Enlightenment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 195–97.

[75] James Boswell, *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, ed. George Birkbeck Hill and L. F. Powell, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), 3:280.

[76] On Steevens and the Hogarth canon, see Arthur Sherbo, *The Achievement of George Steevens* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990), chapter 6.

more extensive canvas'.[77] As one of the 'slight outlines of our theatrical Raphael', rather than a 'finished painting', the play did not warrant being added to the main body of Shakespeare's works.[78]

Stylistic analysis and connoisseurship held out the promise of access to Shakespeare's authorial personality. From the 'distinguishing marks of style', it seemed, both Shakespeare's intentions and the body of his genuine works could be recovered. Yet eighteenth-century editors were aware that Shakespeare had not written his plays in isolation. Contemporary stereotypes suggested that authors were often socially inept due to time 'spent in the privacies of study'.[79] *Dramatic* authors, however, were different. Scholars acknowledged that the early modern repertory sprang from a *social* context, where authors had worked alongside actors, 'directors of the stage', and other playwrights.[80] While, as we shall see, critics viewed some of these connections with dismay, the social nature of Elizabethan dramatic authorship seems to have appealed to the eighteenth-century imagination.[81] Biographical traditions arose that placed Shakespeare in social settings, alongside his play-writing contemporaries. Shakespeare and Jonson were, for instance, imagined drinking at taverns together. Indeed, one famous anecdote attributed Shakespeare's death to such a meeting. According to John Ward, 'Shakespeare, Drayton, and Ben Jonson had a merry meeting, and it seems drank too hard, for Shakespear died of a fever there contracted'.[82]

Eighteenth-century editors and critics drew upon and expanded these scenes of authorial collegiality, reinscribing them according to contemporary social theory. Lawrence E. Klein has described how, from the Restoration onwards, the 'language of politeness' migrated from the realm of the court into the fields of art and literature.[83] Culture was redefined in terms that had originally been used to describe aristocratic

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[77] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:677, 676.

[78] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:677.

[79] Johnson, *Rambler*, no. 14, quoted in Philip Carter, '"Polite Persons": Character, Biography and the Gentleman', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6th ser., 12 (2002): 341.

[80] See Walsh, *Shakespeare*, 7.

[81] Cf. Carter, '"Polite Persons"', 342–43.

[82] See Samuel Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 78.

[83] Lawrence E. Klein, 'Liberty, Manners, and Politeness in Early Eighteenth-Century England', *Historical Journal* 32, no. 3 (1989): 588.

ideals of social behaviour.[84] Relationships between dramatists, and between dramatists and actors, were likewise reimagined in the language of genteel sociability. Restoration and eighteenth-century accounts of collaborative plays described them as though they were the 'outward signs' of friendship between dramatists.[85] Speaking of *Pericles*, Steevens surmized that Shakespeare's co-author on the play had been 'some friend whose interest the "gentle Shakspeare" was industrious to promote'.[86] This friendship-based interpretation was pervasive in Shakespeare editing throughout the eighteenth century, and had a pronounced influence on the question of attribution. Steevens, for instance, refused to countenance the possibility that Shakespeare and Fletcher had worked together on *The Two Noble Kinsmen* because he saw no evidence that the two had been friends.[87]

Conversely, the presence of *actorly* influence on Shakespeare's plays was represented as a form of social corruption. Pope, in the Preface to his 1723–5 *Shakespear*, defined the problem: Elizabethan actors had been vastly inferior in social terms even to actors in the Augustan age. The 'Condition … of that class of people was then far inferior to what it is in our days', he wrote. 'The top of the profession were then meer Players, not gentlemen of the stage'.[88] Shakespeare's association with such people, Pope implied, could only have been damaging to his standards of judgement, morals, and language. Most of Pope's eighteenth-century editorial successors shared his socially inscribed anti-theatricalism. Words, speeches, or scenes suspected of having been theatrical interpolations were singled out for vilification in editorial commentary. Such putative additions were regarded as having no legitimate claim on the Shakespearean text. As Ritson remarked of the masque of Jupiter in *Cymbeline*, 5.5, 'The margin would be too honourable a place for so impertinent an interpolation'.[89]

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[84] Klein, 'Liberty', 583.

[85] Cf. Alan Bray, 'Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship', *History Workshop Journal*, no. 29 (1990): 1–19.

[86] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:176.

[87] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:169.

[88] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xix.

[89] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 13:202–3n.

As these aspects of the editorial project suggest, the line between editing and biography during the period was often blurred. Indeed, it is possible to see eighteenth-century Shakespearean editing *as a form of* biography.[90] Decisions on what to acknowledge as Shakespeare's depended on assumptions about his education and personal character. Underlying these was a sense that the ultimate duty of an editorial commentator was to preserve authorial reputation. As Ritson remarked of *Titus Andronicus*, 'Future editors will, doubtless, agree in ejecting a performance by which their author's name is dishonoured, and his works disgraced'.[91] Richard Farmer's discussion of the authorship of the French dialogue between Catherine and Alice in 3.4 *Henry V* likewise indicates how central biographical concerns were to eighteenth-century arguments about attribution. Farmer denied that Shakespeare had had any knowledge of French, and therefore concluded that the lines between Catherine and Alice had been interpolated into the text after Shakespeare had retired from the theatre. Moreover, he observed, the presence of such material in the play did no credit to Shakespeare's 'memory':

> it is extremely probable, that the *French* ribaldry was at first inserted by a different hand, as the many additions most certainly were after [Shakespeare] had left the stage.—Indeed, every friend to his memory will not easily believe, that he was acquainted with the Scene between *Catharine* and the *old Gentlewoman*; or surely he would not have admitted such obscenity and nonsense.[92]

Farmer's position on *Henry V* anachronistically conflates the question of what Shakespeare *had* written with that of what propriety would *allow* him to have written. For Farmer, then, contemporary definitions of 'obscenity' and 'nonsense' ultimately dictated the terms of the canonical.

In his cultural history of forgery, *Faking It*, Ian Haywood argues that, 'before the growth of capitalism and the Enlightenment', 'art was not seen as individualised, and the

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[90] Cf. James L. W. West, III, 'The Scholarly Editor as Biographer', in *Textual Studies and the Common Reader: Editing Novels and Novelists*, ed. Alexander Pettit (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000), 81.
[91] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 13:280n.
[92] Farmer, *Essay*, 84–86.

artist and the work possessed no intimate or mystical affiliation'.[93] It will be one of my main contentions that this moment of individualization preceded the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, the relationships between artists, writers, and their bodies of work in the period were by no means uncomplicated. The matter of canonicity—what works should be attributed to an author, and why—was negotiated in many different ways. Neither simply a nascent form of modern scholarship, nor a site where new 'Enlightenment' ideologies were imposed onto the text, attribution in the eighteenth century was a complex and contested process.

'Le style c'est l'homme même', according to Georges Louis Leclerc de Buffon: 'style is the man himself'.[94] This neat formulation is complicated in Shakespeare's case by the fact that he was a dramatic author. As eighteenth-century commentators realized, his language had been influenced by, and his words intermingled with, those of actors and other playwrights. The urge to isolate Shakespeare's individual style—to separate his words from the social contexts in which they had been written—carried with it a corresponding *recognition* of those contexts. Editors drew upon contemporary languages of sociability, politeness, and friendship to explain how Shakespeare's words had ended up lying alongside those of other speakers. As we shall see, the intersection between these two modes of inquiry—the stylistic, or connoisseurial, and the social—would have profound consequences for the way in which Shakespearean authorship was understood in the eighteenth century.

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[93] Ian Haywood, *Faking It: Art and the Politics of Forgery* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1987), 17.
[94] Quoted in Marjorie Garber, *Quotation Marks* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 36.

I.

'TO KNOW, AND DISTINGUISH HANDS': EDITING AND THE PROBLEM OF PERSONAL STYLE[1]

In his three-volume defence of the authenticity of the Bible, *A New and Full Method of Settling the Canonical Authority of the New Testament* (1726–27), Jeremiah Jones presents a spirited defence of the idea of personal style. Authorial style, Jones suggests, is something intrinsic—as much a part of an author's physicality as his face or particular way of moving. Bodies of written work, according to this way of thinking, are as easily distinguished from each other as the bodies of men:

> For as every Man has his peculiar Air in moving, speaking, &c. as every Man has a peculiar Turn of Eye, Cast of countenance and Complexion, and many other Things by which he is distinguishable from all others; so has every Man a peculiar Way of thinking and expressing his Thoughts, as different from all others as in any of the other Instances …. in every Writer there will always be a peculiar Way of setting his thoughts together, Contexture of the Discourse, Method of handling his Subject, and something distinguishing which I can no more describe, than that in a Man's Face, which makes him different from the World.[2]

Paul Baines, who reproduces this passage in his recent *House of Forgery in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, uses Jones's example to argue that here, in the early eighteenth century, a new way of understanding authorship and authorial style was developing. Eighteenth-century English thinkers, Baines suggests, increasingly exposed to the individuating forces of the market, began to see literature as a form of personal property, and, accordingly, began to define style and literary authenticity solely by their relation to particular authors. For Baines, the beginning of the long eighteenth century represents a

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[1] The title-quote comes from Jonathan Richardson, *An Argument in Behalf of the Science of a Connoisseur* (London, 1719), 189.

[2] Jeremiah Jones, *A New and Full Method of Settling the Canonical Authority of the New Testament* (London, 1726–27), quoted in Paul Baines, *The House of Forgery in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 33–34.

point of rupture from earlier understandings of the forged and the authentic, driven by the disjunctive forces of late seventeeth-century religious controversies, economic change, and the evolution of legal concepts of forgery.

Baines is right to identify in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century English literature and scholarship a marked concern with individual authorship, visible across a wide range of genres. Dramatic prologues and prefaces from this period, for example, also show an acute authorial awareness of the particularities of personal style, and assume their readers capable of—and interested in—distinguishing the work of one writer from another. In the preface to his adaptation of *The Tempest*, written conjointly with Sir William Davenant, John Dryden goes to some lengths to reconstruct their collaborative practices, and identify which portions were by whom. (Davenant had died in the period between the play's composition and its publication, and Dryden's 1669 preface has the character of an epitaph.) While the two dramatists worked together on *The Tempest*, Dryden recalls, his own 'writing received daily' the 'amendments' of his writing partner, a circumstance he decorously credits with making his work 'not so faulty' as that to be found in his singly authored plays.[3] Dryden goes on to record that 'The Comical parts of the Saylors were also [Davenant's] invention, and for the most part his writing', a fact that he assumes any reader 'will easily discover by the style'.[4] Having strived to appear scrupulously open-handed in claiming no more of the play for himself than was his 'due', Dryden proceeds to attack other playwrights who had collaborated with Davenant and not shown the same courtesy:

> It had perhaps been easie enough for me to have arrogated more to my self than was my due in the writing of this Play, and to have pass'd by his name with silence in the publication of it, with the same ingratitude which others have us'd to him, whose Writings he hath not only corrected … but has had a greater inspection over … and sometimes added whole Scenes together, which may as easily be distinguish'd from the rest, as true Gold from counterfeit by the weight.[5]

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[3] John Dryden, *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. Maximillian E. Novak and George E. Guffey, vol. 10 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970), 4. (In all quotes from the preface, italics have been reversed.)

[4] Dryden, *Works*, 10:4.

[5] Dryden, *Works*, 10:4–5.

Other Restoration authors displayed a similar concern with the niceties of attribution and personal style, particularly when writing about works of composite authorship. Charles Gildon, whose 1699 *Lives and Characters of the English Dramatick Poets* was a revised version of Giles Langbaine's 1691 *Account of the English Dramatick Poets*, remarks in the preface that he expects his readers to be able to discern that the 'Piece is not writ all by one Hand … in the Reading'.[6] The author of the prologue to Edmund Waller's *Maid's Tragedy Altered* (c. 1687), meanwhile, deploys a riparian metaphor to represent the conjunction of authorial bodies that the revised play's text results from:

> In this old play, what's new we have exprest
> In rhiming verse, distinguish'd from the rest:
> That, as the *Roan* its hasty way does make,
> Not mingling Waters, thro *Geneva*'s Lake:
> So having here the different stiles in view,
> You may compare the former with the new.[7]

For the prologue's author (and, he assumes, the audience), the styles of John Fletcher and Waller lie alongside each other in the play, but do not coalesce. Literary mode, authorial particularity, and the historical contingency of language combine to prevent the 'old' from merging with the 'new'.

Much recent criticism has located in this period of English literary history the 'birth' of the modern, individualized author. Drawing upon the work of Jonathan Dollimore, Robert M. Markley has written that the idea that texts preserve the 'essence' of individual personalities—that 'style' and 'man' necessarily go together—is an 'historical construct, the product of cultural and economic changes' in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[8] David Quint locates the origin of the modern

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[6] Charles Gildon, *The Lives and Characters of the English Dramatick Poets* (London, 1699), [9] (italics reversed). The book's title page also informed the reader that the original author was Langbaine, and that it had been 'improv'd and continued down to this Time, by a Careful Hand'.
[7] Pierre Danchin, ed., *The Prologues and Epilogues of the Restoration Stage 1660-1700* (Nancy: Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 1981), 2, pt. 4:744.
[8] Robert Markley, *Two-Edg'd Weapons: Style and Ideology in the Comedies of Etherege, Wycherley, and Congreve* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 6. For Dollimore's denial that the concepts of individuality and 'essentialist humanism' existed until the Enlightenment, see Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of*

tendency to value literature for its originality and personal distinctiveness in the mid seventeenth century, and tracks the implications of this change in the literary criticism of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[9] (Indeed, the last decades of the seventeenth century were the first in which definitions of personal, as distinct from rhetorical, style began to appear in English dictionaries.[10]) For Jeffrey Masten, ideas of literary property and 'individuality of style' are 'post-Enlightenment' concepts, and scholars who back-project them onto early modern texts (by, for instance, trying to determine the authorship of anonymous or collaborative plays) can do so only at the expense of anachronism.[11] Attempts to determine the authorial shares of early modern collaborative plays are, he suggests, 'susceptible to both historical and logical critique', because a concept of individuated authorship did not exist for early modern writers.[12] Modern editors and attribution scholars, conditioned by the post-Enlightenment regime of individuation to believe that the 'establishment of authorship … indispensably precedes editing', will, he implies, find their efforts to reduce these texts to authorial singularity frustrated.[13]

According to this line of scholarship, the modern concept of literary authenticity is largely an eighteenth-century phenomenon, whose appearance coincided with emerging philosophical concepts of selfhood, developments in the law of personal property, and the commodification of literature resulting from (and reflected in) the institution of proprietary authorship by the 1710 'copyright' Statute of Queen Anne.[14]

Shakespeare and His Contemporaries, 2nd ed. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 174–81, 250.

[9] David Quint, *Origin and Originality in Renaissance Literature: Versions of the Source* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 22, 216–20.

[10] David A. Hansen, 'Redefinitions of Style, 1600–1800', in *New Aspects of Lexicography*, ed. Howard D. Weinbrot (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), 95–116.

[11] Jeffrey Masten, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 16.

[12] Jeffrey Masten, '*More* or Less: Editing the Collaborative', *Shakespeare Studies* 29 (2001): 114.

[13] Masten, '*More* or Less', 113–15.

[14] See, in addition to Masten, Ian Haywood, *The Making of History: A Study of the Literary Forgeries of James MacPherson and Thomas Chatterton in Relation to Eighteenth-Century Ideas of History and Fiction* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1986), 19–31; Margreta de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim: The Reproduction of Authenticity and the 1790 Apparatus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 51–52; Mark Rose, *Authors and Owners: The*

One of the most influential expressions of this idea has been Ian Haywood's work on English literary forgery. For Haywood, the passage of the copyright act, based upon 'the modern notion of the individualised … author-owned text', signals a period of epochal transition in the understanding of authorship.[15] This manifested itself, he argues, in a movement away from older, collaborative forms of writing, in which 'art was not seen as individualised, and the artist and the work as possessing no intimate or mystical affiliation', to one in which 'the individual began to figure much larger' due to 'the growth of capitalism and the Enlightenment'.[16] Collaboration—a kind of authorial commonality—is thus the original condition of writing in early modern England. However, the increasing individuation of authorship in the eighteenth century meant that these older authorial practices became more and more problematic. Indeed, with the passage of the 'copyright' act, collaboration would come to represent 'an affront to the newly idealised, monolithic status of the single author'.[17] Haywood illustrates this apparent shift with a number of early eighteenth-century examples. The controversy over Pope's use of 'assistants' in his translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and Bentley's notorious attempts to separate the work of Milton's supposed amanuensis from the genuine lines of *Paradise Lost*, Haywood suggests, illustrate the eighteenth century's new commitment to separating authorial voices.

Did the long eighteenth century, then, 'invent' the modern concept of personal style? Are modern editors' attempts to establish the authorship of early modern plays inherently anachronistic? While I shall be focussing on eighteenth-century attempts to determine the authenticity (or otherwise) of certain Shakespearean plays and

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Invention of Copyright (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 48, 90–91, 124–28; Baines, *House of Forgery*, 2–4, 182; and Kathryn Temple, *Scandal Nation: Law and Authorship in Britain, 1750-1832* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 10, 115–17.

[15] Ian Haywood, *Faking It: Art and the Politics of Forgery* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1987), 21.

[16] Haywood, *Faking It*, 17. There are obvious continuities between Haywood's version of the history of authorship and then-current accounts of the 'history of the subject' produced by cultural materialists like Jonathan Dollimore and Catherine Belsey. For an incisive critique of the use of historical evidence in cultural materialism, see David Aers, 'A Whisper in the Ear of Early Modernists; or, Reflections on Literary Critics Writing the "History of the Subject"', in *Culture and History: Essays on English Communities, Identities and Writing*, ed. David Aers (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), 177–202.

[17] Haywood, *Faking It*, 31.

pseudepigrapha, I want to emphasize that these were by no means radical breaks with the past. Haywood and Baines are certainly correct in identifying in England in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries widespread scholarly anxiety about the integrity of biblical and literary canons—a product of what Joseph M. Levine has identified as the pervasive 'historical "pyrrhonism"' of the time.[18] However, there is a danger in separating, as they do, the eighteenth century so completely from what came before.[19] Although the debates over canonicity and authenticity were certainly 'of their time', their participants consciously drew upon a set of already extant classical-humanist rhetorics and methodologies for determining authorship, foremost among which was a concept of personal style. I therefore want to resist the suggestion that a concept of stylistic individuality necessarily 'depends on a network of legal and social technologies specific to a post-Renaissance capitalist culture'.[20] Masten's 'historical critique' of modern attribution studies can itself be subjected to historical critique.[21] While synchronic influences can never be discounted, the languages of and assumptions about authorship that eighteenth-century editors and 'higher critics' brought to Shakespeare were humanistic—and ultimately classical—in origin. In the following section, I shall briefly explore some of these older debates over authorship and attribution. In doing so, I

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[18] Baines, *House of Forgery*, 29–38; Joseph M. Levine, '"Et Tu Brute?" History and Forgery in Eighteenth-Century England', in *Fakes and Frauds: Varieties of Deception in Print and Manuscript*, ed. Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1989), 71.

[19] For the historiographical problems inherent in Baines's 'disjunctive' account of eighteenth-century forgery, see Alfred Hiatt, *The Making of Medieval Forgeries: False Documents in Fifteenth-Century England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), xi.

[20] Jeffrey Masten, 'Playwrighting: Authorship and Collaboration', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 373.

[21] Two detailed and cogent critiques of Masten's model of Renaissance dramatic authorship have recently appeared—Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author: A Historical Study of Five Collaborative Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 528–41, and Jeffrey Knapp, 'What Is a Co-Author?' *Representations*, no. 89 (2005): 1–29. See also (although she does not specifically discuss Masten) Barbara Mowat, 'Constructing the Author', in *Elizabethan Theater: Essays in Honor of S. Schoenbaum*, ed. R. B. Parker and S. P. Zitner (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1996), 93–110. Mowat, Vickers, and Knapp largely concern themselves with demonstrating that classically derived concepts of individual authorship were available to Renaissance playwrights. It is my intention here to examine the use of the concept of authorial individuation by pre-Enlightenment editors and textual critics.

hope to show that ideas of personal style, literary authenticity, and the importance of establishing the authorship of texts before editing them were by no means peculiar to the eighteenth-century, and that, to a large extent, it was these pre-existing intellectual traditions that furnished the vocabularies with which eighteenth-century scholars understood and discussed the matter of Shakespearean canonicity.

AUTHORSHIP AND PERSONAL STYLE IN ANTIQUITY

As Anthony Grafton has argued, early modern and eighteenth-century attempts at the 'higher criticism' cannot be understood without considering the influence upon them of their classical antecedents. As early as the second century B.C., Grafton writes, the concept 'that a literary work was the product of a specific individual with a distinctive style and set of concerns' was already in place, and, accordingly, it was in ancient Greece and its colonies that the first biobibliographies—*pinakes*, or lists attributing orations and literary works to particular orators and authors—and editorial technologies for separating the spurious from the genuine within works, such as *athetesis*, began to appear.[22] The *pinax* apparently stemmed from older forms of ancient Greek chronology and list-making, such as the *Karneonikai* compiled by Hellanikos of Lesbos and the *Olympionikon anagraphe* assembled by Hippias of Ellis, both listing the winners of athletic contests.[23] Aristotle compiled his own lists of sporting champions, the *Olympionikai* and the *Pythionikai*, and also produced a work known as the *Didaskaliai*—a list of plays performed in Athens at the Dionysian festivals of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.[24] The *Didaskaliai* apparently recorded the names of plays, their

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[22] Anthony Grafton, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 10–11. For Greek biobibliography, see Rudolf Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 128–34. For *athetesis*, see Chapter Three below.

[23] Rudolf Blum, *Kallimachos: The Alexandrian Library and the Origins of Bibliography*, trans. Hans H. Wellisch (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 18–19.

[24] Pfeiffer, *History*, 80–81.

placing in the festivals' dramatic competitions, and the names of their authors.[25] (None of these texts has survived, with the exception of some brief extracts in later scholia.)

In the third century B.C., the poet and librarian Kallimachos adopted the *pinakos* form as the basis for his famous catalogue of Greek authors and their writings, the *Pinakes ton en pase paideia dialampsanton kai hon synegrapsan*, or *Tables of Persons Eminent in Every Branch of Learning Together with a List of Their Writings*. (This work apparently derived from a shelf-list that Kallimachos had drawn up in his capacity as library director at Alexandria.[26]) Later commentators report that this text, which, survives only in fragments, occupied 120 books, and classified authors alphabetically, provided each with a brief *bios*, or life, and grouped them according to literary category.[27] The work was not only a list, however: later citations demonstrate that Kallimachos also made judgements about attribution and authenticity, and indicated where authorship was unclear or in dispute.[28] A scholium to Euripides' *Andromache*, for instance, notes that the 'time of the creation of this drama cannot be given exactly, because it was not performed at Athens' (and thus not included in Aristotle's *Didaskaliai*), and then goes on to record that 'Kallimachos says that Demokrates was listed as the author' of the play.[29]

Questions of authenticity and attribution were also treated as important matters in ancient Greek philology and education. By about the fourth century B.C., it had become established that philology, or *grammatike*, consisted of four parts. The first, the *anagnostikon*, involved the reading of texts; the second, the *exegetikon*, their explication; the third, the *diorthotikon*, their textual correction; and the fourth, the *kritikon*, their critical judgement.[30] The latter was believed to be the most important task in philology. It not only entailed reaching aesthetic judgements about the text, but also using aesthetic and stylistic arguments to determine the text's authenticity.[31] Aristotle described the

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[25] For a detailed account, see Blum, *Kallimachos*, 24–43.

[26] Lionel Casson, *Libraries in the Ancient World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 39.

[27] Pfeiffer, *History*, 127–33.

[28] Yun Lee Too, *The Idea of Ancient Literary Criticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 131–33.

[29] Cited in Blum, *Kallimachos*, 158.

[30] Blum, *Kallimachos*, 5.

[31] D. A. Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981), 7.

kritikos, or critic, as a superior kind of man, whose ability to make sound literary judgements—to separate the aesthetically good from the bad—stemmed from his inherent moral goodness.[32] As Andrew Ford puts it, in the Greek critical tradition that followed Aristotle, the *kritikos* became a kind of 'minister of culture who could authenticate, edit, and rank in a canon those texts from the past that were worth preserving and studying'.[33]

Composed in Rome during the late first century, B.C., Dionysius of Halicarnassus' *Critical Essays* give some indication of how this critical tradition dealt with questions of attribution. Dionysius clearly believed that particular writers had personal styles that could be distinguished from those of other authors.[34] Writing about Thucydides's style, for instance, he summarizes its characteristics as 'artificiality of vocabulary, variety of figures, harshness of word-order, [and] rapidity of signification'. He then goes on to assert further that:

> The special features of his style include compactness and solidity, pungency and severity, vehemence, the ability to disturb and terrify and above all emotional power. Such are the characteristics of style by which Thucydides is distinguished from all the rest.[35]

Dionysius states that the 'purpose of the investigation' he undertakes into Thucydides's writings 'is to reveal his peculiar character, including all the noteworthy qualities that are to be found in his style'.[36] When he comes to an author's disputed works, he shows a corresponding willingness to assess their authenticity according to stylistic and aesthetic criteria—their likeness to the author's undisputed works, and their overall literary

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[32] Andrew Ford, *The Origins of Criticism: Literary Culture and Poetic Theory in Classical Greece* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 291.

[33] Ford, *Origins of Criticism*, 272–73.

[34] See Doreen C. Innes, 'Augustan Critics', in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: Volume 1, Classical Criticism*, ed. George A. Kennedy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 267; and D. Thomas Benediktson, *Literature and the Visual Arts in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 111.

[35] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *The Critical Essays*, trans. Stephen Usher, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 1:531.

[36] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Critical Essays*, 1:533.

quality. Of Lysias's genuine orations, for instance, he identifies 'charm' as their distinguishing characteristic, going on to record that:

> Whenever I am uncertain as to the genuineness of any speech that is attributed to him, and find it difficult to arrive at the truth by means of the other available evidence, I resort to this criterion to cast the final vote. Then, if the writing seems to be graced with those additional qualities of charm, I deem it to be a product of Lysias's genius, and consider it unnecessary to investigate further. But if the style is devoid of grace and beauty, I view the speech with a jaundiced and suspicious eye, and conclude that it could never be by Lysias.[37]

The 'other available evidence' Dionysius mentions included matters of chronology and anachronism, and he writes that, where stylistic inequalities and defects caused him to view one or other of Lysias's speeches as suspect, the dates of events and names mentioned within often confirmed his initial doubts about authorship. By these means, he records, he came 'to suspect many of the speeches which have been commonly regarded as genuine … because they did not strike me with that characteristic Lysian charm or with the euphony of that style'.[38] References in his essay on Lysias indicate that Dionysius wrote an entire work dedicated to separating the genuine speeches of Lysias from those that had been misattributed to him.[39] This work, however, has not survived, although fragments remain, embedded in the writings of later commentators.[40]

Jaap Mansfeld has located a similar set of concerns in the educational curricula and biblical commentaries of late-antique Greece and Rome. Evidence that questions of authorship and authenticity were regarded as necessary preliminaries to the study of classic texts lies in the introductory material, or prolegomena, that teachers and critics wrote to assist students undertaking their study. As Mansfeld demonstrates, this material typically followed a set *schema isogogica*, or 'introductory scheme', apparently derived from Proclus, which took the form of a 'set of preliminary questions'. Among these, along with the matter of a work's theme, the meaning of its title, and its place in its

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[37] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Critical Essays*, 1:41.
[38] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Critical Essays*, 1:43.
[39] See, for instance, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Critical Essays*, 1:45.
[40] See K. J. Dover, *Lysias and the Corpus Lysiacum* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), 15–22.

author's canon, was the question of its authenticity (especially if this had been in doubt).[41] Commentators tended to address the question of attribution and authenticity during accounts of the lives of authors, or while cataloguing or laying out the titles of their works.[42]

While these questions were usually applied to classic or sacred texts, one writer apparently influenced by the *schema isogogica* tradition, Galen, applied them to his own compositions. Near the end of his life, Galen wrote two brief pieces, *De Ordine Librorum Suorum* and *De Libris Propriis*, in which he attempted to systematically order and ennumerate his surviving works.[43] He states at the beginning of each treatise that his motive for doing so is his awareness that many inaccurate and unauthorized works, stemming from private transcripts he had never intended to make public, along with outright spurious pieces, were circulating under his name.[44] In *De Libris Propriis*, he asserts that other teachers were using his works in the classroom 'as if they themselves had written them', and provides an example of one teacher who had added his own author's introduction to a copy of one of them.[45] In another anecdote, he describes a book bearing the title 'Galen, physician', unwittingly purchased by a bookshop customer, which an 'educated person' was subsequently able to pronounce inauthentic based solely on the style of its first two sentences.[46]

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[41] Jaap Mansfeld, *Prolegomena: Questions to be Settled before the Study of an Author or a Text* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 10–11. Mansfeld notes that Proclus was by no means the first author to formulate these questions, but was the first to attempt to address them all within one commentary.

[42] Mansfeld, *Prolegomena*, 103, 194–95.

[43] George Sarton, *Galen of Pergamon* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1954), 27–28.

[44] Mansfeld, *Prolegomena*, 118–19, 126–27; and John Joseph Phillips, 'The Publication of Books at Rome in the Classical Period' (Ph.D. Diss., Yale University, 1981), 114–15. Mansfeld (118n208) notes that similar claims about 'final versions' being instigated by the circulation of unauthorized scribal transcripts had earlier been made by Plato, Arrian, and Cicero, and suggests that this was a '*modus modestiae*'—a literary trope designed to make authorial publication look less immodest than it might otherwise have done. The parallels with early modern claims about unauthorized dramatic publication are obvious and intriguing.

[45] Mansfeld, *Prolegomena*, 127.

[46] Mansfeld, *Prolegomena*, 127n224. See also Phillips, 'Publication', 115–16.

PERSONAL STYLE IN MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE CRITICISM

Despite traditional narratives that present the Middle Ages as a 'golden age' of forgery for which questions of authorship and authenticity were unimportant, an awareness of authorial style and the distinction between genuine and inauthentic works did not entirely disappear during the period between late antiquity and the Renaissance. The ninth-century Byzantine scholar Photius, for example, frequently concerned himself with matters of literary style in his commentaries on ancient and Christian authors.[47] His excursions into the higher criticism show that he had both a concept of personal style, and a willingness to pronounce texts inauthentic on stylistic grounds. However, a note on the authorship of a speech attributed to Demosthenes indicates that he was aware of the pitfalls involved in making authorial attributions based on style alone:

> some assign this speech to Hegesippus, but I know that different authors have similar styles, while individuals can vary their own style … so I cannot confidently declare whether this speech is by Demosthenes or Hegesippus.[48]

A similar concern with attribution existed within the later Western European medieval scholastic commentary tradition.[49] Medieval authorities were also capable of practising the criticism of documents on internal grounds. In the last years of the twelfth century, Pope Innocent III issued a statement on the forgery of papal documents, detailing how genuine bulls might be distinguished from forged ones. Among the criteria he specified for determining the authenticity of texts were 'the mode of composition of the document and the type of script employed ("stylus dictaminis et forma scripturae")'.[50]

The resemblances between medieval and ancient textual and literary criticism should, perhaps, not be overstressed. The medieval 'theory of authorship' carried with it a quite different criterion of authenticity from those operating earlier and later⸺texts

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[47] N. G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (London: Duckworth, 1983), 103–110.

[48] Quoted in Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, 110.

[49] A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 11.

[50] Hiatt, *Making of Medieval Forgeries*, 26.

during the medieval period were typically attributed to *auctores* (ancient authors of authority) according to their perceived importance or validity, either political or doctrinal.[51] Nevertheless, medieval scholars were, on occasion, quite capable of martialling stylistic and historical evidence to settle questions of authorial attribution. Using the scholarly reception of the Aristotelian 'spuria' as an example, Steven J. Williams has argued convincingly that medieval schoolmen were both aware of, and willing to apply in their own commentaries, the rhetoric and practice of the classical higher criticism.[52] Indeed, Williams argues, the scholastic commentators on Aristotle were sufficiently well-grounded in the methods of their classical predecessors to be able to augment them with their own innovations.[53] In 'this case as in so many others', he suggests, 'the Middle Ages constitute not a chasm between antiquity and the Renaissance, but rather a bridge'.[54]

When, from the fifteenth century onwards, humanist scholars in Western Europe came to debate the authenticity of biblical and classical texts, then, they were drawing upon a set of models for assessing authorship and determining the validity of older works derived from classical antiquity and mediated through medieval scholasticism. Lorenzo Valla's highly influential oration on the supposed Donation of Constantine, for instance, composed in 1440 and often credited with practically inventing the attitude of historically informed scepticism towards ancient texts that characterized the humanist movement, in fact derived its methodology and rhetorical arguments from Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*.[55] Valla possessed Quintilian's work in two manuscripts, and, according to his

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[51] Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship*, 10–12; Andrew Bennett, *The Author* (London: Routledge, 2005), 40–41.

[52] Steven J. Williams, 'Defining the *Corpus Aristotelicum*: Scholastic Awareness of the Aristotelian Spuria in the High Middle Ages', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 58 (1995): 32–34.

[53] Williams, 'Aristotelian Spuria', 49.

[54] Williams, 'Aristotelian Spuria', 51.

[55] For an example of a critic who treats Valla's work as revolutionary, see Baines, *House of Forgery*, 29, who identifies Valla as a precursor to late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English controversies over the authorship of the bible, but underplays the continuity between Valla and his medieval and classical predecessors. Valla's dependence upon Quintilian was first established by Salvatore Camporeale in his *Lorenzo Valla. Unanesimo e teologia* (1972); for brief discussion and references, see Salvatore I. Camporeale, 'Lorenzo Valla's *Oratio* on the Pseudo-Donation of Constantine: Dissent and Innovation in Early Renaissance Humanism',

surviving correspondence, valued Quintilian's writings extremely highly.[56] Carlo Ginzburg notes that there are 'obvious convergences' between Valla's *Oratio* and book five of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, on proofs, where Quintilian outlines the means by which an orator might distinguish forged from genuine documents, and convey that distinction persuasively to an audience.[57] Valla's argument adheres closely to Quintilian's recommendations for demonstrating falsity: it suggests that the Donation 'lacks verisimilitude'; is contradicted by other contemporary writings; and contains anachronisms inconsistent with its supposed date of composition.[58]

The Donation of Constantine was not the only ancient text that Valla was to deem inauthentic using the mixture of rhetoric and philology he derived from Quintilian. Elsewhere, he discussed the authorship of the Apostles' Creed, pronounced as forgeries the supposed epistles between Saint Paul and Seneca, and argued against the traditional ascription of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* to Cicero.[59] Although the political and religious implications of the attack on the Donation of Constantine resulted in immediate personal disaster for Valla, his methods and example were to soon prove highly influential.

It is, of course, no coincidence that humanist scholars would concern themselves so greatly with the authorship of ancient texts. Humanism, as Paul Oskar Kristeller has insisted, was in large part centred upon matters of oratorical and literary style. The revival of classical eloquence depended upon the study and teaching of approved classical examplars—a small canon of authors whose purity of style and propriety of

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Journal of the History of Ideas 57, no. 1 (1996): 11; and Ronald K. Delph, 'Valla Grammaticus, Agostino Steuco, and the Donation of Constantine', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 57, no. 1 (1996): 55–56.

[56] Carlo Ginzburg, *History, Rhetoric, and Proof* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999), 61–62.

[57] Ginzburg, *History*, 61.

[58] Ginzburg, *History*, 61.

[59] Jerry H. Bentley, *Humanists and Holy Writ: New Testament Scholarship in the Renaissance* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 47; R. J. Schoeck, *Erasmus of Europe: The Making of a Humanist 1467–1500* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990), 157.

subject matter provided the best models for students looking to develop their own individual styles.[60] As Erasmus was to put it in *De Ratio Studii*,

> a true ability to speak correctly is best fostered by conversing and consorting with those who speak correctly and by the habitual reading of the best stylists. Among the latter the first to be imbibed should those whose diction, apart from its refinement, will also entice learners by a certain charm of subject matter.[61]

Into this canon of authors he admits, among Greeks, Lucian, Demosthenes, Herodotus, Aristophanes, Homer, and Euripides; among Romans, Terence, Virgil, Horace, Cicero, and Julius Caesar. (Sallust he admits as an outside choice, and remarks that if anyone were to nominate 'a few, selected comedies of Plautus, free from impropriety', he 'would personally not demur', though he implies that others might.[62]) This group, he asserts, is perfectly sufficient for any student learning either Greek or Latin; Erasmus has no time for those who would 'waste an entire lifetime' trying to come to grips with all surviving classical texts, 'however minor'.[63] Erasmus also applied this canonical logic, for which the identity of authorship was the primary concern, to religious works:

> What is so important about whose name is on a book, provided it is a good book? …. In the case of sacred writers and pillars of the church … from whom popes and theologians derive as from oracles their teachings on war, on the sacraments, and on the most serious matters, it will be, I think, of the greatest importance. Otherwise it will happen that the words, nay the nonsense, of some impostor presented with the name of Paul or Jerome would force me either to be silent or to accept what is not right.[64]

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[60] On this last point, see Hanna S. Gray, 'Renaissance Humanism: The Pursuit of Eloquence', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 24, no. 4 (1963): 513; John F. D'Amico, *Theory and Practice in Renaissance Textual Criticism: Beatus Rhenanus Between Conjecture and History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 146; and Zachary Sayre Schiffman, 'Dimensions of Individuality: Recent French Works on the Renaissance', *Renaissance Quarterly* 49, no. 1 (1996): 114–17.

[61] Desiderius Erasmus, *The Collected Works of Erasmus*, ed. Craig R. Thompson, vol. 24 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 669.

[62] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 24:669.

[63] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 24:669.

[64] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:75–76.

In this pedagogical and religious environment, it clearly mattered a great deal 'who was speaking', and Erasmus accordingly treated matters of authorship and attribution as being of the utmost importance.[65] In order to illustrate this, I want to focus here on Erasmus' prefatorial rhetoric in his edition of the letters of St Jerome, issued as part of the Froben Jerome, or *Opera Omnia* (1516).

It had long been Erasmus' intention to edit Jerome, whose writings and scholarly example he admired hugely.[66] In a letter composed in 1500, Erasmus laid out the textual problems that such a project would face: Jerome 'has been spoiled and garbled and confused by the ignorance of divines', with the result that 'many passages in his writings … are corrupt or spurious'.[67] When the edited works finally appeared, Erasmus discussed the authorship problem in detail, and the remedies that he had applied to extract Jerome's authentic writings from the mass of *spuria* surrounding them. By way of analogy, he also touches on a number of other authorship problems in classical literature, and thus gives a kind of map of humanist higher criticism, laying out the difficulties, as he saw them, and the means by which scholars might be able to overcome them. '[M]y intention', says Erasmus, is 'to set forth the causes that give rise to such *spuria* and secondly to demonstrate the signs and inferential evidence by which false attribution might be detected'.[68]

Erasmus relegated what he regarded as the inauthentic works of Jerome to the second of the four volumes that he contributed to the *Opera Omnia*, which he divided into three parts. Into the first, he placed those writings which, although spurious, were 'nevertheless learned and worth reading'. Into the second went works that had been mistakenly ascribed to Jerome, but whose actual authors were known. To the third, Erasmus consigned pieces whose attributions were 'not only false but also … shameless',

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[65] On the centrality of style to Erasmus' textual scholarship, see D. F. S. Thompson, 'Erasmus and Textual Scholarship in the Light of Sixteenth-Century Practice', in *Erasmus of Rotterdam: The Man and the Scholar*, ed. Jan Sperna Weiland and Willem Frijhoff (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 166, 169–70.

[66] For Jerome's importance as an *exemplum* for Erasmus, see Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 60–82.

[67] Quoted in Schoeck, *Erasmus of Europe*, 250.

[68] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:71.

and in which he judged that 'the absence of learning and eloquence … is so complete that not even a shadow of Jerome's mind is reflected therein'.[69] While he allows that some readers—those who 'devour … everything without discrimination'—might resist these deattributions, Erasmus writes that anyone with a knowledge of false ascriptions in Greek and Roman literature would recognize the precedents. Among the Greeks, for instance, Erasmus notes that Aristarchus found spurious lines from Homer; Quintilian reascribed to Hesiod certain fables traditionally attributed to Aesop; and a number of the plays of Aristophanes and Euripedes have been 'marked as spurious by scholars'.[70] Similarly, biblical scholars have long known that certain pieces of sacred writing were not authentic. Erasmus remarks that 'Saint Jerome himself', for instance, 'delivers a finishing stroke to many passages in Daniel with an obelisk', the textual-critical mark of reprobation reserved for inauthentic passages.[71]

How had these false attributions come about? Erasmus goes on to lay out the combination of 'error and ignorance' and 'design and deliberate effort' that had enabled the confusion of authors' works in the past. Writers with similar names were likely to have their books mingled with one another by subsequent critics, and those who summarized the books of earlier authors were likely to have those works ascribed to them by inattentive readers. More seriously, deceit might be involved, motivated by either commercial or doctrinal interests:

> … we know it is not uncommon even today for zealous booksellers intentionally to misuse the names of famous writers for their own profit. Others cloak their designs under influential names in their attempt either to commend to their reader their nonsense and baneful ideas or to … promote swifter and wider circulation in the community for their doctrinal poison under the cover of an important name.… Nothing is easier than to place any name you want on the front of a book.[72]

Readers, therefore, have an obligation to ensure that the texts they have in front of them were actually written by the author claimed on the title page. Prospective buyers, 'not

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[69] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:67.
[70] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:71.
[71] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:72.
[72] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:74–75.

trusting the price tag', check goods closely before purchasing them at a market, so why, Erasmus asks, should readers suspend that same critical judgement when it comes to books?[73]

Erasmus emphasizes repeatedly that, foremost among the criteria that ancient and biblical critics used to discriminate between genuine and inauthentic writings, was authorial style, and he uses quotations from his critical predecessors—not infrequently, Jerome himself—as precedents to buttress his own stylistic arguments about the integrity of Jerome's works. He notes, for instance, Jerome's judgement on the authorship of the Second Letter of Peter, which, he records, Jerome 'believed to be by another hand, simply on the evidence of style', and also quotes Jerome's stylistically informed opinions on the authorship of works attributed to Tertullian and Pamphilius.[74] In a passage that closely resembles, and quite possibly inspired, the eighteenth-century passage on style with which I started this chapter, Erasmus argues that personal style is the surest means of distinguishing a genuine from a false work. While anyone aiming to pass a forged work off as that of a famous historical writer will pay close attention to matters of doctrine and chronology, authorial style is much harder to imitate convincingly. For this reason, Erasmus suggests,

> The surest sign and truly the Lydian stone, as they say, is the character and quality of the speech. As each individual has his own appearance, his own voice, his own character and disposition, so each has his own style of writing. And the quality of mind is manifest in speech even more than the likeness of the body is reflected in a mirror…. For between the ineloquent and the eloquent the difference is clearer than between a man and an ape, or between flint and a precious stone.[75]

Against those who would claim that personal style changes according to one's mood, age, or rhetorical intent, Erasmus deploys a copious set of organic analogies to argue that distinguishing the style of one writer from another is still possible:

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[73] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:75.
[74] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:76.
[75] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:76.

> The countenance of an angry man is unlike that of a man of kindly spirit; the
> countenance of a sad person unlike that of a cheerful one; and yet this is no bar to
> the recognition of an acquaintance. A person whom you knew in his younger
> days you recognize in his old age …. The resemblance of brothers and sisters to
> one another is no obstacle to distinguishing Paris from Hector and Cassandra
> from Polyxene…. Indeed, those who are highly observant may distinguish one
> egg from another egg, one fig from another fig … it is simply not true that one
> style is indistinguishable from another; for in no other sphere of activity is there a
> greater diversity …[76]

This absolute individuality of style, and the ability to distinguish it, is, moreover, at its
most heightened when the author's—and the critic's—talent is greatest. Artists and
writers, Erasmus suggests, are more likely to appreciate the personal styles of their peers
than 'some ploughman', while the literary products of an absolutely first-rate mind are
impossible to imitate.[77] Erasmus goes on to suggest that Jerome represents such a mind,
while, in binary fashion, he utterly negates the literary talents of the 'impostor' whose
'supremely worthless rubbish' has become mingled with the saint's writings.[78]

By marginalizing and 'execrating' Jerome's interpolator, he establishes the
priority of Jerome in the text, and in so doing, his own priority as critic. The higher
criticism not only enabled Erasmus to claim a privileged intimacy—a kind of
commingling—with the minds of ancient authors, but it also, as Lisa Jardine puts it,
raised the possibility of claiming 'the right to the "work" as his own, as return on the
investment of labour' involved in separating the genuine from the spurious.[79] As Charles
G. Nauert has recently observed, it was from this claim to editorial expertise that
humanist scholars ultimately derived their authority. Humanism owed its victory over
scholasticism, Nauert suggests, to its success in arguing that the study of ancient works
could not begin until the texts in which they were preserved had been established,
stabilized, and authenticated.[80]

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[76] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:77.
[77] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:77–78.
[78] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:79–80, 12.
[79] Jardine, *Erasmus*, 68.
[80] Charles G. Nauert, 'Humanism as Method: Roots of Conflict with the Scholastics', *Sixteenth Century Journal* 29, no. 2 (1998): 436.

Erasmus' prefaces to Saint Jerome are remarkable for the directness with which they confront the matter of authorial attribution. They not only demonstrate that Erasmus possessed a highly developed concept of personal style, but also that organicized, individualist ideas of authorship were by no means eighteenth-century developments.[81] While Ian Haywood sees the 1709/10 'copyright' act as inaugurating a 'mystical' or parental link between literary works and their authors, Erasmus had already claimed—almost two centuries earlier—that style is both 'an imaging of the mind in its every facet' and an analogue to 'physical propagation, where parental features appear in the offspring'.[82] Paul Baines sees Jeremiah Jones's defence of individual style as an early expression of an emergent post-Enlightenment—and ultimately Romantic—conception of literary personality.[83] In fact, the passage is more likely to be a simple paraphrase of Erasmus' earlier pronouncements on personal style. Jones's stylistic rhetoric, therefore, I would suggest, does not indicate a radical break with the past impelled by the emergence of new, post-Enlightenment mentalities, but rather eighteenth-century textual scholarship's continuity with pre-existing ideas about style and authorship.

Where does this leave the study of eighteenth-century concepts of literary authenticity? To the extent that late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century anxieties about the integrity of literary canons arose alongside contemporary disputes about the authorship of the Bible and the authenticity of the *Epistles* of Philaris, it makes sense to group these historical developments together. Early eighteenth-century debates over the makeup of the Shakespearean canon arose in the immediate aftermath of the Battle of the Books, and at much the same time as Bentley was applying his philological methods to Milton and the Bible. As Simon Jarvis observes, there is, therefore, 'an obvious prima

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[81] I certainly, however, would not want to claim that Erasmus'—or Valla's—radical views on the authorship of certain ancient and biblical texts were uncontroversial or universally shared. Many of their contemporaries and textual-critical successors held much more ambivalent views on the usefulness of the higher criticism, and were often reluctant to challenge traditional attributions. See Irena Backus, 'Renaissance Attitudes to New Testament Apocryphal Writings: Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples and His Epigones', *Renaissance Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (1998): 1169–98; and Hiatt, *Making of Medieval Forgeries*, 167–74.

[82] Haywood, *Faking It*, 30; Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:79.

[83] Baines, *House of Forgery*, 33. For a similar reading of this passage, see Margaret Russett, *Fictions and Fakes: Forging Romantic Authenticity, 1760–1845* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 21.

facie case' for seeing the eighteenth-century textual criticism of vernacular authors as an outgrowth of contemporary classical and biblical editorial scholarship.[84] However, the location of an immediate—synchronic—context for eighteenth-century debates over literary authenticity should not lead to an elision of their *diachronic* context, particularly their reliance on pre-existing, classical-humanist 'languages' of canonicity and literary style.

In much recent work on the period, the concern of eighteenth-century scholars with literary fraud and the problem of apocryphal works has been considered in isolation, as if these critics owed little or nothing to the past. Eighteenth-century efforts to attribute authorship, to locate forgeries, or to identify individual literary styles, have been seen as novel developments, themselves attributable to Enlightenment philosophies of selfhood, new conceptions of individual personality, and nascent Romantic ideals of authorship. By presenting a series of historic counter-examples—Dionysius of Halicarnassus; Galen; Erasmus—I have suggested, conversely, that concepts of stylistic individuation were available—indeed, instrumental—to editing and textual criticism before the Enlightenment. In the following chapters, I shall consider the influence that the concept of personal style, and the means of distinguishing it inherited from the classical-humanist editing tradition, had upon eighteenth-century Shakespearean textual criticism.

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[84] Simon Jarvis, *Scholars and Gentlemen: Shakespearian Textual Criticism and Representations of Scholarly Labour, 1725–1765* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 19.

2.

'AND UNTO THIS EDITION IS ADDED': THE SHAKESPEAREAN APOCRYPHA AND CANONICITY, 1664–1714

Writing about the phenomenon of the Collected Edition, Ian Donaldson has recently noted that

> New editions are often judged in relation to what they have added to the existing sum of knowledge relating to an author's work; some hitherto unpublished juvenilia, perhaps, a previously unattributed fragment … a long-forgotten, never-acted play, recently discovered in a grandson's loft or agent's bottom drawer.[1]

Such canonical extensions might seem attractive to editors looking to make names for themselves, or publishers wanting to distinguish their wares from previous collections. To others, however, these kinds of innovations might seem threatening. Authors' reputations rest, in part, upon the kinds of works attributed to them, and the boundaries of authorial canons inevitably attract controversy. In the eighteenth century, the value assigned to a disputed or newly discovered work depended upon the interaction of a number of variables. Authorial reputation, the work's perceived aesthetic qualities and stylistic affinities, and the advocating editor or critic's own reputation and rhetorical skills combined to determine on which side of the canonical boundary a newly attributed work came to rest.

For eighteenth-century editors of Shakespeare, much of this controversy played itself out over a group of plays now known as the Shakespearean 'apocrypha'.[2] The

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[1] Ian Donaldson, 'Collecting Ben Jonson', in *The Culture of Collected Editions*, ed. Andrew Nash (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 19.

[2] I use the term 'apocrypha' here for convenience; it was not the word that eighteenth-century editors and critics themselves used to describe these plays. Although the word and its cognate had secular meanings in the eighteenth century, the plays were variously referred to instead as 'contested', 'imputed', 'spurious', 'disputed', or 'suppositious'. The term 'apocrypha' seems to

apocryphal plays were added to the Shakespeare canon in 1664, included in the first eighteenth-century edition of the plays in 1709, rejected by Charles Gildon in 1710 and removed from the *Works* altogether by Alexander Pope in 1725, only to return in the 1728 octavo reissue of Pope's *Shakespear*. They were finally dissociated from the Shakespearean canon in Lewis Theobald's edition of 1733, although, somewhat confusingly, Theobald vouched for their authenticity in his 1733 and 1740 prefaces. (Edward Capell would do the same in his 1768 edition of the plays.) In 1780, Edmond Malone included the apocrypha in his two-volume *Supplement* to the 1778 Johnson-Steevens edition and pronounced all except *Pericles* spurious. Accordingly, *Pericles* was the only one of the apocryphal plays that Malone selected for inclusion in his influential edition of 1790, and it is the only one now generally regarded as Shakespeare's. Since being ejected from the canon, the Shakespearean apocrypha have experienced over two centuries of near-total critical neglect.[3]

How did these plays become associated with Shakespeare? What forces militated against their acceptance as Shakespeare's during the eighteenth century? How did their existence influence scholarly attitudes towards the canonical plays? In this chapter, I shall briefly describe the circumstances under which the apocrypha were added to the Third Folio, before turning to their critical and editorial reception in the early eighteenth century. In the critical stances of the apocrypha's first editor, Nicholas Rowe (1709), and first critic, Charles Gildon (1710), I argue, we can see the beginnings of an attitude towards the Shakespearean canon that was to become pervasive over the course of the eighteenth century. Rowe seems to have found his own ways of segregating the apocryphal from the canonical plays. However, because his was not an annotated edition, his judgements about authenticity were almost all implied—at the textual-critical rather than the surface level. Gildon, on the other hand, whose 'Critical Remarks' on Shakespeare offered a commentary on Rowe's edition, was much more explicit in his rejection of the apocrypha. However, Gildon extended his stylistic arguments about

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have become the conventional one only after the publication of C. F. Tucker Brooke's edition of the plays, *The Shakespeare Apocrypha*, in 1908.

[3] See Richard Proudfoot, 'Shakespeare's Most Neglected Play', in *Textual Formations and Reformations*, ed. Laurie E. Maguire and Thomas L. Berger (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1998), 155–57.

authorship beyond the plays added in 1664 to others that had been included in the First Folio. In doing so, he helped to inaugurate a basic scepticism toward the canonical authority of the Folio tradition. This would, in turn, have profound effects for the critical reception of plays like *Titus Andronicus*, the *Henry VI* trilogy, and *Troilus and Cressida*. The result was a Shakespeare canon defined not by the authority of the First Folio, but by the aesthetic and connoisseurial senses of its eighteenth-century editors.

SHAKESPEARE AND THE 'SEVEN SPURIOUS PLAYS': 1664–1709

In strict terms, the 'Shakespearean apocrypha' refers to a group of seven plays, *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, *The London Prodigal*, *The History of Thomas Lord Cromwell*, *Sir John Oldcastle Lord Cobham*, *The Puritan Widow*, *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, and *The Tragedy of Locrine*, that were added by publisher Philip Chetwind to the second issue of the Third Folio edition of Shakespeare's *Works* in 1664. Of these plays, *Pericles*, *The London Prodigal*, *Oldcastle*, and the *Yorkshire Tragedy* had all been published in the early seventeenth century with title-page ascriptions to 'William Shakespeare'. The other three had been attributed more discreetly to 'W. S.'.[4] All seven were listed under Shakespeare's name—almost certainly on the basis of the title-page information—in the play catalogues issued by Edward Archer and Francis Kirkman in 1656 and 1661 respectively.[5] Significantly for the future shape of the canon, all seven plays had been previously printed. Although, as Humphrey Moseley's 1653 and 1660 entries in the Stationers' Register indicate, there were at least six manuscript plays with Shakespearean attributions extant in the early Restoration period, Chetwind made no attempt to annex any of these to the 1664 edition.[6] The Shakespeare apocrypha was, from the very beginning, limited to plays which had already received the authority of print.

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[4] See Richard Proudfoot, 'Is There, and Should There Be, a Shakespeare Apocrypha?' in *In the Footsteps of Shakespeare*, ed. Christa Jansohn (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2005), 50–51.
[5] A. W. Pollard, *Shakespeare's Folios and Quartos: A Study in the Bibliography of Shakespeare's Plays 1594–1685* (London: Methuen, 1909), 160–62.
[6] See W. W. Greg, 'The Bakings of Betsy', *Library* 3rd ser., 2 (1911): 240–44.

It seems highly likely that Archer's and Kirkman's play-lists had some bearing on Chetwind's decision to include the seven additional plays.[7] However, Chetwind exercized a further level of discrimination here, choosing only those plays ascribed to Shakespeare by Archer and Kirkman that had been published as his before 1616.[8] Chetwind arranged for the additions to be advertized prominently in the new issue. The second state of the title page carries an addendum, reading 'And unto this Impression is added seven Playes, never before Printed in Folio', under which the plays themselves are listed in a generously sized typeface.[9] Yet the bibliographical state of the 1664 Third Folio attests to the instability of these additions, even at their point of insertion. The new plays were not added to the 'Catalogue' of works contained in the edition, an oversight repeated by the printers of the Fourth Folio. More striking, however, is the pattern in the signatures and pagination for the apocryphal plays in the 1664 Folio.

As A. W. Pollard was the first to remark upon, there are three sequences of signatures and page numberings in the Third Folio—one for the plays included in the first issue; one for *Pericles*; and another for the remaining apocryphal plays. From this numbering Pollard concluded that there were two separate parts to Chetwind's intention to include additional plays. In the first, Chetwind envisaged adding only *Pericles*. Then, some time later, when *Pericles* had already been set and perhaps impressed, he decided to add the others, which were composed and printed separately.[10] As Don-John Dugas has pointed out, however, it would have been the printer's, not the publisher's, task to assign signatures and pagination. Therefore, Pollard's bibliographical evidence may reflect printing-house practices that are not necessarily related to the question of Chetwind's publishing intentions.[11] The pattern remains, however, and, combined with the distinctive handling of *Pericles*'s title-page in F3, is, it seems to me, suggestive of

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[7] See Don-John Dugas, 'Philip Chetwind and the Shakespeare Third Folio', *Harvard Library Bulletin* n.s. 14, no. 1 (2003): 43, 45.

[8] The Third Folio proprietors would presumably not have known that *Sir John Oldcastle*'s quarto title-page date of 1600 was spurious. See Proudfoot, 'Shakespeare Apocrypha', 54.

[9] William Shakespeare, *Mr. William Shakespear's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies* (1664; reprint, London: Methuen, 1905), [A1].

[10] Pollard, *Shakespeare's Folios and Quartos*, 159–61.

[11] Dugas, 'Philip Chetwind', 39.

some kind of differentiation being made between *Pericles* and the other apocryphal plays by those involved in F3's production.

Pollard's suggestion, then, if we accept it, implies that there was a hierarchy of authenticity in the apocrypha from the moment they were added to the canon. *Pericles* was, for late seventeenth-century readers, in some way disjunct—the apocryphal play with the best claim to being authentically Shakespearean. Three or four years before the publication of the Third Folio, *Pericles* had been revived on the London stage, and this theatrical currency may have spurred Chetwind's interest in it.[12] The way in which *Pericles* was displayed typographically in F3, relative to the other additional plays, seems to confirm its primacy among the apocrypha. Not only is *Pericles* printed first, but it receives the confident endorsement 'Written by W. Shakespeare, and published in his life time' in large type on its title-page.[13] Other than *The London Prodigal*, the next play in the sequence, none of the other apocryphal plays is explicitly attributed to Shakespeare anywhere in the volume. (In the Fourth Folio, this typographical distinction disappears. All plays in the volume receive the same uniform title-page format.)

In 1663–4, the publication rights to three of the 'apocrypha'—*Pericles, Sir John Oldcastle*, and *A Yorkshire Tragedy*—along with significant interests in other F3 plays, were owned by Ellen Cotes, widow of Richard Cotes, a member of the syndicate that produced the Second Folio.[14] (With the exception of *Thomas, Lord Cromwell*, which belonged to John Wright, Jr., the rights to the other apocryphal plays had been derelict since the early seventeenth century.[15]) Scholars have agreed that Ellen Cotes must have

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[12] See Don-John Dugas, *Marketing the Bard: Shakespeare in Performance and Print, 1660–1740* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006), 103–5. A brief mention of this performance exists in John Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, ed. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume (1708; reprint, London: Society for Theatre Research, 1987), 44.

[13] Shakespeare, *Works 1664*, second seq., 1.

[14] Cotes held a half share in the sixteen plays entered into the Stationers' Register in November 1623 by Edward Blount and William Jaggard, and full or half shares in *Titus Andronicus* and *Henry V*. See Giles E. Dawson, 'The Copyright of Shakespeare's Dramatic Works', in *Studies in Honor of A. H. R. Fairchild*, ed. Charles T. Prouty (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1946), 17–19.

[15] Dawson, 'Copyright of Shakespeare', 21.

played some role in the publication of the Third Folio, despite her name's omission from its title page.[16] The scope and precise nature of that role, however, remain unclear.[17]

Chetwind, meanwhile, who was not a member of the Stationers' Company, had gained his rights in Shakespeare by marrying Mary Allott, widow of another of the Second Folio's publishers, Robert Allott.[18] Company regulations barred Chetwind, a member of the clothworkers' guild, from entering into joint ventures with licensed stationers. If the title page is correct and he did undertake the Third Folio on his own account, he would have assumed a substantial amount of risk in doing so.[19] Both the 1623 and 1632 Folios, in contrast, had been brought out by large syndicates of booksellers. Even then, the publication of a volume as expensive and time-consuming as a Shakespeare Folio was a potential ruinous business, as the leading members of the 1623 syndicate evidently discovered.[20] The promises that Chetwind's volume seemed to make to its readers—to have 'added' to the canon plays 'never before printed in Folio'—can, then, be seen as an astute marketing device on Chetwind's behalf.[21] The inclusion of the new plays suggested both novelty and comprehensiveness, indicating to potential purchasers that here was more of Shakespeare than they had ever been offered in the past.

Whatever Chetwind's second title page may have suggested to contemporary readers, some more recent observers have seen his actions in a much more dubious light. Giles E. Dawson, for instance, dismisses the additions as 'a somewhat fraudulent catch-penny feature', a 'publisher's gimmick' that gave readers apocryphal dross in place of

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[16] Harry Farr notes that the Third Folio's printing ornaments suggest that Ellen Cotes was not among its printers. See Harry Farr, 'Philip Chetwind and the Allott Copyrights', *Library* 4th ser., 15 (1934): 160.

[17] For a highly speculative account, see Richard Finkelstein, 'The Politics of Gender, Puritanism, and Shakespeare's Third Folio', *Philological Quarterly* 79, no. 3 (2000): 315–41.

[18] For details of Chetwind's life, and the legal dispute over publishing rights that his marriage sparked, see Farr, 'Philip Chetwind', 129–36.

[19] Dugas, 'Philip Chetwind', 31.

[20] See Gary Taylor, 'Making Meaning Marketing Shakespeare 1623', in *From Performance to Print in Shakespeare's England*, ed. Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 61–63.

[21] Dugas, 'Philip Chetwind', 43.

the Shakespearean gold they had been promised.[22] However, as we have seen, Chetwind may have thought that the attributions in Archer's and Kirkman's catalogues offered sufficient justification for printing the apocrypha. Dawson's accusation of fraud is a thoroughly anachronistic one, based upon the subsequent critical fate of the apocryphal plays, and there is little reason to believe that Chetwind was knowingly defrauding readers. (To be fair to Dawson, however, the different title-page presentations of *Pericles* on one hand and the rest of the plays on the other do suggest a certain diffidence on Chetwind's part.) Whatever Chetwind's publishing intentions were, the episode amply illustrates the extent to which, as Dugas puts it, 'one publisher's desire to make his edition more saleable' can have a lasting and significant effect on canon formation.[23]

By the time the Fourth Folio appeared, in 1685, Ellen Cotes had died, and her interests in Shakespeare had passed to Henry Herringman and Robert Scott. Who, if anyone, owned the Allott-Chetwind copyrights in 1685 is, however, unclear; no record of any transfers of Chetwind's Shakespeare titles has survived.[24] (Chetwind, not being a member of the Stationers' Company, would have been unable to make entries in the Stationers' Register.) Dawson mentions another possibility, besides an unrecorded sale. Chetwind's Shakespearean copyrights may have been so entangled in legal actions by the end of the seventeenth century that no-one thought it worthwhile to assert a title to them.[25]

Unlike the Second Folio, and the first issue of the Third, the Fourth Folio was not a page-for-page reprint of its immediate predecessor.[26] While those responsible for its text reorganized the contents somewhat, they retained the seven plays that Chetwind had added in 1664. When Jacob Tonson I bought Herringman's rights-in-copy to Shakespeare in May 1707, he thus not only acquired the rights to publish *Pericles, Oldcastle*, and the *Yorkshire Tragedy*, but there was by now also a forty-three-year

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[22] Giles E. Dawson, *Four Centuries of Shakespeare Publication* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Libraries, 1964), 4.

[23] Dugas, 'Philip Chetwind', 30.

[24] Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print: A History and Chronology of Shakespeare Publishing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 54–55.

[25] See Dawson, 'Copyright of Shakespeare', 22.

[26] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, 55.

publishing tradition that ascribed these (and the other apocryphal plays) to Shakespeare. Accordingly, when the first of the Tonson Shakespeare editions appeared, in 1709, they too included the seven additional plays.[27]

NICHOLAS ROWE AND THE APOCRYPHA

At the end of May 1709, Tonson placed in advertisement in the *London Gazette* announcing that:

> There is this day Publish'd … the Works of Mr. William Shakespear, in six Vols. 8vo. Adorn'd with Cuts, Revis'd and carefully Corrected: With an Account of the Life and Writings of the Author, by N.Rowe, Esq; Price 30s.[28]

This catalogue of features indicates how radically the 1709 *Shakespear* diverged from the pre-existing Shakespearean publishing tradition. The format was now multi-volume octavo, and a prefatory *vita* of the author was for the first time included. This brought Shakespeare in line with the octavo sets of English authors that Tonson had been issuing, starting with the *Works* of Abraham Cowley in 1707.[29] As Robert B. Hamm, Jr., has written, these editions shared a 'standardized set of elements'—a formulaic title beginning with *The Works of Mr.* ——; a short account of the author's life; and a common typographical format. All were composed using the same Dutch typefaces, impressed on high-quality paper, and were adorned with the same set of type ornaments.[30]

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[27] As R. B. McKerrow demonstrated in 1934, there were two almost identical editions of the 1709 *Shakespear* issued that year. (See R. B. McKerrow, '"Rowe's Shakespeare, 1709"', *Times Literary Supplement*, March 8 1934, 168.) Since their contents do not differ in any substantial way, I shall, for convenience, treat them here as one singular edition.

[28] *London Gazette*, May 30 1709.

[29] Cf. Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, eds., *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 10 vols. (London, 1778), 1:42: 'Rowe seems to have thought very little on correction or explanation, but that [Shakspeare's] works might appear like those of his fraternity, with the appendages of a life and recommendatory preface'.

[30] Robert B. Hamm, Jr., 'Rowe's *Shakespear* (1709) and the Tonson House Style', *College Literature* 31, no. 3 (2004): 187.

In 1709, for the first time, the editor of a collected edition of Shakespeare was named, and his alterations to the text advertized as features—'Revis'd and carefully Corrected'. The editor whom Tonson had selected, Nicholas Rowe, was himself a well-known dramatist who would go on to be poet-laureate under George I. (The first play that Rowe would write after editing the 1709 edition, 1714's *The Tragedy of Jane Shore*, was self-consciously composed 'in imitation of Shakespear'.) As Tonson's advertisement implies, Rowe did indeed bring about a number of fundamental and long-lasting changes in the text of Shakespeare. The 1709 edition modernized the spelling and punctuation found in the Fourth Folio to make it accord with early eighteenth-century usage.[31] (In doing so, however, Rowe was merely following practices established by the anonymous 'editors' of the Second, Third, and Fourth Folios.[32]) Moreover, Rowe drew up lists of characters, emended and amplified stage directions, added scene locations for some of the plays, and imposed a number of act and scene divisions.[33] He also looked to the quarto tradition for additional material not found in the Folios—most notably in *Hamlet*. Here, he selected for inclusion 124 lines not present in F4 from the 1676 'players' quarto', and used it as a source of variant readings throughout the play.[34] The final part of the *London Gazette* advertisement indicates another of the innovations brought about by the 1709 *Shakespear*. At thirty shillings, the octavo set was fifty-percent more expensive than the going rate for a second-hand folio in the late seventeenth century.[35] Rowe's edition was not, as it has often been described, a popular edition, 'designed to appeal to large numbers of readers'.[36] As its price indicates, it was a high-end product, aimed at the

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[31] See Peter Holland, 'Modernizing Shakespeare: Nicholas Rowe and *The Tempest*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (2000): 27–32.

[32] Matthew W. Black and Matthias A. Shaaber, *Shakespeare's Seventeenth-Century Editors, 1632–1685* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1937), 28–30.

[33] R. B. McKerrow, 'The Treatment of Shakespeare's Text by his Earlier Editors, 1709-1768', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 19 (1933): 97–99.

[34] Barbara Mowat, 'The Form of *Hamlet's* Fortunes', *Renaissance Drama* n.s. 19 (1988): 100.

[35] Don-John Dugas and Robert D. Hume, 'The Dissemination of Shakespeare's Plays *Circa* 1714', *Studies in Bibliography* 56 (2003–4): 270.

[36] *Pacé* Dawson, *Four Centuries*, 5.

small, comparatively genteel market that could consider spending one-and-a-half pounds on a single literary work.[37]

For all its innovations, however, Rowe's edition of Shakespeare was highly conservative in terms of *canonicity*. It presented the same plays, in the same order, as had appeared in the Fourth Folio. In using as his received text the edition closest to him in time, Rowe was simply following what was then common editorial practice.[38] However, the survival of a probable trial sheet for the 1709 edition suggests that his plans might initially have been somewhat different. This sheet, dated 1708 and preserved in the British Museum, consists of the title-page and first eight pages of the *Tempest*.[39] For this exercise, Rowe appears to have used the Second Folio as his base-text, a decision that, if followed through on the next year, would have had major implications for the apocrypha. Whether the difference in base text between the 1708 trial sheet and 1709 edition represents a genuine change of mind on Rowe's part is, however, unclear. Rowe might have used the Second Folio for the 1708 trial printing simply because it was convenient for him to do so. He owned a copy of it, whereas he apparently did not have either of the two later Folios.[40] The rights that Tonson had acquired in Shakespeare, after all, were to those plays published in the Fourth Folio. In the light of this, Tonson would have presumably expected Rowe to base his text on F4, and could easily have given him a copy of it to mark up in preparation for the new edition.[41]

Whatever Rowe's publishing intentions were with regard to the apocrypha in 1708, he ignored the plays almost entirely in his 1709 preface. Only one of them—*Pericles*—is mentioned. Brief though it is, Rowe's handling of the play here is intimately bound up with questions of authenticity, literary merit, and the shape of its

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[37] See Robert D. Hume, 'The Economics of Culture in London, 1660–1740', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (2006): 509.

[38] See E. J. Kenney, *The Classical Text: Aspects of Editing in the Age of the Printed Book* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), 18, 25–26; and Glenn W. Most, 'Classical Scholarship and Literary Criticism', in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, Volume 4: The Eighteenth Century*, ed. H.B. Nisbet and Claude Rawson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 747–48.

[39] For a description, see Holland, 'Modernizing Shakespeare', 25–27.

[40] R. J. Roberts, 'Rowe's Shakespeare: An Experiment of 1708', *Library* 5th ser., 28 (1973): 59.

[41] Holland, 'Modernizing Shakespeare', 27; Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, 147.

author's canon. *Pericles* enters the 1709 preface as part of Rowe's discussion of which play was likely to have been Shakespeare's first. Rowe's main intent here is to except Shakespeare from the rule that an author's 'least perfect Writings' are necessarily the earliest. Shakespeare, he says, was so much more indebted to 'Nature' than 'Art' in his writings that his earliest compositions might well have been 'the most vigorous' he would ever write.[42] For such an exceptional dramatist, Rowe suggests, the usual prescription that literary quality depends on writerly experience does not apply.

Rowe pauses at this point to note that Dryden had argued otherwise, explicitly singling out *Pericles* as Shakespeare's first play on account of its dramatic immaturity. Although he does not directly quote him, Rowe is presumably referring to Dryden's defence of young playwrights in his epilogue to Davenant's *Circe* (1677):

> *Shakespeare*'s own Muse her *Pericles* first bore,
> The Prince of *Tyre* was older than the *Moore*:
> 'Tis miracle to see a first good Play,
> All Hawthorns do not bloom on *Christmas-day*.[43]

Rowe appears to have accepted Dryden's assertion that *Pericles* was a weak play. However, he tried to avoid the implications of Dryden's argument by suggesting that the play was not Shakespeare's at all—at least, not in full. 'Mr. *Dryden*', he writes,

> seems to think that *Pericles* is one of [Shakespeare's] first Plays; but there is no judgment to be form'd on that, since there is good reason to believe that the greatest part of that Play was not written by him; tho' it is own'd, some part of it certainly was, particularly the last Act.[44]

Rowe declined to elaborate on this statement, leaving the grounds of his reasoning unclear. It could be that Rowe's 'good reason' amounts simply to his own aesthetic judgement, or that he believes that the play's provenance is evidence enough of its spuriousness, or near spuriousness. It seems to me, however, that Rowe may want his

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[42] Nicholas Rowe, ed., *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear*, 6 vols. (London, 1709), 1:vi.

[43] John Dryden, *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. Edward Niles Hooker and H. T. Swedenburg, Jr., vol. 1 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961), 158.

[44] Rowe, ed., *Works 1709*, 1:vii.

readers to assume that, as with the other details of Shakespeare's life that he provides, his statements are grounded in theatre anecdote or tradition. The use of the passive voice—'it is own'd'—certainly implies that Rowe is conveying someone else's information. Moreover, this appears to be 'new' anecdote—something that readers would not have been able to find in the play catalogues of Phillips, Winstanley, Langbaine, or Gildon. (All of these catalogues appear to rely upon the Third or Fourth Folios for information about the extent of the Shakespearean canon, and each accordingly ascribes the apocrypha to Shakespeare without question.) Whatever the source of Rowe's statement, the rhetorical strategy that it embodies, of attributing perceived imperfections in a play to an agency other than Shakespeare's, would become a very common one in Shakespearean textual criticism during the century to follow.

On a textual level, Rowe's treatment of the apocryphal plays is uneven. An examination of Rowe's text for the opening scene of *Pericles* confirms that he modernized the play's spelling, orthography, and punctuation, as he had done elsewhere in the edition. However, as we shall see, several of the innovations for which his edition is best known—the division of plays into acts and scenes, and the introduction of scene locations—are less fully carried out among the apocrypha than elsewhere. In *Pericles*, Rowe occasionally adds character names to stage directions, as at the beginning of Act I, scene 1, where the 1709 text alters F4's stage direction '*Enter* Antiochus *Daughter*' to '*Enter* Hesperides'.[45] He also continues the earlier Folios' project of progressive modernization, capitalizing proper nouns and altering spelling and punctuation throughout the text. The changes that Rowe introduces at Scene 1, 62–65 are representative of these kinds of interventions:

F4	You Gods that made me man, and sway in love,
	That have inflam'd desire within my Brest,
	To taste the fruit of yon celestial Tree,
	(Or die in the adventure) be my helps,
1709	You Gods that made me Man, and sway in love,
	That have inflam'd desire in my Breast,

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[45] William Shakespeare, *Mr. William Shakespear's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies* (London, 1685), third seq., 194; Rowe, ed., *Works 1709*, 6:2848.

> To taste the Fruit of yon celestial Tree,
> Or die in the adventure, be my helps,[46]

Elsewhere, where he finds deficiencies in the sense, Rowe introduces *ex ingenio* conjectural emendations. At Sc. 1, 67, for instance, where F4 reads 'bondless' (and Q1 and F3 'bondlesse'), Rowe emends the text to 'boundless'. Sometimes these changes fortuitously return the 1709 text to the quarto readings, as at Sc. 1, 72, where Rowe independently happens upon the original text when emending the apparent nonsense of F4's (and F3's) punctuation:

Q1	For death like Dragons here affright thee hard:
F3	For death like Dragons here affright thee hard?
F4	For Death like Dragons here affright thee hard?
1709	For Death like Dragons here affright thee hard:

At other times, Rowe is able to identify problems in the text, but unable to divine the original reading through conjecture alone. At Sc. 1, 101, for instance, Rowe realizes that a word has been omitted, but his guess at a solution only compounds the error:

Q1	As these before thee, thou thy selfe shalt bleed.
F3	As these before thou thy selfe shalt bleed.
F4	As these before thou thy self shalt bleed.
1709	As these before so thou thy self shalt bleed.

General accounts of the 1709 *Shakespear* often suggest that Rowe divided his attention evenly across the canon. In her biography of Jacob Tonson II, Kathleen Lynch summarizes the edition by stating that Rowe 'modernized spelling and corrected punctuation', 'provided a list of characters for each play, divided and numbered acts and scenes "on rational principles," and added stage directions'.[47] Andrew Murphy likewise treats Rowe's changes in this regard as universal, writing that Rowe 'introduced act and

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[46] Shakespeare, *Works 1685*, third seq., 195; Rowe, ed., *Works 1709*, 6:2849.
[47] Kathleen M. Lynch, *Jacob Tonson: Kit-Cat Publisher* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1971), 131.

scene divisions for all plays' in the edition.[48] Lynch and Murphy may have derived their information from R. B. McKerrow's highly influential British Academy lecture on eighteenth-century Shakespeare editing. McKerrow had surmized that Rowe began to realize the value of uniform act and scene division when he reached *Troilus and Cressida*, and thereafter 'introduced scene division into all the plays where this did not already exist'.[49] The division that McKerrow notes is certainly a significant feature of Rowe's edition. The twelve plays between *Troilus* in volume four and *Cymbeline* in volume six are uniformly divided, and Rowe has been much more assiduous about specifying scene locations here than he had been in earlier volumes.[50] However, what McKerrow does *not* say is that Rowe seems to have returned to his earlier pattern of editing once he reached the apocryphal plays. (This is likely because McKerrow had implicitly excluded the apocrypha from discussion.)

In fact, as the textual state of the apocrypha indicates, Rowe *did not* apply his editorial labours uniformly. Although he compiled and reordered lists of *dramatis personae* for the apocrypha, and, as we have seen, modernized their spelling and punctuation, in other respects Rowe appears to have intervened in these plays to a lesser extent than in the rest of the edition. For none of the seven 'additional' plays, for instance, did he actively divide the text into acts and scenes. Indeed, for six of the seven plays, Rowe simply reproduced the Fourth Folio's arrangement of the action. For four of these, *The London Prodigal*, *Thomas Lord Cromwell*, *Sir John Oldcastle*, and *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, this meant printing the text with no act or scene breaks at all. (As in the rest of the edition, however, the half-titles for each of these plays include the heading 'Act I. Scene I.') Indeed, the only significant change that the 1709 text makes in this regard is in *The Puritan*, where Rowe introduces a division for Act II, which had been inadvertently left out by the Fourth Folio's compilers.[51] Similarly, none of the three

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[48] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, 61. In addition to the four apocryphal plays listed below, Rowe's edition also prints *2 Henry VI* without act or scene divisions.

[49] McKerrow, 'Treatment', 99.

[50] All of these twelve plays contain scene locators. Of the twenty-four plays that sit before *Troilus and Cressida* in the edition, seventeen are printed without scene locations.

[51] Terry Scott Douglass, 'Nicholas Rowe's Edition of Shakespeare' (Ph.D. Diss., Florida State University, 1982), 133.

apocryphal plays with act and scene divisions in Rowe's edition receives scene locators. Only two of the seven additional plays—*The Puritan* and *The London Prodigal*—are given a setting. Significantly, both of these plays had had their settings identified in the Fourth Folio. Rowe's only deviation from the received text here is his amplification of F4's setting for *The London Prodigal* from 'Scene London' to 'Scene London, and the Parts adjacent'.[52]

One likely explanation for Rowe's neglect of settings and scene locations in the apocryphal plays is that none of them had a presence on the early eighteenth-century stage. As Barbara Mowat has shown, many of the descriptive elements that Rowe added to his edition—settings and scene locations, as well as lists of *dramatis personae*—were by no means new creations.[53] Instead, Rowe seems to have wanted to bring Shakespeare in line with contemporary norms for representing dramatic action on the page. While crafting these new, readerly additions, he drew both form and content from contemporary players' quartos of Shakespeare's plays.[54] The 1709 texts of *Measure for Measure* and *The Merchant of Venice*, for instance, appropriate almost word-for-word the scene locators printed in early eighteenth-century adaptations of those plays—Charles Gildon's *Measure for Measure* (1700) and George Granville's *Jew of Venice* (1701), respectively.[55] In contrast to these plays, the apocrypha were not part of the London repertory, nor had any of them been printed separately since 1660.[56] Indeed, only *Pericles* is known to have been staged at all after the Stuart Restoration, and that performance took place fourteen years before Rowe was born.[57]

The lack of acting traditions and players' quartos for these texts obviously precluded the kinds of borrowings that Rowe had made in *Measure for Measure* or the

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[52] For these points, see Douglass, 'Nicholas Rowe' 139, 141.

[53] Barbara Mowat, 'Nicholas Rowe and the Twentieth-Century Text', in *Shakespeare and Cultural Traditions: The Selected Proceedings of the International Shakespeare Association World Congress, Tokyo, 1991*, ed. Tetsuo Kishi, Roger Pringle, and Stanley Wells (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1994), 316–19.

[54] See Paul Menzer, 'Dislocating Shakespeare: Scene Locators and the Place of the Page', *Shakespeare Bulletin* 24, no. 2 (2006): 2–3.

[55] Peter Holland, 'Introduction', in *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear*, ed. Peter Holland (1709; reprint, London, Pickering and Chatto, 1999), 1:xv.

[56] See Dugas and Hume, 'Dissemination', 272, 275.

[57] Dugas and Hume, 'Dissemination', 269.

Merchant of Venice. Nevertheless, the fact that he made little effort to compensate for the apocryphal plays' textual shortcomings is itself significant. The two plays that precede the apocrypha in the sixth volume of Rowe's *Shakespear*—*Antony and Cleopatra* and *Cymbeline*—provide a point of contrast. In both plays, Rowe systematically reworked the act and scene divisions found in the Fourth Folio, and specified a location for every scene. (In both cases, Restoration versions of the plays existed, but Rowe does not seem to have made use of them for scene locators.[58]) *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Cymbeline* sat, of course, among Shakespeare's tragedies, a grouping that Rowe evidently thought particularly worthy of his attention. Nevertheless, the difference in textual handling between the two sets of plays is palpable. This uneven distribution of editorial labour does seem to indicate a real divide in Rowe's attitude to the plays.

The apocrypha, then, occupy a liminal position in the 1709 *Shakespear*, just as they had in the 1664 and 1685 Folios. Placed at the tail of the edition, they receive a single mention in Rowe's preface, and then only to have their 'Shakespearean-ness' questioned. (Although even here Rowe is careful not to make an outright claim about the authorship of *Pericles*. 'Some part of it is' Shakespearean, he emphasizes, 'particularly the last Act'.) On a textual level, Rowe's editorial neglect of these plays appears to confirm the value judgement that their place in the edition implied. It seems difficult to escape the conclusion that Rowe's treatment of the apocrypha reflects a belief about authenticity—or, more particularly, *inauthenticity*. However, it was not Rowe's place to make canonical judgements. As the discrepancy between the 1708 trial sheet and the 1709 text implies, Rowe had been engaged to edit Tonson's property, and this corresponded to the group of plays published in the Fourth Folio. Rowe appears to have responded to this task by devoting the amount of attention to the apocrypha that he thought they deserved.

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[58] These plays were Dryden's *All for Love* (1678) and Thomas D'Urfey's *The Injured Princess* (1682). In no cases do the scene locators in either pair of texts exactly correspond. However, there *are* some verbal resemblances between the lists of *dramatis personae* in *All for Love* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, and it is possible that Rowe consulted a copy of the earlier play while drawing up his list of characters for *Antony and Cleopatra*.

'VOLUME THE SEVENTH': GILDON, CURLL, AND CANONICITY

In 1710, a book advertizing itself as the seventh volume of *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear* appeared, its title page proclaiming that it contained:

> VENUS AND ADONIS. **l** TARQUIN & LUCRECE **l** AND **l** HIS MISCELLANY POEMS. **l** With Critical Remarks **l** on his PLAYS, *&c.* to **l** which is Prefix'd an **l** ESSAY on the Art, Rise **l** and Progress of the **l** STAGE in *Greece, Rome* **l** and *England.*

The editor of this volume was the critic and sometime playwright Charles Gildon. (In most surviving exemplars, the editor is identified solely by the initials 'S. N.', which appear at the end of the dedication. However, in at least one extant copy of the book, the dedication is signed 'Charles Gildon', and the edition was attributed to him by other eighteenth-century critics.[59]) In his 'Critical Remarks' on Shakespeare's plays, Gildon displayed none of Rowe's discretion in pronouncing the apocrypha to be spurious. Indeed, as Paul D. Cannan has recently remarked, Gildon's essays differed from Rowe's Preface by explicitly foregrounding philological issues that Rowe had avoided: 'the chronology, attribution, and authenticity of Shakespeare's works'.[60]

The reason for Gildon's emphasis on canonicity may have lain partly in the circumstances of the new volume's production. While masquerading typographically as a continuation of Tonson's edition, the seventh volume was in fact published by Edmund Curll and Egbert Sanger (a fact openly stated on the title page), and the poems it

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[59] Raymond MacDonald Alden, 'The 1710 and 1714 Texts of Shakespeare's Poems', *Modern Language Notes* 31, no. 5 (1916): 268–69. Anonymity was clearly important to Gildon, and this was by no means the only time that apparently last-minute decisions on whether to attach his name to books created problems for his printers. In a number of copies of the 1701 *New Miscellany of Original Poems*, for instance, which Gildon edited, the last leaf of the epistle dedicatory was cancelled, apparently to remove Gildon's signature from the volume. See Iolo A. Williams, 'Some Poetical Miscellanies of the Early Eighteenth Century', *Library* 4th ser., 10 (1929): 235.

[60] Paul D. Cannan, 'Early Shakespeare Criticism, Charles Gildon, and the Making of Shakespeare the Playwright-Poet', *Modern Philology* 102, no. 1 (2004): 44.

contained were lifted entirely from earlier publications. Curll and Sanger derived their copy of *Venus and Adonis* from Bernard Lintot's 1709 edition of Shakespeare's poetry, *A Collection of Poems*. The copy-text of *Lucrece*, meanwhile, was provided by the fourth volume of *Poems of Affairs of State*, which appeared in 1707, and the text of the Sonnets came from John Benson's 1640 *Poems Written by Will. Shakespeare Gent*.[61] This kind of publication was wholly consistent with Curll's mode of operation in the early eighteenth century. He was not a member of the Stationers Company, and had entered the publishing profession during the 'heyday of English literary piracy', the time-period between the lapse of the Licensing Act in 1695 and the passage of the first copyright legislation in 1709/10.[62]

Curll was somewhat disinclined to pay for copy, often preferring to publish older works whose titles had reverted to public domain.[63] On other occasions, he resorted to outright piracy. In 1707, he had joined with two other publishers to produce a derivative volume of Matthew Prior's poems. The rights in copy to Prior's work belonged to Tonson, and, like *Lucrece*, a number of pieces in the collection were taken from the *Poems on Affairs of State* series.[64] In the case of Shakespeare's poems, Curll may well have assumed that the works were in public domain. *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* had last been published separately in 1675 and 1655, respectively, and Benson's *Poems* had not been reprinted after 1640.[65] Because Curll and Sanger lacked any legitimate title to Shakespeare's works, Gildon was free in a way that Rowe had, perhaps, not been to indulge in the higher criticism. This freedom from proprietary interest may also have encouraged Gildon to make the sometimes severe judgements on Shakespeare's plays that he includes in the 'Critical Remarks'.

Gildon's essays on Shakespeare were by far the longest and most detailed pieces of Shakespearean criticism that had appeared up until that time. Yet they have

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[61] Dawson, *Four Centuries*, 9.

[62] Don-John Dugas, 'The London Book Trade in 1709 (Part Two)', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 95, no. 2 (2001): 159.

[63] Paul Baines and Pat Rogers, *Edmund Curll, Bookseller* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 35.

[64] Baines and Rogers, *Edmund Curll*, 27–28.

[65] See Harry Farr, 'Notes on Shakespeare's Printers and Publishers, with Special Reference to the Poems and *Hamlet*', *Library* 4th ser., 3 (1923): 247–52.

been largely overlooked in more recent accounts of Shakespeare's eighteenth-century reception. As Cannan observes, this critical oversight and the circumstances of the essays' publication are probably not unrelated. The moral taint of Curll and Sanger's apparent piracy seems to have extended to Gildon's essays, implying that they too were not legitimate parts of the Shakespearean critical tradition.[66] This elision already seems to have been underway in the eighteenth century. In the preface to his 1723–5 *Shakespear*, Pope recognized no precedent for his removal of the apocrypha from the Shakespearean canon. Twenty-two years later, William Warburton would commend Pope's 'judgment' in 'separating the genuine from the spurious plays'.[67] Johnson, too, in mildly censuring Warburton for offering this compliment, makes no reference to Gildon. The apocrypha's spuriosity, Johnson implies, should have been evident to anyone familiar with the Folios' publishing history:

> I know not why [Pope] is commended by Dr. Warburton for distinguishing the genuine from the spurious plays. In this choice he exerted no judgment of his own; the plays which he received, were given by Hemings and Condel, the first editors, and those which he rejected … had been omitted by [Shakespeare's] friends, and were never added to his works before the edition of 1664.[68]

Almost certainly, Gildon's own eighteenth-century reputation, shaped as it was by Scriblerian propaganda, contributed to the critical obscurity of his work on Shakespeare.

Gildon's 'Remarks on the Plays of Shakespear' take the form of an extended commentary on Rowe's edition. He works his way systematically through the volumes, gives a critical account of each play's action and characters, and balances the play's 'faults' against its 'beauties'.[69] Where he feels it appropriate, he also extracts notable passages and places them under commonplace headings. Throughout his remarks on Shakespeare, Gildon is highly attentive to questions of authenticity. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, for instance, after commenting at length on 'the Defect of the Plot'

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[66] Paul D. Cannan, *The Emergence of Dramatic Criticism in England: From Jonson to Pope* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 128.

[67] Reprinted in Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 1:152.

[68] Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 1:43.

[69] On Gildon's use of this method, see Cannan, *Emergence of Dramatic Criticism*, 129.

and the fact that the 'Manners' of the characters 'are no where agreeable, or convenient',

he proceeds to the question of the play's authorship.[70] If the plot is defective, the

characters and language indecorous, and the setting full of geographical errors, might the

play be not Shakespeare's at all? In this case, Gildon asserts, the clumsiness of the play's

action is counterbalanced by the Shakespearean nature of its style: 'how defective soever

this Interlude may be in the Plot, Conduct, Manners and Sentiments … it is not destitute

of Lines, that discover the Author to be *Shakespear*'.[71]

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and elsewhere, Gildon treats the questions of

authorship and chronology together. The errors of the *Two Gentlemen*, he writes, are a

result of its early place in Shakespeare's dramatic career. Even though the Folios and

Rowe's edition place it after *The Tempest*, Gildon writes,

> 'tis evident from the Writing, and the Faults and even Absurdities, that it was
> written long before it, for I can by no means think that *Shakespear* wrote worse
> and worse; for if his Fire may be suppos'd to abate in his Age, yet certainly his
> Judgment increas'd, but most of the Faults of this Play are Faults of Judgment
> more than Fancy.[72]

While discussing *Love's Labours Lost*, Gildon again returns to the twin questions of

authenticity and date of composition. If, in his discussion of the *Two Gentlemen*, Gildon

had implicitly critiqued Rowe's belief that the order of Shakespeare's plays was

unknowable, here he explicitly attacks it. Rowe, as we have seen, knowingly inverted

Dryden's biographical method for dating a play, archly suggesting that the 'natural' poet

Shakespeare may have written his best works while young. Gildon's response is a three-

and-a-half-page discourse on the usual shape of playwrights' careers, in which he

counters Rowe with the examples of Otway, Wycherley, and Dryden. At the end of this

passage, Gildon summarizes his argument:

> *Loves Labour's Lost* being perhaps the most defective [of Shakespeare's plays], I
> can see no Reason why we shou'd not conclude, that it is one of his first. For

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[70] Charles Gildon, ed., *The Works of Mr. William Shakespeare*, vol. 7 (London, 1710), 275.
[71] Gildon, ed., *Works 1710*, 7:274, 276.
[72] Gildon, ed., *Works 1710*, 7:274.

neither the Manners, Sentiments, Diction, Versification, *&c*. (except in some few places) discover the *Genius* that shines in his other Plays.[73]

At this point, just as he had in his account of the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Gildon feels obliged to defend the play's authenticity against the evidence presented by its 'imperfections'. In doing so, he turns to the language of virtuoso art appreciation.[74] Shakespeare, in Gildon's rendering of him, becomes like a master painter whose personal style informs each brush-stroke: 'But tho' this Play be so bad yet there is here and there a Stroak, that persuades us, that *Shakespear* wrote it'.[75] The internal evidence presented in the 'some few places' where Gildon recognizes Shakespeare's style is sufficient for him to attribute the whole dramatic canvas to Shakespeare.

In all of his discussions of Shakespeare's plays, Gildon brings this stylistic mode of criticism to bear most fully on the apocrypha and *Titus Andronicus*. Although he had unquestioningly ascribed these plays to Shakespeare when revising Langbaine's 1691 *Account of the English Dramatic Poets* as *The Lives and Characters of the English Dramatick Poets* (1699), in the 1710 volume he implied that their inauthenticity would be obvious to any informed observer.[76] Indeed, Gildon uses their presence in Rowe's *Shakespear* as a way of undermining the edition, and, in particular, the credibility of its publisher.[77] While readers might assume that the poems' exclusion from the 1709 edition indicated that they were spurious, Gildon observes, Tonson's inclusion of the apocrypha indicates that he had no interest in authenticity. Instead, Gildon implies, the Shakespearean canon as it exists in the 1709 *Shakespear* simply reflects Tonson's narrow commercial interest. Like the Third and Fourth Folio proprietors, Gildon suggests,

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[73] Gildon, ed., *Works 1710*, 7:310–11.

[74] On authorship in early eighteenth-century English art criticism, see Brian Cowan, 'An Open Elite: The Peculiarities of Connoisseurship in Early Modern England', *Modern Intellectual History* 1, no. 2 (2004): 163–64.

[75] Gildon, ed., *Works 1710*, 7:311.

[76] For his earlier attributions, see Charles Gildon, *The Lives and Characters of the English Dramatick Poets* (London, 1699), 127–29.

[77] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, 162, speculates that this passage is in fact Curll's. However, there is no break in the authorial *persona* here. The 'I' of the opening paragraph segues seamlessly into the 'I' that claims authorship of the essays on Shakespeare.

Tonson included the apocrypha simply to increase the bulk of the edition and justify a higher price for it:

> The Reader must not imagine that the *Bookseller* … rejected [the poems] as spurious, or doubtful, or as unwilling to shelter under his Name, what was not genuine; for by re-printing those Plays, in [the 1709] Edition, which carry no Mark of this celebrated Author, and which were only added to former Impressions, according to the laudable Custom of the Trade, to swell the Volume and the Price … 'tis plain that no such nice Scruple gave him any disturbance.[78]

In contrast to Tonson, Gildon represents himself as a true ally of the reader. He promises to bring his critical expertise to bear on questions of authenticity, and he claims privileged access to information about Shakespeare's plays through his social intimacy with stage personnel. Thomas Betterton, he writes, has 'assur'd' him 'that the first Folio Edition by the Players, contain'd all those, which were truely' Shakespeare's.[79]

As Paul Cannan has pointed out, this is the most unequivocal endorsement of the First Folio's canonical authority in eighteenth-century Shakespeare criticism before Malone.[80] Like Malone himself, however, Gildon stopped short of accepting Heminge and Condell's word in the case of *Titus Andronicus*. This 'bloody Butchering Play' is, he assures his readers, 'none of *Shakespear*'s'.[81] The lack of 'Beauties in the Diction', writes Gildon, combined with the play's violation of the rules of 'Nature and Art', leave the whole 'monstrously beyond the very Name of Scandalous'.[82] Significantly, Gildon also withholds from *Titus Andronicus* his usual practice of excerpting a play's notable passages. Even while critiquing a play severely, Gildon is usually at pains to appear even-handed. After his general demolition of *Loves Labour's Lost*, for instance, he still takes the time to point out that certain episodes are 'very prettily manag'd' or 'well contriv'd'.[83] In his remarks on *Titus Andronicus*, however, he makes no such concessions. For Gildon, the play's aesthetic, moral, and linguistic shortcomings both

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[78] Gildon, ed., *Works 1710*, 7:i–ii.
[79] Gildon, ed., *Works 1710*, 7:ii.
[80] Cannan, 'Early Shakespeare Criticism', 49.
[81] Gildon, ed., *Works 1710*, 7:367.
[82] Gildon, ed., *Works 1710*, 7:368.
[83] Gildon, ed., *Works 1710*, 7:312.

demonstrate its inauthenticity, and combine to render the piece the very antithesis of an exemplary work.

Gildon's dismissal of the apocryphal plays is similarly forthright and sweeping. The six plays that appear after *Pericles* in the 1709 edition are, he writes,

> as I am very well assur'd … none of *Shakespear*'s, nor have any thing in them to give the least Ground to think them his; not so much as a Line; the *Stile*, the manner of the *Diction*, the *Humours*, the *Dialogue*, as distinct as any thing could possibly be. In the worst of those which are genuine, there are always some Lines, various Expressions, and the turn of Thought which discover it to have been the Product of *Shakespear* : But in these Six I can find none of these Signs.[84]

Gildon thus represents his opinion about the plays' authorship as a sturdy mixture of external and internal authority. Starting in the passive voice, Gildon relates that someone, presumably Betterton, has 'very well assur'd' him that Shakespeare did not originally write the plays. Building upon this evidentiary foundation, Gildon adds the weight of his own critical judgement. None of the internal 'Signs' of Shakespeare's authorship presents itself to Gildon's critical senses. As we have seen Dryden and some of his Restoration contemporaries doing, Gildon here applies to English drama the rhetoric of classical and biblical higher criticism. There is, he posits, a uniquely Shakespearean 'Stile' or 'manner' that manifests itself in all aspects of its author's work. Since no such features can be discerned in the apocrypha, Gildon implies, they should be ejected from the canon. The result for the apocrypha is a kind of critical elision. Gildon declines to make any observations on these plays, the same mark of scholarly contempt that he had earlier extended to *Titus Andronicus*. As George Steevens would later infamously do with the *Sonnets*, Gildon simply stops commentating, decorously refusing to sully the instruments of criticism by handling works he thought were 'unclean'.[85]

What are we to make of these early eighteenth-century engagements with the issue of Shakespearean canonicity? Rowe's attitude to the apocrypha is hard to discern without any explicit statements, and, as we have seen, he committed himself only on the

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[84] Gildon, ed., *Works 1710*, 7:423–24.
[85] For Steevens and the Sonnets, see Margreta de Grazia, 'The Scandal of Shakespeare's Sonnets', *Shakespeare Survey* 46 (1994): 37.

authorship of *Pericles*. Either the authenticity issue did not much interest him, or, mindful of the interests of the plays' copyholders, he deliberately avoided it. Nevertheless, if we can take the relative expenditure of editorial effort as a measurement, Rowe seems to have valued the apocrypha less than any of the other plays, including the comedies. Gildon's criticism, in contrast, was highly attentive to the authenticity of Shakespeare's plays and poems. This interest in canonicity was, as I have suggested, probably encouraged by the publishing circumstances of the 1710 volume. Gildon obviously felt compelled to defend the poems' authenticity against the imputation that they were spurious. (The opening paragraph of Gildon's 'Essay on the … Progress of the Stage' implies that Tonson had been somehow 'lessen[ing] the Towns Expectation of these Poems, because he had no Hand in their Publication'.[86]) In addition, the fact that his proprietors had no interests in Shakespeare's works enabled him to extend this interest in authenticity to some of Shakespeare's Folio works.

In Gildon's essays, Shakespeare's plays move from the realm of theatrical spectatorship to the domain of the critic. There, under the eye of the virtuoso, they become primarily *linguistic* objects, on which the 'style, 'manner', and 'diction' of their author is inscribed. Paul Cannan has suggested that Gildon's stylistically based argument against Shakespeare's authorship of the apocryphal plays was 'innovative and noteworthy'.[87] I would counter that Gildon's rhetoric is notable less for its originality than for its transference to vernacular literature of philological methods previously reserved for classical authors and the Bible. While not, perhaps, innovative, Gildon's work on Shakespeare's 'Stile' does prefigure what was to become an abiding preoccupation in Shakespearean textual criticism—the attribution (or deattribution) of his works based on internal evidence. Whether they recognized Gildon's priority or not, Alexander Pope, John Upton, Richard Farmer, George Steevens, and Edmond Malone would all go on to anatomize Shakespeare's works using the criterion of style.

Yet for all of Gildon's efforts, his rejection of the apocrypha had no immediate effect on the shape of the early Shakespearean canon. Rowe's edition was reprinted in duodecimo in 1714, and even though Gildon's volume was reprinted with it—apparently

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[86] Gildon, ed., *Works 1710*, 7:ii.
[87] Cannan, 'Early Shakespeare Criticism', 49.

with Tonson's approval—the apocrypha remained in place.[88] Only with the edition of Gildon's sometime antagonist Alexander Pope, in 1725, would Shakespeare's dramatic canon return to its pre-1664 boundaries. Yet, as we shall see, Pope's efforts to remove 'spurious' material from the Shakespearean corpus would go far beyond excising the apocrypha. Pope's text, and more importantly, perhaps, his preface, would have a profound and lasting influence upon editors' attitudes to Shakespeare's entire dramatic canon.

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[88] For Curll's involvement with the 1714 edition, see Baines and Rogers, *Edmund Curll*, 64.

3.

POPE IN THE MARGINS: THE 1723–25 *SHAKESPEAR*, CLASSICAL EDITING, AND HUMANISTIC READING PRACTICES

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In his 1756 *Proposals* for a new edition of Shakespeare, Samuel Johnson writes that 'The observation of faults and beauties is one of the duties of an annotator'. However, he goes on to add,

> I have never observed that mankind was much delighted or improved by …
> asterisks, commas, or double commas; of which the only effect is, that they
> preclude the pleasure of judging for ourselves.[1]

Johnson's target here was Alexander Pope's 1725 *Works of Shakespear*, in which Pope had employed an elaborate set of typographical symbols to mark what he saw as the 'Beauties' and 'Faults' in Shakespeare's plays. Marginal inverted commas distinguished Shakespeare's best lines from the surrounding text, while stars appeared at the heads of the most noteworthy scenes. As Pope explained in his Preface, 'the most shining passages are distinguish'd by comma's in the margin; and where the beauty lay not in particulars but in the whole, a star is prefix'd to the scene'.[2] On the other hand, lines that Pope judged 'excessively bad' were removed from the main text block altogether. These so-called 'degraded' passages, which amounted to about 1560 lines in total, were, Pope implied, non-Shakespearean interpolations.[3] These appeared, in small type, at the bottom of the page, their place of insertion in the text indicated by an asterisk.[4] (Other lines were

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[1] Arthur Sherbo, ed., *Johnson on Shakespeare*, 2 vols., The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 7:57.

[2] Alexander Pope, ed., *The Works of Shakespear*, 6 vols. (London, 1723–25), 1:xxiii.

[3] See R. B. McKerrow, 'The Treatment of Shakespeare's Text by his Earlier Editors, 1709–1768', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 19 (1933): 108.

[4] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xxii.

entirely omitted from the edition, although Pope makes no reference to this in the Preface.) 'Low' scenes—often comic dialogues between minor characters—likewise received Pope's 'mark of reprobation': three obelisks or daggers, set at the head of the scene.[5] Pope explains what this meant at its first appearance in the text: Act 1, scene 1, of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*,

> This whole Scene, like many others in the Plays, (some of which I believe were written by *Shakespear*, and others interpolated by the Players) is composed of the lowest and most trifling conceits, to be accounted for only from the gross taste of the age he liv'd in; *Populo ut placerent*. I wish I had authority to leave them out, but I have done all I could, set a mark of reprobation upon them; throughout this edition.   †††.[6]

Critical opinion of Pope's *Shakespear* since the eighteenth century has almost universally followed Johnson's judgement. Writing in 1906, Thomas Lounsbury called Pope's editorial interventions 'the most unwarrantable liberty … ever … taken with the text of a great author'.[7] Richard Foster Jones likewise assessed Pope's *Shakespear* against the norms of twentieth-century editorial method. The narrative of Pope editing Shakespeare that Jones presents is accordingly one of failure—failure to collate against the oldest editions, refusal to follow proper editorial practice, and, finally, a basic inability to edit a text to scholarly standards.[8] David Nichol Smith encapsulates this 'whig' approach to editorial history when he calls Pope 'a man of genius pursuing a wrong method', in contrast to his editorial successor Lewis Theobald, who was 'a man of

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[5] See John Butt, *Pope's Taste in Shakespeare* (London: Shakespeare Association, 1936), 20.

[6] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:157. (Italics reversed.) In Pope's edition, this is Act 1, scene 2. Pope, in accordance with French dramaturgical convention, usually indicates a change of scene with the entrance of a new character, as he does here. See P. Dixon, 'Pope's Shakespeare', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 63, no. 2 (1964): 192n4. The making of a new scene at this point, however, has the additional effect of emphasizing the aesthetic distinction Pope uses the 'mark of reprobation' to indicate typographically.

[7] Thomas Lounsbury, *The First Editors of Shakespeare: Pope and Theobald* (London: Nutt, 1906), 94–95.

[8] Richard Foster Jones, *Lewis Theobald: His Contribution to English Scholarship with Some Unpublished Letters* (1919; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1966), 62–64.

very moderate capacity striving towards the right' one.[9] Johnson himself was instrumental in defamiliarizing Pope's edition for later readers. Although he was highly critical of Theobald in his Preface to the 1765 *Shakespeare*, Johnson adopted Theobald's Bentleyan editorial method of displaying critical notes at the foot of the page, a convention that would remain fixed in scholarly editions of Shakespeare until the late nineteenth century.[10] As a result, eighteenth-century editions of the plays that deviated from this norm came to seem retrospectively strange. Pope's *Shakespear* and the editions that emulated it—Hanmer's 1744 Oxford *Shakespear*, with its Popean 'degradations' and Warburton's 1747 edition, which combined the Bentleyan note format with Pope's inverted commas for flagging 'shining passages'—appeared hopelessly wrongheaded when judged by the standard of later editorial practice.

More recent criticism has placed Pope's efforts to distinguish between the 'faults' and 'beauties' of Shakespeare in the context of eighteenth-century ideologies of taste. In the words of Margreta de Grazia, Pope's *Shakespear* was an attempt to direct the 'aesthetic and moral sensibility' of the British reading public. Pope's asterisks and inverted commas were, then, a 'typographical signal' of literary and moral worthiness.[11] (Indeed, as de Grazia shows, the marginal quotation mark had had a long history as a typographical marker of *sententiae*, or commonplaces.[12]) Those lines marked in this way were, as Robert B. Hamm, Jr. has recently put it, a series of Shakespearean 'highlights'—'the passages a reader of taste needed to know'.[13] The Shakespeare that emerged—winnowed of his faults, and with his virtues marked for commonplace-book

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[9] David Nichol Smith, *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928), 38.

[10] A. R. Braunmuller, 'Shakespeares Various', in *In Arden: Editing Shakespeare: Essays in Honour of Richard Proudfoot*, ed. Ann Thompson and Gordon McMullan (London: Thomson Learning, 2003), 9–10.

[11] Margreta de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim: The Reproduction of Authenticity and the 1790 Apparatus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 197.

[12] See Margreta de Grazia, 'Shakespeare in Quotation Marks', in *The Appropriation of Shakespeare: Post-Renaissance Reconstructions of the Works and the Myth*, ed. Jean I. Marsden (New York: St. Martin's, 1991), 57–71. De Grazia draws much of her information about the marking of *sententiae* in printed books from G. K. Hunter, 'The Marking of *Sententiae* in Elizabethan Printed Plays, Poems, and Romances', *The Library* 5th ser., 6 (1951): 171–88.

[13] Robert B. Hamm, Jr., 'Shakespeare Bound: The Tonson Editions and the Making of a Literary Classic' (Ph.D. Diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2004), 91.

appropriation—was a 'respectabilized' one, suitable for eighteenth-century genteel consumption.[14]

On the one hand, then, Pope's editorial interventions have been seen as merely eccentric. Colin Franklin encapsulates this position when he remarks that 'nothing … was more whimsical than the appearance or absence of Pope's commas in the margin, or his very rare award of a star to the scene'.[15] On the other, the observation of faults and beauties in Pope's *Shakespear* has been treated as part of a specifically *contemporary* cultural movement—the cultivation of 'eighteenth-century bourgeois taste'.[16] Other than de Grazia's remarks on the connections between Pope's use of inverted commas in the 1725 edition and the commonplace-book tradition, there have been surprisingly few attempts to place Pope's typographical symbols in a wider intellectual and historical context. Indeed, Pope's resort to symbolic rather than verbal annotation on the 1725 *Shakespear* has been seen as primarily a kind of labour-saving device. Peter Seary speculates that the use of symbols allowed Pope to appear to comment on Shakespeare, without compelling him to make the kinds of specific editorial claims that could be refuted by hostile critics.[17] Evelyn B. Tribble likewise suggests that Pope relied upon symbolic annotation because the unforeseen difficulties of collating Shakespeare left him with no time to compose a verbal commentary for the edition.[18] These arguments represent Pope's editorial sigla as contingencies—forced upon Pope either by necessity or an unwillingness to expose himself too far as a textual critic.

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[14] Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660–1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 130. See also Marcus Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing: The Beginnings of Interpretative Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 128, and Trevor Ross, *The Making of the English Literary Canon: From the Middle Ages to the Late Eighteenth Century* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 236.

[15] Colin Franklin, *Shakespeare Domesticated: The Eighteenth-Century Editions* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1991), 178.

[16] de Grazia, 'Shakespeare in Quotation Marks', 65; Dobson, *Making of the National Poet*, 99–133.

[17] Peter Seary, *Lewis Theobald and the Editing of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990),

[18] Evelyn B. Tribble, '"Like a Looking-Glas in the Frame": From the Marginal Note to the Footnote', in *The Margins of the Text*, ed. D. C. Greetham (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 240.

In this chapter, I shall suggest that the origins of the 1725 apparatus lie in a somewhat different direction. A comparison between the commentary to Pope's Homeric translations and the editorial apparatus to the 1725 *Shakespear* reveals a striking pattern of resemblances. The form of the critical apparatus that Pope selected for his *Shakespear*, with its combination of stars, obelisks, and 'degradations', I will argue, may have been suggested to him by the accounts of ancient Greek textual criticism reproduced in the commentary to his *Iliad* and *Odyssey* translations. In the apparatus to the 1725 *Shakespear*, then, Pope combined his intention to emulate the classical editors of Homer with a desire to impose his own 'Erasmian' system of readerly judgement onto the text. While Pope may have indeed been aiming to make Shakespeare 'safe for Augustan readers',[19] it was his familiarity with these older systems of reading, annotating, and editing that explains what Pope was trying to achieve in his Shakespeare edition.

POPE AND VERBAL ANNOTATION: FROM THE *ILIAD* TO THE *DUNCIAD*

At the end of the 1725 Preface, Pope defends his 'new' system of stars and commas for marking the beauties of Shakespeare. 'This' is, he writes

> a shorter and less ostentatious method of performing the better half of Criticism (namely the pointing out an Author's excellencies) than to fill a whole paper with citations of fine passages, with *general Applauses*, or *empty Exclamations* at the tail of them.[20]

A number of scholars have seen this as a veiled insult directed at Charles Gildon, whose 1710 edition of Shakespeare's poems contained a long series of miscellaneous extracts from Shakespeare.[21] However, Pope's wording here recalls an earlier passage, from the

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[19] David Scott Kastan, *Shakespeare and the Book* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 99.

[20] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xxiii.

[21] See Austin Warren, *Alexander Pope as Critic and Humanist* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1929), 149n119, and Dixon, 'Pope's Shakespeare', 195. The essays in question are the 'Remarks on the Plays of Shakespear' and 'Remarks on the Poems of Shakespear', in Charles Gildon, ed., *The Works of Mr. William Shakespeare*, vol. 7 (London, 1710), 257–464.

head note to the commentary on his *Iliad* translation, where he upbraids Madame Dacier for her failure to adequately perform 'the better half of criticism':

> Madame *Dacier* … has made a farther attempt than her predecessors to discover the beauties of the Poet; though we have often only her general praises and exclamations, instead of reasons.[22]

In contrast, Pope claims that his own notes on Homer provide an appropriate remedy. Here, he implies, is the 'reasoned' account of 'the Beauties of the Poet' supposedly lacking from Dacier's commentary. In the first note on Book I of the *Odyssey*, Pope is similarly explicit about his critical intentions:

> We shall proceed in the same method thro' the course of these Annotations upon the *Odyssey*, as in those upon the *Iliad*; considering *Homer* chiefly as a Poet, endeavouring to make his beauties *understood*, and not to praise without a reason given. [23]

Pope's 'Observations' on Homer—mainly, in fact, written by collaborators and only revised by Pope—are grouped at the back of each book. Set in smaller type than the poem itself, and given less ornate head and tail pieces, they draw on the writings of about two hundred authorities, although Dacier and the Byzantine scholiast Eustathius of Thessalonica are the scholars most often referred to.[24] Although Pope relied on his associates Parnell, Broome, and Fenton to supply the bulk of these, Pope's *Correspondence* shows that he was fully engaged in the process.[25] Notes were sent to him by post, and Pope read and commented on them, amending them for style before

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[22] Alexander Pope, *The Iliad of Homer*, 6 vols. (1715; reprint, London, 1760), 1:5n. For the relationship between these two passages, see Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 55.

[23] Alexander Pope, *The Odyssey of Homer*, vol. 1 (London, 1725), 35.

[24] Howard D. Weinbrot, 'Annotating a Career: From Pope's *Homer* to *The Dunciad*: From Madame Dacier to Madame Dacier by Way of Swift', *Philological Quarterly* 79, no. 4 (2000): 460.

[25] See, for example, Alexander Pope, *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, ed. George Sherburn, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 1:270–71; 1:297–98; 2:19–20, 2:247–48; 2:264–65.

sending them on for publication.[26] The instructions that Pope gave to Broome on what he wanted extracted from Eustathius are illustrative of his intentions for the whole:

> Be so kind as to take this method: translate such notes only as concern the beauties or art of the author—none geographical, historical, or grammatical—unless some occur very important to the sense.[27]

These comments show how central to the editorial project Pope believed critical evaluation to be. Yet by the time of his Shakespeare edition, Pope seems to have abandoned his belief that commentary alone could achieve this. If, in 1715, he had wanted to outdo Madame Dacier in composing notes that would venerate Homer's 'beauties', by 1725, the act of annotation itself had become somehow 'ostentatious'—an indecorous or imperfect means of conveying critical judgement.

This movement appears at first glance to represent a significant change in practice for Pope. The notes to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* had required Pope's assistants (and, to a much lesser extent, Pope himself) to carry out a vast amount of reading, translation, and composition work. In the first part of his career, Pope had also composed notes and glosses for the printed versions of some of his own poems. In the two-canto *Rape of the Locke*, which appeared in Bernard Lintot's 1712 *Miscellaneous Poems and Translations*, Pope inserted five glosses indicating where he had drawn on earlier sources. The five-canto *Rape of the Lock* (1714) expands this total to eight. As the 'degraded passages' in the 1725 *Shakespear* would do, these glosses appear as footnotes, with asterisks in the text block indicating which words they are keyed to.

The first printing of *The Temple of Fame* provides another example of the young Pope's compulsion to explain himself through annotation. In the Advertisement to the poem, Pope admits his debt to Chaucer's *House of Fame*, and writes that he 'could not suffer it to be printed without this Acknowledgment, or think a Concealment of this

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[26] For the experience of one of Pope's assistants on the project, the Cambridge classicist John Jortin, see Joseph M. Levine, *The Battle of the Books: History and Literature in the Augustan Age* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 197.

[27] Pope to Broome, 29 November 1714, in Pope, *Correspondence*, 1:225–26.

Nature the less unfair for being common'.[28] The seven-and-a-half pages of endnotes printed at the back of the poem acknowledge Pope's borrowings and allusions while hinting that the piece should be read as an allegory.[29] These early attempts at commentary seem to indicate a certain anxiety on Pope's part about the agency of his readers. The notes to the *Temple of Fame* appear designed to forestall potential accusations of plagiarism by laying bare the sources it draws on, while also displaying the extent of its author's classical attainments. The citations in the *Rape of the Lock(e)*, meanwhile,—'* *Vide* Ovid. Metam. 8', '* *Vid*. Homer Iliad. 22. & Virg. Æn. 12.'—mimic the style of the humanist textual commentary, allowing Pope to indicate his familiarity with classical scholarship while simultaneously registering the comical distance between the classical realm and that of the poem's protagonists.[30]

What explains Pope's apparent change of mind between the translations of Homer and the edition of Shakespeare about the desirability of verbal annotation? Peter W. Cosgrove, Evelyn B. Tribble, and Howard D. Weinbrot have all traced a movement between Pope's Homer translations and the *Dunciad Variorum* in Pope's attitude to the critical note.[31] A form of beautification in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, or, at least, a necessary if inferior part of the apparatus, in the Shakespeare edition and the *Dunciad* the note has migrated to the bottom of the page.[32] Here, as what Cosgrove calls the 'anti-authenticating footnote', it becomes the domain of the trivial or inauthentic. Pope's *Dunciad* footnotes slyly invert the logic of the Bentleyan scholarly edition, extracting and reproducing the nonsense—rather than the wisdom—of commentators. In his *Shakespear*, he degrades 'suspected passages' to the base of the page. By doing so, he is, as Tribble has pointed out, able to exploit the lowly position of the footnote in the

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[28] Alexander Pope, *The Temple of Fame* (London, 1715), [A3]$^{\text{V}}$.

[29] Pope, *Temple of Fame*, 45–52.

[30] *Miscellaneous Poems and Translations: By Several Hands*, (London, 1712), 361, 372.

[31] Peter W. Cosgrove, 'Undermining the Text: Edward Gibbon, Alexander Pope, and the Anti-Authenticating Footnote', in *Annotation and Its Texts*, ed. Stephen A. Barney (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 130–51; Tribble, '"Like a Looking-Glas"', 240–42; Weinbrot, 'Annotating a Career', 459–82.

[32] For commentary as a form of beautification, see Cosgrove, 'Undermining the Text', 138–39.

implied visual hierarchy. Their type size and position on the page both quarantine these passages from the text and embody their moral and stylistic 'lowness'.[33]

The *Dunciad* footnotes, according to Cosgrove, thus amount to 'a direct attack on the note itself'.[34] However, despite the *Dunciad*'s campaign against philological commentary, Pope continued to annotate his own poetry. He removed the endnotes from the *Temple of Fame* when re-editing it for inclusion in his 1717 *Works*, but retained a portion of the commentary in the six footnotes appended to the 1717 text. The 1717 *Works* likewise retain the eight footnotes to the *Rape of the Lock*, while the 1735 second volume of *The Works of Mr. Alexander Pope* contains a nine-and-a-half-page Postscript that brings together all the notes included in the separate printings of Pope's *Epistles*, 'with', as the headnote puts it, 'the addition of a few more which have been judg'd the most necessary'.[35] In all of these examples, Pope seems preoccupied with controlling readerly interpretations of the text. He points out classical allusions, so that his poems' affinities with the works of the ancient canon will not be lost on his audience. Moreover, he uses notes to impress upon his readers a sense of his own personality. The *Dunciad* footnotes contain his own forceful rejoinders to attacks made upon him by the 'dunces', and one of the notes to *The Epistle to Doctor Arbuthnot* contains a forthright—yet almost entirely fanciful—genealogy of Pope's parentage, in which he claims a direct genetic affinity with the Earls of Downe and Lindsay which he did not really possess.[36]

If the 1725 *Shakespear*'s editorial apparatus seems to differ somewhat from the annotative practices that Pope imposed on his own poetry, it nevertheless stems from the same impulse to manage his readers' responses to the text. Moreover, if, as his veiled criticism of Dacier in the 1725 Preface suggests, Pope's 'shorter and less ostentatious' method of annotating Shakespeare stems from a reaction against elaborate verbal commentary in part engendered by his experiences with annotating Homer, we can also look to the Homeric commentary for the textual-critical solution to this problem that Pope devised for the 1725 *Shakespear*.

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[33] Tribble, '"Like a Looking-Glas"', 241.

[34] Cosgrove, 'Undermining the Text', 150.

[35] Alexander Pope, *The Works of Mr. Alexander Pope*, vol. 2 (London, 1735), [187].

[36] Flavio Gregori, 'Introduction: Pope on the Margins and in the Center', *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 38, no. 1 (2005): vii.

POPE, HOMER, AND ANCIENT TEXTUAL CRITICISM

In the 'Essay on the Life, Writings and Learning of Homer' that prefaces in the first volume of Pope's *Iliad*, Thomas Parnell gives a brief account of Homer's ancient critical reception. 'The *Ptolomies*', writes Parnell, 'trained up their princes under *Græcian* Tutors; among whom the most considerable were appointed for revisers of *Homer*'. Among these was Aristarchus, who, Parnell says, 'restored some verses to their former readings, rejected others which he marked with *obelisks* as spurious, and proceeded with such industrious accuracy, that … antiquity has generally acquiesced in it'.[37] Similar accounts of ancient Greek textual criticism appear in the commentary. A note to Book Five of the *Iliad* cites Eustathius saying that 'the ancients marked this place with a star, to distinguish it as one of those that were perfectly admirable'.[38] Conversely, on Book Five, verse 64, of the *Odyssey*, the 'Observations' record that 'Some ancient Critics mark'd the last verse … with an Obelisk, a sign that it ought to be rejected'.[39] Similarly, in the remarks on the *Iliad*, Book Fifteen, line 298:

> We are told that the ancient criticks … gave [these] verses two marks; by the one (which was the asterism) they intimated, that the four lines were very beautiful; but by the other (which was the *obelus*) that they were ill placed.[40]

As Parnell's 'Essay' makes clear, the 'ancient criticks' being referred to here were the Alexandrian textual scholars, who developed an array of critical symbols for denoting editorial judgements in the second and third centuries B.C. The Alexandrians turned the margins of the manuscripts they produced into a storehouse of textual-critical information.[41] Ancient tradition credited the poet and librarian Zenodotus with the

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[37] Pope, *Iliad*, 1:cxviii.
[38] Pope, *Iliad*, 2:206n. This is the scene where Pallas Athena dons the armour of Zeus.
[39] Pope, *Odyssey*, 2:43.
[40] Pope, *Iliad*, 4:175n.
[41] James I. Porter, 'Hermeneutic Lines and Circles: Aristarchus and Crates on the Exegesis of Homer', in *Homer's Ancient Readers: The Hermeneutics of Greek Epic's Earliest Exegetes*, ed. Robert Lamberton and John J. Keaney (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 69.

invention of the *obelos*, a horizontal stroke in the margin (—), which he placed next to Homeric verses suspected of being interpolations.[42] Aristarchus of Samothrace, who succeeded Zenodotus as both Alexandrian librarian and Homeric critic, adopted the *obelos* in his recension of Homer. Although Aristarchus' Homeric manuscripts have not survived, later accounts of them record that he also used five other marginal symbols, among them the *diple* (>), the ancient ancestor of the quotation mark, which signalled noteworthy passages, and the *asteriskos*, which was used to indicate misplaced lines.[43] Summaries of ancient critical opinion on the authenticity of certain verses in Homer subsequently appeared in Eustathius' scholia on the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, from whence they became available to Pope through the translation efforts of Broome and Fenton.[44] Pope may also have known of Quintilian's reference to ancient editorial practice in the *Institutio Oratoria*, 1.4.3:

> The old *grammatici* indeed were so severe in their judgments that they … allowed themselves to mark lines with a sign of disapproval and disinherit, as it were, as bastards any books which seemed to be wrongly attributed.[45]

Pope was familiar with Quintilian's works from an early age, and his reference here to misattributed works as 'bastards' seems to find an echo in Pope's castigation of the Shakespearean apocrypha as suppositious offspring, 'adjudged to him, as they give Strays to the Lord of the Manor'.[46]

The resemblances between the account of the ancient critical symbols in Pope's Homer and the typographical régime that he would later impose on Shakespeare are

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[42] Rudolf Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 115.

[43] On the Alexandrian symbols, see R. L. Fowler, 'Reconstructing the Cologne Alcaeus', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, no. 33 (1979): 24–28; H. D. Jocelyn, 'The Annotations of M. Valerivs Probvs (II)', *Classical Quarterly* n.s. 35, no. 1 (1985): 154; L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature*, Third ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 10–11.

[44] On the sources of Eustathius' Homeric scholia, see N. G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (London: Duckworth, 1983), 197–200.

[45] Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, trans. Donald A. Russell, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 103, 105.

[46] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xx. On Pope and Quintilian, see Maynard Mack, *Alexander Pope: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 117, 167.

striking. The 1725 *Shakespear*'s critical apparatus was, I believe, a conscious attempt to emulate the ancient editors through typography, so as to turn Shakespeare into a classic author. Lewis Theobald, who was to produce the next in the Tonson series of Shakespeare editions, certainly seems to have recognized an Aristarchan allusion in Pope's annotative symbols. Writing to William Warburton, Theobald remarked,

> I am mighty pleased you concur with me in admiring our Poet's thought concerning Orpheus's Lute. We are not to wonder that it is not marked by Mr. Pope for its excellence, since he is so little an *Aristarchus* in this province, that, to use a conundrum of Ben Jonson's, he is rather *a stark ass*.[47]

Pope would also have found in ancient Homeric scholarship a precedent for his practice of revising and retrenching the work of other authors, manifested here in a desire to rid Shakespeare of the material he believed had been added by 'the players'.[48] This was the principle of *athetesis*, or the rejection of spurious lines, through the use of *obeloi*. Pope was clearly aware that the ancients had athetized lines from Homer on subjective grounds, and his actions as a translator indicate that he shared their assumption that Homer contained non-authorial interpolations.

In translating the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Pope displayed the same vigilance towards the possibility of spurious lines in Homer that he would later bring to his editorial work on Shakespeare. Here, as in Pope's *Shakespear*, the question was whether particular passages were 'mean', or below the tenor of surrounding lines, and therefore 'unworthy' of their author. In Phoenix's address to Achilles in Book 9 of the *Iliad*, for instance, Pope declines to include the original wording in his translation, relegating it instead to a note:

> In the original of the place *Phoenix* tells *Achilles*, that as he placed him in his infancy on his lap, *he has often cast up the wine he had drunk upon his cloaths*. I wish I had any authority to say these verses were foisted into the text: for though

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[47] John Nichols, ed., *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 2 (London, 1818), 284.

[48] For this tendency in Pope, see James R. Sutherland, '"The Dull Duty of an Editor"', *Review of English Studies* 21, no. 83 (1945): 213, and Margaret J. M. Ezell, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 69–70, 72.

the idea be indeed natural, it must be granted to be so very gross, as to be utterly unworthy of *Homer*; nor do I see any colour to soften the meanness of it: such images in any age or country, must have been too nauseous to be described.[49]

There are several other instances in the *Iliad* where Pope refuses on his own account to translate the Homeric original for moral or aesthetic reasons. In most of these cases, the endnotes likewise record that he found the original lines beneath the dignity of the surrounding text, and therefore implicitly spurious.[50] Elsewhere, however, he seems to have followed the authority of Joshua Barnes's 1711 edition of Homer in deciding which supposedly interpolated passages to exclude from his translation.[51]

Although the ancient critics seem not to have literally excised passages they considered spurious, instead simply marking them with *obeloi*, it was a common misconception that they had.[52] Pope, for instance, seems to have believed that *athetesis* had involved literally 'cutting out' verses from the text. A note on Book 9, line 586, of the *Iliad* reads:

I have taken the liberty to replace here four verses which *Aristarchus* had cut out, because of the horrour which the idea gave him of a son who is going to kill his father; but perhaps *Aristarchus*'s niceness was too great.[53]

Pope's account of Greek textual scholarship contains a number of other obvious errors. In particular, the balanced antithesis between stars and obelisks—marks of beauty and signs of reprobation—that he attributes to the ancients in fact has no ancient exemplar. None of the Alexandrine critics ever used the *asteriskos* to denote poetic beauties. The symbol was used only to mark lines that, although otherwise genuine, had been reproduced in the wrong context due to scribal error.

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[49] Pope, *Iliad*, 3:120n.
[50] Howard D. Weinbrot, *Britannia's Issue: The Rise of British Literature from Dryden to Ossian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 302.
[51] Levine, *Battle of the Books*, 210.
[52] Michael Haslam, 'Homeric Papyri and the Transmission of the Text', in *A New Companion to Homer*, ed. Ian Morris and Barry B. Powell (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 72–73.
[53] Pope, *Iliad*, 3:117–18n. See also the account of Aristarchus' argument that Book 24 of the *Odyssey* was not originally part of the poem in Pope, *Odyssey*, 5:259–60.

POPE, ERASMUS, AND HUMANISTIC READING PRACTICES

Most of the confusion in the 'Observations' to Pope's Homer can probably be attributed to the state of early eighteenth-century knowledge about the history of ancient scholarship.[54] The system of signs that the Alexandrians devised largely fell out of use in late antiquity, and later accounts of it were generally either corrupt or very brief.[55] Some medieval scholars made reference to the ancient editors, but only to lament that knowledge of their methods had been lost through a lack of teaching.[56] The most famous Homeric manuscript that deployed the ancient critical symbols—the Venetus A *Iliad*—remained unpublished until 1788.[57] It is not surprising, then, that the information available to Pope about the history of Homeric editing might be misleading. There was, however, one source readily accessible to eighteenth-century readers that precisely anticipates both Pope's understanding of Homer's ancient textual transmission and the critical symbols that he used in his *Shakespear*: the *Adagia* of Erasmus.

Among the mass of sayings that Erasmus collected in the *Adagia* is one apparently taken from ancient Greek proverb collections—I V 57, entitled 'Stellis signare. Obelo Notare. To mark with stars. To brand with an obelus'.[58] Erasmus explains the proverb in this way:

> To mark with an obelus … means to affix a marginal sign shaped like a spit for confutation or condemnation. It is taken from Aristarchus, who … reject[ed] by means of 'obeli' or small dagger-signs prefixed to them the … counterfeit and substituted lines which did not … have the true feeling of the Homeric vein. Those, on the other hand, which seemed outstanding and genuine he marked with

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[54] Joseph M. Levine alludes to this when he notes the ease with which Parnell's 'Essay', when discussing the text of Homer, moves from the ancient world to the eighteenth century, as though the intervening period posed no problems of textual transmission. See Levine, *Battle of the Books*, 204.

[55] Jocelyn, 'Annotations', 152; Nigel Wilson, 'Scholiasts and Commentators', *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 47, no. 1 (2007): 43–44.

[56] Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 113.

[57] See Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 214; Anthony Grafton, 'Prolegomena to Friedrich August Wolf', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 44 (1981): 111–12.

[58] For the source of this adage, see Desiderius Erasmus, *The Collected Works of Erasmus*, trans. Margaret Mann Phillips, vol. 31 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 434.

asterisks, little stars. Both Origen and St Jerome followed this method in Holy Scripture.[59]

Erasmus' own preoccupation with authenticity is well-known. In the second edition of his Seneca, he made a sustained attempt to differentiate between the genuine and spurious letters of Seneca, placing the latter at the end of the volume under the heading 'falso Seneca tributo'.[60] In the preface to his edition of Saint Jerome, Erasmus used the example of Aristarchus to justify his own campaign of purging Jerome of non-authorial interpolations, noting that:

> Aristarchus purged [Homer's] poetry of foreign elements, marking outstanding verses as genuine and clearly worthy of Homer's authorship by means of asterisks, and on the other hand delivering the death blow with obelisks to counterfeit and spurious verses.[61]

Pope's own (now lost) copy of Erasmus' works, which he bequeathed to Bolingbroke, would have included the *Adagia*.[62] According to William Kupersmith, Pope may have drawn on the 'Adages' for folklore about donkeys when devising the *Dunciad* illustrations. Elsewhere, Pope records his reverence for Erasmus in several places, most famously in the 'Essay on Criticism', and he even considered writing a biography of Erasmus, in Latin.[63] If, as I am suggesting, Pope knew Erasmus' account of the ancient editors, this might explain why, in the 1725 *Shakespear*, he registers the antithesis between Shakespeare's faults and beauties with 'small dagger-signs' and 'little stars'.

[59] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 31:435–36.

[60] Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 134–36.

[61] Erasmus, *Collected Works*, 61:71.

[62] Maynard Mack identifies Pope's copy of Erasmus as the 10-volume Le Clerc edition of 1703–06. See Maynard Mack, *Collected in Himself: Essays Critical, Biographical, and Bibliographical on Pope and Some of His Contemporaries* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1982), 320n4.

[63] William Kupersmith, 'Asses, Adages, and the Illustrations to Pope's *Dunciad*', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 8, no. 2 (1974-5): 206–11. For Pope's intention to write a biography of Erasmus, see Pope, *Correspondence*, 1:119. The importance of Erasmus to Pope as a religious and literary exemplar is considered more generally in Chester Chapin, 'Alexander Pope: Erasmian Catholic', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 6, no. 1 (1973): 4–30; Thomas Woodman, 'Pope: The Papist and the Poet', *Essays in Criticism* 46, no. 3 (1996): 219–33; and Gregori, 'Pope on the Margins', xi–xiv.

As a history of ancient textual scholarship, however, Erasmus' account is quite seriously misleading. (As, of course, was the commentary on Pope's Homer, and for many of the same reasons.) The obelus was not, in antiquity at least, a 'dagger-sign', and Greek and Roman scholars never used the asterisk to adorn beautiful passages. Likewise, Erasmus is correct in observing that Saint Jerome adopted the *obelus* and *asteriscus* for his work on the bible, but wrong in the detail of his account. Although Jerome's use of the symbols differed somewhat from those of his ancient counterparts, he did not use the *stella*, or *asteriscus*, as a mark of approbation.[64] In the case of Origen, scholarly tradition maintained that he too used the symbols in his *Hexapla*, but no textual evidence survives to tell either way.[65] Certainly, Erasmus himself would have had no first-hand knowledge of Origen's biblical manuscripts.

Erasmus' account of the ancient critical symbols almost certainly stems from Eustathius, who, in his Homeric commentaries, wrote that the 'ancient ones' placed the asteriskos 'upon the ones [i.e. lines] having the best of words and, as it were, shining like stars, as laid in a good place'.[66] However, Erasmus' description of the asteriskos also accords with humanist reading practices. Asterisks were used by some printers in the early modern period to draw readers' attention to gnomic passages, or *sententiae*.[67] A number of early modern readers—Ben Jonson among them—employed the *stella* themselves to mark noteworthy passages in their own books.[68] Anthony Grafton records that some late seventeenth-century readers were still accustomed to marking the 'best

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[64] For Jerome's appropriation of the ancient critical symbols, see Karl Kelchner Hulley, 'Light Cast by St. Jerome on Certain Palaeographical Points', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 54 (1943): 91–92.

[65] Anthony Grafton and Megan Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 88, 316n5.

[66] Eustathius of Thessalonica, *Commentarii ad Homeri et Odysseam*, ed. Gottfried Stallbaum, vol. 2 (Hildesheim: Olms, 1970), 599. I am indebted to Gregory Olsen for this reference. The translation is his, with advice from Paul McKechnie.

[67] Hunter, 'Marking of *Sententiae*', 180.

[68] William H. Sherman, 'Toward a History of the Manicule', in *Owners, Annotators and the Signs of Reading*, ed. Robin Myers, Michael Harris, and Giles Mandelbrote (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2005), 38, 41–42.

things' in the books they read with 'a little star' in the margin.[69] This he attributes to the long survival of the systems of readerly annotation that existed in medieval and early modern Europe, and that were popularized by Erasmus in his educational works.[70] Indeed, in *De Conscribendi Epistolis* Erasmus himself recommended that readers use asterisks for marking any passages they found that had a 'special charm, elegance, or neatness'.[71] It is Pope's own position within this humanist tradition of readers writing in books that, I think, best explains what Pope was trying to do in his edition of Shakespeare.

Studies by R. D. Erlich, Felicity Rosslyn, and Maynard Mack have revealed the extent to which Pope was accustomed to annotating the contents of his own library. The marginal inverted comma that Pope used to flag 'shining passages' in Shakespeare, for instance, has a manuscript counterpart performing the same function in Pope's personal copies of the works of Chaucer, Dryden, and Jonson, among other authors.[72] Here, too, Pope shows the influence of Erasmus. In *De Ratione Studii*, Erasmus had stipulated that striking passages

> should be indicated by some appropriate mark. For not only must a variety of marks be employed but appropriate ones at that, so they will immediately indicate their purpose.[73]

Pope's marginal inverted commas, then, in the Shakespeare edition and elsewhere, embodied their *raison d'être*—indicating what in the body of the work was worth quoting elsewhere, by the reader, in another context. Elsewhere, Pope's *notae* show his

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[69] Anthony Grafton, *Commerce with the Classics: Ancient Books and Renaissance Readers* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 154.

[70] Grafton, *Commerce with the Classics*, 154. See also Anthony Grafton, 'Is the History of Reading a Marginal Enterprise? Guillaume Budé and His Books', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 91, no. 2 (1997): 148.

[71] Quoted in Eugene R. Kintgen, *Reading in Tudor England* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996), 23.

[72] For Pope's practice of marking significant passages in his books with marginal inverted commas, see Austin Warren, 'Pope and Ben Jonson', *Modern Language Notes* 45, no. 2 (1930): 87; R. D. Erlich, 'Pope's Annotations in his Copy of Dryden's *Comedies, Tragedies, and Operas*: An Exercise in Cryptography', *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Theatre Research* 10, no. 1 (1971): 14–24; Mack, *Collected in Himself*, 180–92, 318; and Mack, *Alexander Pope*, 83, 85.

[73] Quoted in Kintgen, *Reading in Tudor England*, 26.

Erasmian habit of using the margins of printed books to indicate his opinion of the text. Pope's copy of Thomas Tickell's 1715 translation of Book I of the *Iliad* contains a detailed numerical index, which Pope used to classify what he saw as the imperfections in Tickell's work.[74] He also used a small upright cross to indicate what he perceived to be ill-conceived archaisms, and marked Tickell's interpolations with a special marginal symbol.[75] In his copy of Chapman's *Iliad*, meanwhile, Pope drew brackets around lines of Chapman's own invention and wrote 'interpolatio' in the margin.[76] These marginalia reveal an obvious continuity between the markings in Pope's own books and the printed symbols that he would eventually inscribe on Shakespeare. Not only are the notational conventions used in many cases the same, but so also is their purpose—to indicate a readerly judgement upon the text, or to classify it according to worth, usefulness, or authenticity.

What Pope was attempting to do in his *Shakespear*, I suggest, was to blur the boundaries between print and manuscript—to present the printed page in some way *as* manuscript.[77] By deploying the 'asterisks' and 'commas' that Johnson dismissed so summarily, Pope was providing his audience with a privileged glimpse at the private annotations of a sophisticated reader. His adoption of the ancient critical symbols gave him an elegant means of 'managing readers', anticipating and guiding their aesthetic responses to the text. By applying them to Shakespeare, Pope was giving him the 'dignity of an ancient'—presenting Shakespeare in the same textual form that the ancients had reserved for Homer. Just as Bentley, in his Amsterdam Horace, had clothed an ancient author in modern philological dress, Pope in his *Shakespear* was applying an ancient mode of editing to a modern author. In doing so, Pope was able to achieve something else. By projecting Shakespeare back into an idealized classical past, he was able to distance his own editorial project from the 'modern' textual scholarship whose

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[74] See Felicity Rosslyn, 'Pope's Annotations to Tickell's *Iliad* Book One', *Review of English Studies* n.s. 30, no. 117 (1979): 50–55; Mack, *Collected in Himself*, 443–56. Pope would extract 'obscurities' from Tickell's Homer translations in *Peri Bathous*. See Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift, *Miscellanies: The Last Volume* (London, 1736), 64.

[75] Rosslyn, 'Pope's Annotations', 52; Mack, *Collected in Himself*, 454.

[76] Alexander Pope, *The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. John Butt and Maynard Mack, 10 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961–67), 10:481.

[77] Cf. Weinbrot, 'Annotating a Career', 464.

application to classical literature so appalled him. By providing a point of contrast—or resistance—to philological commentary, the ancient critical signs allowed Pope to bestow upon *himself* 'the dignity of an ancient' editor. If Pope had to edit literature, in other words, he would rather do so as an Aristarchus than as a Bentley.

4.

POPE'S PREFACE TO SHAKESPEARE AND THE LANGUAGES OF SOCIAL DISTINCTION

As we saw in the previous chapter, one of Pope's abiding concerns in his Shakespeare edition was finding a way of separating Shakespeare's faults from his beauties. Yet, having identified faults, Pope was noticeably reluctant to lay the blame for them on Shakespeare. Instead, he largely attributed faults in Shakespeare to other agencies—interpolators who 'foisted' inauthentic material into the text, or, more generally, the low level of taste prevalent in the Elizabethan age. As we have seen, Pope's textual-critical system of stars and obelisks had its origin in his experience with editing Homer. Pope's desire to exculpate Shakespeare of faults also had a precursor in the Homer edition. In the 'Preface' to the *Iliad*, he had earlier remarked, in defence of Homer against those who would 'charge him with a defect or narrowness of genius', that 'those seeming defects will be found upon examination to proceed wholly from the nature of the times he lived in'.[1]

This form of historical relativism had arisen in the late seventeenth century in the context of the French *querelle* between the 'ancients' and the 'moderns' over the standing of ancient literature—particularly Homer. It was a way of reconciling the two positions—acknowledging ancient authors' deficiencies in morality and style from the perspective of the self-consciously 'refined' critical present, while at the same time (potentially) absolving those authors of any blame for them. So versatile was this form of argument that it could be used by *both* parties—those who wanted to assert the

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[1] Alexander Pope, *The Iliad of Homer*, 6 vols. (1715; reprint, London, 1760), 1:xxx.

superiority of modern culture over that of the ancients, but also those who would defend ancient authors from the imputation of depravity, barbarism, or impoliteness.[2]

By the early eighteenth century, the use of historical context to defend an author's works had become a common tactic in English criticism. The argument could not only be applied to Homer (as Addison argued in *The Spectator*), but also to more recent authors who wrote in English, such as Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare.[3] Pope's efforts to separate Shakespeare's 'Excellencies' from his 'defects', and to attribute the latter entirely to the 'Contingencies' of the age, should be seen, then, as forming part of a larger rhetorical context.[4] Nicholas Rowe had argued similarly, though more briefly, on behalf of Shakespeare in the Preface to his 1709 edition, while, according to John Dennis, Shakespeare's 'Beauties were entirely his own, and owing to the force of his own Nature; whereas his Faults were owing to his Education, and to the Age that he liv'd in'.[5] In his own Preface, however, Pope applied the argument to Shakespeare much more extensively than either Rowe or Dennis had done. As he writes in his opening paragraph, the aim of the Preface is to give an account of Shakespeare's historical context and the transmission of his text, the effect of which will be to 'extenuate' many of his admitted faults, while 'clear[ing] him from the imputation of many which are not'.[6]

In Pope's historical scheme, Shakespeare's immediate social context, and the agencies responsible for preserving and publishing his texts after his death, united to form a kind of engine of corruption, whose influence could only 'disadvantage' his

[2] Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most, and James E. G. Zetzel, 'Introduction', in *F. A. Wolf: Prolegomena to Homer, 1795* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 8–9; Anthony Grafton, 'Renaissance Readers of Homer's Ancient Readers', in *Homer's Ancient Readers: The Hermeneutics of Greek Epic's Earliest Exegetes*, ed. Robert Lamberton and John J. Keaney (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 163. For other accounts of this aspect of the 'quarrel' between ancients and moderns, see Joseph M. Levine, *The Battle of the Books: History and Literature in the Augustan Age* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 121–40; and Howard D. Weinbrot, *Britannia's Issue: The Rise of British Literature from Dryden to Ossian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 201–19.

[3] See Donald F. Bond, ed., *The Spectator* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 589; and Jack Lynch, *The Age of Elizabeth in the Age of Johnson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 27–29, 44–45.

[4] Alexander Pope, ed., *The Works of Shakespear*, 6 vols. (London, 1723-25), 1:ii, iv.

[5] John Dennis, *The Critical Works of John Dennis*, ed. Edward Niles Hooker, 2 vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1943), 2:4.

[6] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:ii.

essential literary genius. Since Shakespeare initially wrote only for the public stage, whose 'Audience', Pope asserts, 'was generally composed of the meaner sort of people', the quality of the images, plots, and scenarios in his earlier plays had to be lowered to meet plebian standards of taste. In tragedy, this meant combining the 'most strange … and unnatural … Events and Incidents' with 'the most verbose and bombast Expression'; in comedy, it involved combining 'mean buffoonry, vile ribaldry' with the 'unmannerly jests of fools and clowns'.[7]

Pope describes Shakespeare's social and professional situation in the following terms:

> He writ to the *People*; and writ at first without patronage from the better sort, and therefore without aims of pleasing them: without assistance or advice from the Learned, as without the advantage of education or acquaintance among them: [and] without the knowledge of the best models, the Ancients, to inspire him …[8]

In the sketch of Shakespeare's career that Pope draws, it was only through the intervention of Court patronage that Shakespeare managed to escape the 'bad conversation' of actors and 'the *People*'. The quality of Shakespeare's dramatic writing improved, Pope implies, in direct proportion to his level of social and linguistic contact with 'the better sort'. Conversely, what seem to Pope to be lapses in decorum and literary merit could be accounted for by Shakespeare's social contamination by his inferior associates and conversation partners. As in many eighteenth-century accounts of language, Pope sees 'vulgarisms' in Shakespeare as a form of contagion, passed onto Shakespeare by 'vulgar' people.[9]

Taking care to distinguish the eighteenth- from the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century stage, Pope places particular blame for Shakespeare's artistic shortcomings, as well as his failure to follow the example of the ancient authors, upon the players for whom he wrote. Whereas eighteenth-century actors are polished and refined by 'the familiar conversation of [the] Nobility, and an intimacy (not to say dearness) with people

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[7] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:v.
[8] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:vi.
[9] For the role of the 'vulgar' in eighteenth-century rhetorical theory, see Adam Potkay, *The Fate of Eloquence in the Age of Hume* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 69–71.

of the first condition', Shakespeare's associates were, in Pope's vivid social parallel, 'led into the Buttery by the Steward, not plac'd at the Lord's table, or Lady's toilette'.[10] Developing a point that Rowe had made in his account of Shakespeare's life, Pope attributes to Shakespeare and the Elizabethan actors a kind of aesthetic antinomianism in their refusal to shape their stage in accordance with the rules of Aristotle. Rowe had described Shakespeare as a kind of aesthetic natural man, living 'in a state of almost universal license and ignorance', in which 'there was no establish'd judge, but every one took the liberty to write according to the dictates of his own fancy'.[11] Emulating Rowe's equation of the aesthetic with the political, Pope appears to draw upon the rhetoric of anti-republicanism to describe the artistic lawlessness of the stage. Actors, Pope writes, have always

> had a Standard to themselves, upon other principles than those of *Aristotle*. As they live by the Majority, they know no rule but that of pleasing the present humour, and complying with the wit in fashion; a consideration which brings all their judgment to a short point.[12]

Shakespeare, having begun his career in London as an actor, and therefore 'forming himself first upon the judgments of that body of men', was infected with a similar ignorance of the purposes of dramatic art. Rather than writing according to the timeless precepts of the ancients, and thus aiming for 'what Poets are pleas'd to call Immortality', Shakespeare instead became a kind of 'Taylor', producing historically contingent art that aimed to flatter the unruly and capricious fashions of the 'Town'.[13] Thus, in Pope's view, 'most of our Author's faults are less to be ascribed to his wrong judgment as a Poet, than to his right judgment as a Player'.[14]

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[10] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xix. There is obviously a certain amount of satire here on the willingness of eighteenth-century *grandees* to allow actors into their social (and, Pope implies, sexual) circles. Pope, it seems, would rather that actors stayed in the buttery, contemporary attitudes notwithstanding.

[11] Nicholas Rowe, ed., *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear*, 6 vols. (London, 1709), 1:xxvi.

[12] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:vii.

[13] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:vii.

[14] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:viii.

According to Pope's historico-linguistic schema, Shakespeare is an 'historic' author, and therefore 'incorrect' according to eighteenth-century standards of art, language, and decorum, because of his unfortunate social connections. Pope's critique of Shakespeare's professional alliance with actors and audience may be described in terms of what Lawrence E. Klein has called 'perverted acquaintance'.[15] Rather than attaining artistic virtue and immortality through proper imitation of the classics, Shakespeare's art is instead 'mediated' and 'corrupt'—servilely dependent upon flattering the expectations of his spectators.[16]

This line of rhetoric continues in Pope's discussion of the textual history of Shakespeare's plays. According to Pope, errors and textual corruptions in the folio texts stem from the same root: the mediating 'ignorance' of actors and directors, who either interpolated material of their own devising into the plays, or cut and rearranged existing material to suit their needs in performance. These changes were perpetuated by the editors of the First Folio—Pope is careful to point out, so as to undermine their authority, that they had themselves been actors—who intermingled the 'trifling and bombast passages' added in the theatre with Shakespeare's original words through their use of playhouse transcripts as the base text for the 1623 edition. Hence, says Pope, 'whatever had been added … by the actors, or had stolen from their mouths into the written parts, were from thence conveyed into the printed text, and all stand charged upon the Author'.[17] This form of mingling—the dissolving of the boundaries between the literary and the merely theatrical—finds its most emblematic form in what Pope takes to be stage and prop directions interpolated into the plays from the '*Prompter's Book*' and actors' '*Piece-meal Parts*' which he imagines were the First Folio editors' '*Original Copies*':

> in some places their [i.e. the actors'] very names are thro' carelessness set down instead of the *Personae Dramatis*: And in others the notes of direction to the

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[15] Lawrence E. Klein, 'The Third Earl of Shaftesbury and the Progress of Politeness', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 18, no. 2 (1984-5): 196.
[16] Klein, 'Third Earl', 196.
[17] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xvi.

> *Property-men* for their *Moveables*, and to the *Players* for their *Entries*, are inserted into the Text, thro' the ignorance of the Transcribers.[18]

In this account of the transmission of Shakespeare's plays, there is a repeated attempt to link low social status and proximity to the theatre with textual unreliability. The Folio editors' word, and the Shakespearean text they present, cannot be trusted, Pope implies. Not only were Heminge and Condell actors, but they were also low-born and dependent upon others for economic support. Pope's eagerness to ascribe both impure motives and unreliability to Shakespeare's folio editors (and the theatre general) bears out Steven Shapin's observation that those in positions of economic dependence were often regarded as fundamentally untrustworthy by their seventeenth- and eighteenth-century social superiors.[19] Reed Browning has referred to this as an elite 'uneasiness about the reliability of the lower orders', and notes that it was practically universal in the political and social thought of the mid eighteenth century.[20] Because of the perceived linkages between status and honesty, the imputation of low social status was an especially damaging rhetorical gambit. As Alexandra Shepard has noted, in cases of slander by insult brought before the courts in seventeenth-century Cambridge, the suggestion of social lowness—'rogue/knave/jack/rascal'—was by far the most common cause of complaint.[21] To question another's position in the social hierarchy was to effectively place in doubt his or her pretensions to honesty and reputation.

The degree of Pope's animosity towards the Folio editors was to have profound textual consequences for Pope's own edition. Such was the denigration heaped upon the Folio tradition that Pope was able to justify adopting an attitude of radical editorial scepticism, not only to Heminge and Condell's claims to authority, but also (potentially)

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[18] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xvii–xviii. There are, of course, many examples of stage directions and actors' names finding their way into printed editions of plays during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. My point here is to note the role that these interpolations play in Pope's rhetorical campaign against the reliability of Shakespeare's first editors.

[19] Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 86–87, 91–95.

[20] Reed Browning, *Political and Constitutional Ideas of the Court Whigs* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 202–3.

[21] Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 157–65.

to the possibility of *any* particular line or passage within the received text having a Shakespearean origin.[22] With the *Iliad*, the combination of Pope's limited Greek and the existence of a long tradition of commentary and scholarship about matters of authenticity on the whole restrained Pope from making large-scale retrenchments to the text he was to translate. Here, with Shakespeare, the absence of such an editorial tradition, combined with Pope's poetic abilities and commitment to 'improving' the English language, meant that he felt no such constraints on his editorial freedom.

As we have seen, the language of authorship that Pope uses in the Preface explicitly equates hierarchies of literary merit with social rank. Pope is not content simply to label as 'mean' or 'clownish' those plays or passages that seem to him inferior; he attributes them to outside agencies, whose social inferiority he continually insists upon. (This rhetorical positioning is reflected, of course, in the position of the 'suspected passages' themselves in Pope's edition—relegated to the very bottom of the page, set in small type.[23]) This equation between the scales of aesthetic and social worthiness raises the issue of Shakespeare's own position in the social hierarchy. In his account of Shakespeare's life, Rowe had noted that the Shakespeare family were 'of good figure and fashion' in Stratford upon Avon, and were 'mention'd as gentlemen' in the town records.[24] Pope's edition amplifies this identification by providing a full transcript of Shakespeare's 1599 renewal of his father's application for a coat of arms, with its long series of assertions about the Shakespeare and Arden families' gentlemanly provenances.[25] Thus authorized by historical evidence, the language of social distinction provides Pope with a powerful means by which questions of relative literary value, authenticity, and corruption in the Shakespearean corpus could be expressed. The extent of this usefulness is, perhaps, best illustrated by the justifications Pope offers for excluding the apocrypha from the 1723–5 edition.

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[22] See Robert E. Scholes, 'Dr. Johnson and the Bibliographical Criticism of Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 11, no. 2 (1960): 164.

[23] See Evelyn B. Tribble, '"Like a Looking-Glas in the Frame": From the Marginal Note to the Footnote', in *The Margins of the Text*, ed. D. C. Greetham (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 241.

[24] Rowe, ed., *Works 1709*, 1:ii.

[25] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:e2ʳ.

In his discussion of the apocrypha, a number of the tendencies in Pope's Preface come together. In dismissing the plays added to the Third Folio as both 'wretched' *and* un-Shakespearean, he again blurs the boundaries between aesthetic quality, authenticity, and social virtue. He also reserves the right to judge—and find wanting—these pieces according to his own appreciation of what constitutes 'the distinguishing marks of [Shakespearean] style', as well as 'his manner of thinking and writing'.[26] That is, while the judgement is made for aesthetic reasons, Pope attempts to ground it in the objective realm. The apocryphal plays are relatively inferior, he argues, and therefore 'cannot be admitted as' Shakespeare's, when measured against the standard set elsewhere for what constitutes Shakespeare's genuine style.[27] This judgement is, in turn, prefixed on Pope's authority as an editor, poet and, perhaps, as a gentleman.

Characteristically, however, Pope goes further, nominating the Folio plays *Love's Labours Lost*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Titus Andronicus* as likewise supposititious, with only a few characters, scenes, or passages in each being genuinely Shakespearean.[28] (The 1728 version of the Preface added the *Comedy of Errors* and Lewis Theobald's *Double Falshood* to this list.[29]) Echoing Heminge and Condell's mention of Shakespeare's 'orphan' works in the First Folio, Pope asserts that all of these plays had originally been 'pieces produced by unknown authors, or fitted up for the theatre while it was under [Shakespeare's] administration: and no owner claiming them' had been 'adjudged to him, as they give Strays to the Lord of the Manor.' Were these illegitimate accretions removed from the corpus of Shakespeare's works, Pope asks,

> how many low and vicious parts and passages might no longer reflect upon his great Genius, but appear unworthily charged upon him? And even in those which are really his, how many faults may have been unjustly laid to his account from arbitrary Additions, Expunctions, Transpositions of scenes and lines, confusion of Characters and Persons, wrong application of Speeches, corruptions of innumerable Passages by the Ignorance, and wrong Corrections of 'em again by the Impertinence, of his first Editors? [30]

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[26] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xx.
[27] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xx.
[28] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xx.
[29] Alexander Pope, ed., *The Works of Shakespear*, 9 vols. (London, 1728), 1:xxi
[30] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xxi.

Pope goes on to state his belief that, were an editor's labours able to achieve this unmingling, 'the greatest and grossest part of what are thought [Shakespeare's] errors would vanish, and leave his character in a light very different from that disadvantageous one, in which it now appears to us'.[31]

For Pope, the editor's task when faced with so corrupt an original is to distinguish between the valuable (genuine and exemplary) and the worthless (contaminated, interpolated, and inauthentic) parts, casting the latter aside. The editor's role, then, is not merely scholarly; it also encompasses ethical and moral dimensions. At its centre is the 'character' and reputation of the author, which must be enhanced and cleared of the 'imputations' and 'unworthy charges' cast upon them by textual corruptions, interpolations, and misattributed works. David Nichol Smith has aptly compared Pope's editorial actions to those of a literary executor seeking to present the body of works for which he is responsible in the best posthumous light.[32] In other respects, it accords with what J. Paul Hunter has identified as a central preoccupation of early eighteenth-century literary theory—the impulse 'to define the insignificant, the inappropriate, and the inadequate out of literature' altogether.[33]

Yet, ultimately, Pope's aesthetic and critical senses were, like Shakespeare's, still subject to the commercial realm, and his project to detach the apocrypha from the *Works* was not immediately successful. When, in 1728, Pope's edition was reprinted in octavo, a supplementary ninth volume was issued by the publishers, containing the seven plays that Pope had excluded from the 1723–5 quarto edition.[34] The apocrypha had last been published as part of Shakespeare's *Works* in 1714, and the fourteen-year interval between the two publication dates is probably not coincidental. Their inclusion in the second issue of Pope's *Shakespear* was likely intended to prevent the plays' reversion to the public

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[31] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xxi.

[32] David Nichol Smith, *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928), 34.

[33] J. Paul Hunter, 'Literary Theory and Literary Practice: The Example of Pope', in *Talking Forward, Talking Back: Critical Dialogues with the Enlightenment*, ed. Kevin L. Cope and Rüdiger Ahrens (New York: AMS Press, 2002), 322.

[34] See Stanley Wells et al., *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 67n147.

domain, in accordance with contemporary understandings of the 1710 'copyright' statute. The Tonsons' interests in asserting their rights in the apocryphal plays, in other words, outweighed Pope's critical arguments for their exclusion. Pope, for his part, had his most substantial contribution to the edition, the appendix entitled, 'Various Readings, or Conjectures, on Passages in *Shakespear*', printed at the end of volume eight. This makes its own statement as to where Pope saw the boundaries of the edition lying.

POPE, SHAFTESBURY, AND THE GENTRIFICATION OF AESTHETIC VALUE

In the second half of this chapter, I want to place Pope's 'social' theory of literary value in a slightly wider context. In particular, I want to compare it with that which appears in Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury's, 'Soliloquy: Or Advice to an Author' (1710), published as part of the *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* in 1711. My purpose in doing this is two-fold. Firstly, there are some verbal parallels between Pope's Preface and Shaftesbury's 'Soliloquy' that suggest that Pope might have been influenced by the earlier work. Secondly, the two texts exemplify a theory of authorship that equates a writer's stylistic or aesthetic value with personal moral virtue. This position, I shall argue, had a significant influence on the way in which debates about authenticity in the developing Shakespearean canon were conducted. Both Pope and Shaftesbury sought to revive a Greco-Roman view of authorship, predicated upon the equation of literary and social virtue, in which an author's 'character' and reputation were of paramount importance.

In what ways do Shaftesbury's 'Soliloquy' and Pope's Preface to Shakespeare resemble each other? Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the critical precedents of Jonson and Dryden, both Shaftesbury and Pope emphasize the 'natural' sources of Shakespeare's inspiration. For Shaftesbury, the 'old Dramatick Poet', despite his 'Rudeness' and 'unpolish'd Stile', is notable for the 'plain and natural Turn of several of his

Characters'.[35] In Pope's estimation, Shakespeare's characters are simply 'Nature her self'.[36] Pope's concern with the effect of audience expectation upon authorial independence also has an antecedent in Shaftesbury's 'Soliloquy'. For Shaftesbury, an author who is too concerned with his own reception risks becoming simply an '*Author-Character*', wholly dependent upon his ability to flatter an audience.[37] In such a mediated, dependent form of writing, an author 'purchases his Reader's Favour by all imaginable compliancys and Condescensions … sut[ing] himself, on every occasion, to the Fancy' of his audience.[38] He can be 'no certain man', nor have 'any certain or genuine Character' beyond that which will enable him to attract the audience's attention and approval.[39] The theatricality inherent in social performance, in other words, undercuts an author's ability to be true to his own character.[40]

The similarities between Shaftesbury's 'Soliloquy' and Pope's Preface become more striking, however, in their respective discussions of the English stage. In describing the English theatre audience's uncivilized, 'barbaric' taste for violent spectacle, Shaftesbury remarks that

> The *Gladiatorian*, and other sanguinary Sports, which we allow our people, discover sufficiently our National Taste … 'Tis alledg'd indeed by our Stage-Poets, in excuse for vile Ribaldry and other gross Irregularitys, both in the Fable and Language of their Pieces; that their Success … is never so fortunate, as when this *Havock* is made on Virtue and good Sense.[41]

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[35] Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, 4th. ed., 3 vols. (London, 1727), 1:275.

[36] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:ii.

[37] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, 1:164. In discussing Shaftesbury's theory of authorship, I have retained his gendered language. As Rebecca Tierney-Hynes points out, Shaftesbury's ideal author is so clearly male, and the thrust of his rhetoric so concerned with essentializing authorship as masculine, that to do otherwise would be inappropriate. See Rebecca Tierney-Hynes, 'Shaftesbury's *Soliloquy*: Authorship and the Psychology of Romance', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 38, no. 4 (2005): 620n12.

[38] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, 1:199–200.

[39] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, 1:200.

[40] See Lawrence E. Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness: Moral Discourse and Cultural Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 76–79.

[41] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, 1:270–1. See also, 1:264.

Pope, observing that Shakespeare, as a professional dramatist, was forced to aim his writing 'solely to hit the taste and humour that then prevailed', goes on to assert that 'nothing was so sure to *please*' this audience, made up as it was 'of the meaner sort of people', than 'mean buffoonry, vile ribaldry, and unmannerly jests of fools and clowns'.[42] Shaftesbury and Pope both proceed to develop the same *topos* in their discussion of the faults of the English theatre—that a reliance upon the taste and fashion of the multitude leads to a debased and historically contingent mode of literature and aesthetic judgement. Shaftesbury writes that,

> They who have no help from Learning to observe the wider Periods or Revolutions of human Kind, the Alterations which happen in Manners, and the Flux and Reflux of Politeness, Wit, and Art; are apt at every turn to make the present Age their Standard, and imagine nothing barbarous or savage, but what is contrary to the Manners of their own Time. The same pretended Judges, had they flourish'd in our BRITAIN at the time when CAESAR made his first Descent, wou'd have condemn'd … the Man who shou'd have made bold to censure our deficiency of Clothing, and laugh at the blue Cheeks and party-colour'd Skins which were then in fashion with our Ancestors. Such must of necessity be the Judgment of those who are only *Criticks by fashion*.[43]

Pope, drawing out the consequences of Shakespeare's having been an actor for the quality of his dramatic writing, suggests that a major cause of Shakespeare's artistic defectiveness,

> may be deduced from our Author's being a *Player*, and forming himself first upon the judgments of that body of men whereof he was a member … As they live by the Majority, they know no rule but that of pleasing the present humour, and complying with the wit in fashion; a consideration which brings all their judgment to a short point. Players are such judges of what is *right*, as Taylors are of what is *graceful*.[44]

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[42] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:v. A search of the Literature Online (LION) database for the collocation 'vile ribaldr*' using the default date-range yields only two results—Pope's Preface to Shakespeare and Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks*.
[43] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, 1:271–72.
[44] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:vii.

Although the comparison of fashions in language and literary style with other forms of 'modishness', particularly in clothing, was by no means uncommon in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the verbal and theoretical resemblances between these two passages are striking.[45]

Perhaps the most obvious linkage between Shaftesbury's artistic theories and Pope's Preface, however, is their mutual adherence to the principle of the *vir bonus*—the insistence that the good and exemplary artist is necessarily a good man. ('Good man' in this context implies goodness in both moral and social senses, with the implication that the former stems from the latter.) Shaftesbury argues in the *Characteristicks* that artistic and literary merit are simply outgrowths of inward, aristocratic, moral virtue. Hence, according to Shaftesbury, 'the Knowledg and Practice of the social *Virtues*, and the Familiarity and Favour of the *moral* GRACES are essential to the Character of a deserving Artist', and, furthermore, 'the *Arts* and *Virtues* [are] mutually Friends: and thus the Science of *Virtuoso's*, and that of *Virtue* it-self, become, in a manner, one and the same'.[46] Conversely, bad art and poor writing are, for Shaftesbury, outward signs of a lack of moral character, associated in the 'Soliloquy' with dishonesty and low social status: '*Knavery* is mere *Dissonance* or *Disproportion*. And tho Villains may have strong *Tones* and natural Capacitys of Action; 'tis impossible that true *Judgment* and *Ingenuity* shou'd reside where *Harmony* and *Honesty* have no being'.[47]

It follows, according to Shaftesbury, that 'knaves', being morally one-dimensional, must be artistically one-dimensional also. Lacking 'good parts', they cannot experience the internal dialectic between the 'high' and 'low' sections of the artistic personality that, for Shaftesbury, is crucial for the production of good art.[48] Lacking the 'interest' within themselves to raise a better 'companion' who will judge and correct

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[45] On the rhetorical uses of clothing metaphors in the eighteenth century, see Claude Rawson, *Satire and Sentiment, 1660-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 133–96.

[46] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, 1:338. For Shaftesbury's use of the word 'virtuoso' here to mean a virtuous gentleman, rather than in the more usual (satirical) eighteenth-century sense of a pedant or antiquarian, see R. L. Brett, *The Third Earl of Shaftesbury: A Study in Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory* (London: Hutchinson, 1951), 130.

[47] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, 1:207–8.

[48] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, 1:170. On the role of 'inward colloquy' in both Shaftesbury's artistic theory and his own writing practices, see Robert Voitle, *The Third Earl of Shaftesbury: 1671–1713* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984), 335–36.

their works, they cannot be worthy authors. Conversely, the ideal author will not only engage in internal dialogue, but also 'regulate his Style or Language by the Standard of good Company, and People of the better sort'. One who offends 'against Good-Breeding, and the Laws of Decency', Shaftesbury declares, 'will no more be esteem'd *a good Author*, than will a Sinner against Grammar, good Argument, or good Sense'.[49] For Shaftesbury, as well as for Pope, aesthetics, literary value, and social positioning are intimately entwined.

Anna Bryson has noted that a feature of late seventeenth-century English conduct books is their preoccupation with the possibility of social corruption by inferiors. She speculates that, as civility came increasingly to be seen as produced through the mechanism of gentlemanly conversation, a corresponding unease developed about contact with those of lower social rank.[50] (In this, Restoration and Augustan languages of politeness resemble earlier, humanist discourses of counsel, which invested words with the power to cure or corrupt, depending on their moral content.) If politeness did indeed come about through the 'amicable collision' of gentleman-equals in the social world, it followed that exposure to members of the lower orders could strip away a gentleman's civil polish, and hence, as one of Bryson's sources puts it, collapse 'that just distance that order recommends between the Noble and the Mean'.[51] A similar anxiety about policing the boundary between high and low, in both the literary and social senses, underlies both Pope's editorial rhetoric and Shaftesbury's theory of 'virtuous' authorship. Both Pope and Shaftesbury are anxious to gentrify aesthetic quality—to equate the separation of the aesthetically (and, in Pope's case, textually) 'bad' from the 'good' with the segregation of social ranks and moral opposites. Both authors quite deliberately subsume literary and moral values within the language of aristocratic privilege.[52]

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[49] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, 1:165–66.

[50] Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 133–34.

[51] Richard Allestree, *The Gentleman's Calling* (1660), quoted in Bryson, *From Courtesy*, 134.

[52] For this tendency in Shaftesbury, see Robert Markley, 'Sentimentality as Performance: Shaftesbury, Sterne, and the Theatrics of Virtue', in *The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics, English Literature*, ed. Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (London: Methuen, 1987), 213–14.

Shaftesbury lays out the classical precedents to his theory of virtuous authorship in a long footnote to section 1.3 of his treatise. The principle that 'Villains' are incapable of true artistic judgement will, Shaftesbury maintains,

> hardly be disprov'd by Fact or History, either in respect of Philosophers themselves, or others who were the great Genius's or Masters in the liberal Arts. The Characters of the two best *Roman* Poets are well known. Those of the ancient *Tragedians* no less. And the great Epick Master [Homer], tho of an obscurer and remoter Age, was ever presum'd to be far enough from a vile or knavish Character … And those Historians who are of the highest value, were either in a private Life *approv'd good Men*, or noted such by their Actions in the Publick. As for Poets in particular (says the learned and wise STRABO) … 'tis impossible that he shou'd be a great and worthy Poet, who is not first a worthy and good Man'.[53]

What Shaftesbury is referring to here is the principle of the *vir bonus*—the idea, laid out in its classic form by Quintilian in Book 12 of the *Institutio Oratoria*, that the good orator must necessarily possess a virtuous moral character. 'I am not only saying that the orator must be a good man', Quintilian writes, 'but that no one can be an orator unless he is a good man'.[54] This prescription was extended from oratory to poetry and literature by other writers. Strabo, for instance, in the passage that Shaftesbury cites, defends the geographical details in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* against the charge that Homer had fabricated them by pointing to 'the inherent nobility or dignity' of Homer's character. 'The excellence of a poet' like Homer, Strabo suggests, 'is inseparably associated with the excellence of the man himself'.[55] Elsewhere,'Longinus', one of the key influences on eighteenth-century English neoclassicism, stipulates that,

> the truly eloquent must be free from low and ignoble thoughts. For it is not possible that men with mean and servile ideas and aims prevailing throughout their lives should produce anything that is admirable or worthy of immortality.

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[53] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, 1:208n.

[54] Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, trans. Donald A. Russell, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 12.1.

[55] Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, trans. Horace Leonard Jones (London: Heinemann, 1917), 1.2.5.

Great accents we expect to fall from the lips of those whose thoughts are deep and grave.[56]

For each of these authors, rhetoric and eloquence are inseparable from the moral—and social—goodness of the author or orator. In order to be successful in rhetoric, one must be of high moral character. This is because the materials with which the rhetorician works themselves possess an important moral aspect. The aim of rhetoric is to encourage good conduct—to morally improve—the audience which it is addressed to; it follows that only the good man will be able to do this successfully.[57] Brian A. Krostenko has described this phenomenon as 'the social performance of identity through aesthetic means'.[58] He suggests that Greek, and, from the second century, B.C., Roman, elites increasingly used aesthetic practices, including rhetoric, as means of demonstrating social privilege. Aesthetic value and social value were conflated, it being argued that only the mind and character of an elite person could produce aesthetically valuable objects.[59] When Pope writes of the 'many low and vicious parts and passages … unworthily charged upon' Shakespeare's character that an editor might remove, and Shaftesbury denies the role of author to the ungentle, both are drawing upon a shared, ultimately classical, assumption that good literary style necessarily reflects an author's other virtues. That is, they make a straightforward link between an author's moral character and social positioning and the quality of his writing. In doing so, they reflect the influence of classical literary biography and criticism, which assumed that there would be 'a perfect congruity between a poet's character and his work'.[60]

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[56] 'Longinus', *Longinus On the Sublime*, trans. W. Rhys Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1907), 9.3.

[57] Alan Brinton, 'Quintilian, Plato, and the *Vir Bonus*', *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 16, no. 3 (1983): 169, 174–76, 178.

[58] Brian A. Krostenko, *Cicero, Catullus and the Language of Social Performance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 1.

[59] Krostenko, *Cicero*, 79.

[60] Joseph Farrell, 'Greek Lives and Roman Careers in the Classical *Vita* Tradition', in *European Literary Careers: The Author from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Patrick Cheney and Frederick A. de Armas (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 29.

Christopher Gill has argued that biography and historiography written before the nineteenth century needs to be understood as having a 'character-centred viewpoint'.[61] Unlike (many) modern biographers, who interpret their subjects' actions as the expressions of unique personalities, and, as far as possible, try to avoid moral judgement, Gill suggests that ancient writers, and the neoclassicists who followed their example, regarded their subjects 'evaluatively (often morally) as the possessor of good or bad qualities that merit praise or blame'. Their aim was not the understanding of individual personality, but moral or ethical judgement 'by reference to a determinate standard of excellence, such as " virtue" or " good character"'.[62] In the case of an exemplary or historically important figure, the whole account could be shaped around the writer's need to accentuate the subject's most virtuous and admirable qualities.[63]

English biographers and literary critics of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries shared this preoccupation with character and reputation. Their role, as they saw it, was to evaluate morally and ethically, and to draw out and describe what was exemplary in the characters of those they wrote about. Indeed, to be the subject of these modes of writing—biography, historiography, literary criticism—was itself a mark of exemplary status. For editorial commentary and textual criticism, both of which incorporated aspects of historiography and biographical speculation, the concerns were similar.[64] In the case of a figure like Shakespeare, installed in the eighteenth-century pantheon as 'an Author of Character', textual matters could never be entirely separated from questions of morality, reputation, and aesthetics.[65]

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[61] Christopher Gill, 'The Question of Character-Development: Plutarch and Tacitus', *Classical Quarterly* n.s. 33, no. 2 (1983): 470.

[62] Gill, 'Question of Character', 470–71.

[63] Graham Parry, 'Biography in the Seventeenth Century', *Cambridge Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (2000): 315.

[64] For incisive statements about the connections between scholarly editing and biography, see James L. W. West, III, 'The Scholarly Editor as Biographer', in *Textual Studies and the Common Reader: Editing Novels and Novelists*, ed. Alexander Pettit (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000), 81–83.

[65] The quote comes from David Erskine Baker, *The Companion to the Play-House*, 2 vols. (London, 1764), 1:[Q4]ᵛ, who describes Shakespeare in these terms while discussing the authorship of *Pericles*.

Such a 'character-centred viewpoint' has important implications for apocryphal plays and other, canonical, works deemed morally or aesthetically suspect. For if an author's works are edited because they are exemplary, and editors see their role as protecting the reputations of their authors, then subject matter, morality, and aesthetic value must inevitably play a part in grounding editorial judgements about canonicity. Works, or parts of works, risk being excluded from the canon because they are *not* exemplary, or do not enhance the reputation of their author. Such exclusions, as Richard Hunter observes, are often argued in the language of moral and 'aesthetic condemnation'.[66] As we have seen, Pope explicitly links reputation with authorial attribution. Unmingling the non-authorial parts of the canon from those that are genuinely Shakespearean would, he writes, 'leave [Shakespeare's] character in a light very different' from that in which it seemed to lie in the early eighteenth century.[67]

Marcus Walsh has proposed separating the 'aesthetically oriented' editions of Pope, Hanmer, and Warburton from the 'authorially oriented' work of textual critics like Lewis Theobald and Edward Capell. As the eighteenth century progressed, he argues, 'the authorial orientation was increasingly dominant', as editors like 'Theobald and Capell … set out to establish … "what the author wrote"'.[68] While I agree with Walsh that eighteenth-century editorial rhetoric became increasingly focussed on recovering authors' textual remains, I do want to question his hard-and-fast division of Augustan textual critics into opposing camps. When editors and critics turned to questions of authorial attribution in the Shakespearean canon, aesthetic criteria and matters of 'character' often proved to be inseparable from matters of authorship. Arguments about whether Shakespeare had written particular plays or passages were often stated in explicitly aesthetic terms, or related to an editor's responsibility to protect authorial reputation.

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[66] Richard Hunter, 'The Sense of an Author: Theocritus and [Theocritus]', in *The Classical Commentary: Histories, Practices, Theory*, ed. Roy K. Gibson and Christina Shuttleworth Kraus (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 89–90, 94–95.

[67] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xxi.

[68] Marcus Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing: The Beginnings of Interpretative Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 10.

In the next two chapters, I shall examine the intersection of the authorial and the aesthetic in the textual and 'higher' criticism of Lewis Theobald. Pope and Theobald had radically different understandings of authorship, and appear to have clashed personally over the attribution of some of Pope's own works. However, while Theobald was, as Walsh points out, preoccupied with recovering authorial intention, questions of literary value and authorial reputation were never entirely absent from his discussions of attribution in the Shakespearean canon. These considerations, I shall argue, may have played a role in influencing the contents of Theobald's Shakespeare edition.

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LEWIS THEOBALD, ALEXANDER POPE, AND SHAKESPEARE'S FOLIO CANON

One year after the publication of Pope's edition of Shakespeare, a new work appeared on the London book-market. Entitled *Shakespeare Restored: or, A Specimen of the Many Errors, as well Committed, as Unamended, by Mr. Pope In his Late Edition of this Poet*, this volume was, as its sub-title suggests, a sustained attack on Pope's editorial scholarship. The author of *Shakespeare Restored* was Pope's exact contemporary, the scholar, attorney, playwright, poet, pantomime deviser, and journalist, Lewis Theobald. Pope's response to Theobald's assault on his critical acumen has become notorious. Rather than answering Theobald on his own terms, Pope retaliated through poetry. Through the medium of the *Dunciad* and the *Dunciad Variorum*, Theobald was reduced to the status of a comic character in Pope's literary *ouvre*. Pope's decision to shift the conflict into the realm of the poetic has meant that the contention between the two men is now subsumed within the story of Pope's own literary career. Theobald was briefly glanced at in the 1728 fourth volume of the Pope-Swift *Miscellanies*—in the *Peri Bathous* and a '*Fragment* of a Satire'—and would then be crowned King of the Dunces at the end of the *Dunciad*, Book 1.[1] The *Dunciad Variorum* combines the personal insults embedded in the poem with denigrating, pseudo-scholarly notes on Theobald's life and character. Pope also lards the commentary with excerpts from Theobald's writings, archly redeployed so as to suggest Theobald's hypocrisy, faithlessness, and lack of taste.

In the prefatory matter to the poem, Pope compounded the insult by suggesting that his choice of Theobald had been a flippant—even whimsical—gesture. The 1728 *Dunciad* explains that the poem's hero had been given a name, rather than a pseudonym, in order to prevent the 'unjust scandal' that would result from readers falsely identifying

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[1] For Theobald's appearances in the fourth Pope-Swift *Miscellany*, see Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift, *Miscellanies: The Last Volume* (London, 1736), 33, 34, 37, 207.

him. This, Pope writes, 'is saved by calling him *Theobald*, which by good luck happens to be the name of a real person'.[2] In the *Dunciad Variorum*, Pope (as Martinus Scriblerus) expands on the reasons for Theobald's selection as hero. The poem's hero, he writes, should embody each of the three 'forces' of the Goddess of Dulness—'Party writers, dull Poets, and wild Criticks'.[3] Scriblerus continues:

> A *Person* must be fix'd upon to support this Action, who (to agree with the said Design) must be such as is capable of being all three. This *Phantom* in the Poet's Mind must have a *Name*. He seeks for one who hath been concerned in the *Journals*, written bad *Plays* or *Poems*, and has publish'd low *Criticisms*. He finds his Name to be *Tibbald*, and he becomes of Course the Heroe of the Poem.[4]

Theobald's scholarly 'lowness' and literary incompetence, Pope implies, made him the perfect representative of Grub Street. Yet, at the same time, Pope insists on Theobald's *unimportance*, suggesting that he is quite incidental to the poem's action—and, indeed, to Pope himself.

Recent biographical research has, however, revealed the extent to which Pope and Theobald's disagreement was rooted in personal animosity.[5] The antagonism between the two seems to have stemmed from an early amity—or even a short-lived patron-client relationship—that deteriorated into misunderstanding and bitterness.[6] Pope's choice of Theobald as his hero for the *Dunciad*, in other words, was probably anything but a flippant gesture. At the centre of this dispute, I shall suggest, were two divergent, but overlapping, conceptions of canonicity. In particular, Pope objected to what he saw as Theobald's lack of regard for authorial—and especially posthumous—reputation. In a series of hostile encounters, the two clashed over the extent of the Wycherley canon, the text of Shakespeare, and the unattributed works of Pope himself. When Theobald seemed

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[2] Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad. An Heroic Poem. In Three Books* (London, 1728), vi. (In all quotes from this preface, italics have been reversed.)

[3] Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad Variorum* (London, 1729), xxv.

[4] Pope, *Dunciad Variorum*, xxv–vi.

[5] See Shef Rogers, 'Uncovering Wycherley's *Miscellaneous Remains*', *Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand Bulletin* 25, nos. 1 and 2 (2001): 145–56, and Michael F. Suarez, S. J., 'Uncertain Proofs: Alexander Pope, Lewis Theobald, and Questions of Patronage', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 96, no. 3 (2002): 404–34.

[6] The argument of Suarez's 'Uncertain Proofs'.

to have a new play to add to the Shakespearean canon—the *Double Falshood*—Pope and his allies systematically undermined its credibility, and with it, Theobald's own reputation. Theobald responded by explicitly rejecting Pope's mode of editing Shakespeare and the system of canonical 'degradations' that had gone with it. Theobald's edition would instead follow the editorial style of Richard Bentley's 'Amsterdam Horace', with its extensive footnoted commentary.

When Theobald's edition finally appeared, in 1733, however, it was not as radically different from Pope's as the *Dunciad*'s rhetoric might have suggested. It contained no new works—neither the *Double Falshood* nor any of the eight other plays that Theobald at one time or another claimed were Shakespeare's. Indeed, Theobald's *Shakespeare* showed a discretion—bordering on what R. F. Jones has called 'faint-heartedness'—about discussing matters of attribution and connoisseurship.[7] This is apparent in Theobald's remarks on those plays whose authorship he thought doubtful, like *Titus Andronicus*, and in his references to other, extra-canonical works which he thought genuinely Shakespearean. Similarly, in some of his notes and emendations on Shakespeare, Theobald showed, like Pope, a tendency to ascribe embarrassing material—particularly historical errors—to agencies other than Shakespeare.

What might account for these aspects of Theobald's edition? Firstly, despite Pope's caricature of him in the *Dunciad*, Theobald *did* display a concern with authorial reputation, and some of his editorial changes seem to have been motivated by a desire to defend Shakespeare from the imputation of having written poorly. Secondly, the *Dunciad* had functioned as something of a pre-emptive strike on Theobald's ability to produce a *Shakespeare* radically different in terms of canon from that which had preceded it. If Theobald's taste in extra-canonical Shakespeare suggested a potential, if not a definite intention, to produce a more inclusive edition than any that had yet appeared, the fallout from Pope's attack on *Double Falshood* may have dissuaded him from doing so.[8] The prospect of Popean ridicule may, then, account for the peculiar timidity of Theobald's

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[7] See Richard Foster Jones, *Lewis Theobald: His Contribution to English Scholarship with Some Unpublished Letters* (1919; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1966), 106.

[8] Cf. Don-John Dugas, *Marketing the Bard: Shakespeare in Performance and Print, 1660–1740* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006), 237.

discussions about authorship. In this chapter, and the one that follows, I shall examine how Pope's and Theobald's ideas about canonicity and authorial reputation influenced their editorial work, and set the scene for the *Dunciad* episode. I shall then discuss the possible impacts that this might have had on the shape and contents of Theobald's 1733 edition of Shakespeare.

POPE, SHAKESPEARE, AND CANONICITY

Pope's own views about canonicity were trenchantly expressed in the Preface to his 1717 *Works*, which appeared—remarkably—shortly after he turned twenty-nine. Collected editions of authors' works in the early eighteenth century were almost always posthumous productions, and Pope thus immediately had to deny that he was motivated by vanity or the pursuit of fame.[9] He does this by sketching a satirical picture of a naïve young author who, having sought fame, is instead faced with a multitude of distorting mirrors. He becomes either a 'Coxcomb' by believing the empty 'flattery' of the town, or an object of hatred and derision for those who envy his talents.[10] Either way, Pope suggests, there is no satisfaction to be found in the mocking simulacrum of reputation offered by literary celebrity. In contrast to this, Pope implies that he himself had been indifferent to fame when starting his literary career:

> I writ because it amused me; I corrected because it was as pleasant to me to correct as to write; and I publish'd because I was told I might please such as it was a credit to please.[11]

Pope is clearly anxious that readers perceive him as a self-contained author, serenely unconcerned by the motivations of fame. However, reputation—both immediate and posthumous—is central to the Preface's work, and, in the final paragraph, Pope concentrates all his rhetorical talents on defining for his audience what exactly the

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[9] See James McLaverty, '"For Who So Fond as Youthful Bards of Fame?": Pope's *Works* of 1717', in *The Culture of Collected Editions*, ed. Andrew Nash (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 49.

[10] Alexander Pope, *The Works of Mr. Alexander Pope* (London, 1717), [a2]^r–v.

[11] Pope, *Works 1717*, b1^r.

literary value of his work relies on. This, he asserts, is the principle of *canonical selectivity*. Pope's claim to literary reputation, then, lies in his ability to determine what is—and, more importantly, is not—admitted to the canon of his accepted works:

> I believe no one qualification is so likely to make a good writer, as the power of rejecting his own thoughts; and it must be this (if any thing) that can give me a chance to be one. For what I have publish'd, I can only hope to be pardon'd; but for what I have burn'd, I deserve to be prais'd.[12]

This desire to exert total control over readerly perceptions of him leads him not only to withhold 'mean things' from public consideration, but also other pieces which he thought 'tolerable'.[13] In return for these 'sacrifices', Pope asks his audience to accept unquestioningly the canonical boundaries he sets for them. No other works except those he explicitly lays claim to are, he writes, to be regarded as genuine:

> On this account the world is under some obligation to me … to look upon no verses as mine that are not inserted in this collection. And perhaps nothing could make it worth my while to own what are really so, but to avoid the imputation of so many dull and immoral things, as partly by malice, and partly by ignorance, have been ascribed to me.[14]

Pope's idea of a canon is one which is explicitly defined by its author. The criterion for selection is literary reputation—as Pope puts it, the 'chance' to be regarded as 'a good author'. The ongoing piracies of his work by Edmund Curll and his associates, which he alludes to in the final paragraph, paradoxically assist Pope in this task. The fact that some of his work has been pirated enables him to imply that *any* poems excluded from the *Works* are not his. By doing so, he is able to merge genuine, but unclaimed, Popeana into the same category as misattributions and outright forgeries. The *Works'* instauration of an authorial canon means that he does not even have to mention the titles of those works whose authorship he wishes to deny. These pieces—the 'Epigram upon Two or Three', the eclogues in the *Court Poems*, and *The Worms*, among others—could

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[12] Pope, *Works 1717*, [b2]ʳ.
[13] Pope, *Works 1717*, [b2]ʳ.
[14] Pope, *Works 1717*, [b2]ʳ.

simply be dismissed as 'so many … things', set off from Pope's authorial personality by the end-papers of the 1717 *Works*.[15]

This act of self-canonization is part of Pope's project to exert full editorial control over his own writings. In the *Works*, Pope assumed for himself all of the functions of canonicity that normally befell an author after death. He annotates his own poems, writes—or imagines—his own biography, chooses his own portrait, and separates his genuine works from the apocrypha.[16] By defining his canon so assiduously, he was also, rather paradoxically, able to preserve a space for himself as an *anonymous* writer. Because his authorial persona was so visible, Pope was, as Pat Rogers puts it, able to slide 'in and out of anonymity when it served his turn'.[17] This allowed him both to issue attacks on his literary enemies, such as the *Dunciad*, anonymously, and also to pass minor pieces into print discreetly, such as the anonymous verses he contributed to Theobald's *Grove* collection.[18]

Pope continued to display this preoccupation with canonicity throughout his career. In the last volume of the Pope-Swift *Miscellanies*, he and Swift inserted a Preface that agonizes at length over the ethics of authorial attribution. Acting as both an apology for publication and an attack on the booktrade's disregard for authors' reputations, the Preface bemoans the fact that the collection had to be published at all. However, since neither author can 'quite disown' the pieces within it because of those 'distinguishing Marks of Style' that allow 'Persons of Taste' to discern their authorship, the pieces have been collected under their names.[19] Having made this act of selection, however, Pope and Swift are adamant that this sets a boundary on their acknowledged works. These poems are, they insist, the last genuine and unadulterated pieces circulating among the reading public:

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[15] See Paul Baines and Pat Rogers, *Edmund Curll, Bookseller* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 69, 80–82, 87.

[16] James McLaverty, *Pope, Print, and Meaning* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 56.

[17] Pat Rogers, 'Nameless Names: Pope, Curll, and the Uses of Anonymity', *New Literary History* 33, no. 4 (2002): 239.

[18] Rogers, 'Nameless Names', 240–43. For Pope's role as a contributor to *The Grove*, see Suarez, 'Uncertain Proofs', 417–18.

[19] Pope and Swift, *Miscellanies*, A4ᵛ, A3ᵛ.

they are *Ours*, and others should in Justice believe they are *All* that are *Ours*. If any thing else has been printed in which we really had any Hand, it is either intolerable imperfect, or loaded with spurious Additions …. We declare, that this Collection contains every Piece, which in the idlest Humour we have written; not only such as came under our Review or Correction; but many others, which however unfinished, are not now in our Power to suppress. Whatsoever was in our Possession at the Publishing hereof, or of which no Copy was gone abroad, we have actually destroyed, to prevent all Possibility of the like Treatment.[20]

For Pope and Swift, a genuine work was an authorized one, and they reserved the right to suppress—or physically destroy—pieces in which either had written 'below himself'.[21] Interestingly, the Preface conflates 'imperfect' works with 'spurious' pieces—suggesting that both misattributed works, and genuinely authorial works that had miscarried in execution, were likewise 'intolerable'. The criterion here for canonical inclusion is clearly not the *authenticity* of a work, but whether that work adds to its author's *reputation*.

When Pope came to edit Shakespeare, it is not surprising that he applied the same reputation-based view of canonicity to Shakespeare's works. As we saw in the last chapter, he attributed most of what he saw as Shakespeare's faults to the malign influence of the Elizabethan theatre world. Lacking, as Pope was to put it in his 1717 Preface, the 'privilege of being admitted into the best company', Shakespeare—both the man and the works—had been corrupted by the 'lowness' that surrounded him.[22] By paring back and excising those parts of the Shakespearean canon that he believed were spurious, Pope aimed to rescue Shakespeare's authorial reputation. Were the accretions that had been added to Shakespeare's works by theatre personnel removed, Pope writes, 'the greatest and grossest part of what are thought his errors would vanish, and leave his character in a light very different from that disadvantageous one, in which it now appears to us'.[23]

Pope's primary concern in the 1723–5 edition was, then, exonerating Shakespeare's *character*. As in the Preface to the Pope-Swift *Miscellanies*, Pope

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[20] Pope and Swift, *Miscellanies*, [A6]ʳ.
[21] See Pope and Swift, *Miscellanies*, A3ᵛ.
[22] Pope, *Works 1717*, [a2]ᵛ.
[23] Alexander Pope, ed., *The Works of Shakespear*, 6 vols. (London, 1723–25), 1:xxi.

willfully conflates literary faults with literary spuriousness. Throughout the edition, it seems to be Pope's assumption that the most imperfect parts of Shakespeare were indeed 'unworthily charged upon him', and that it was his task as editor to 'correct' Shakespeare by removing them.[24]

THEOBALD'S RESPONSE TO POPE'S *SHAKESPEAR*

As David Nichol Smith has observed, Pope seems to have approached Shakespeare much as a literary executor would.[25] Indeed, Pope had acted in that role twice in the years immediately prior to the Shakespeare edition⸺for Thomas Parnell, in 1722, and John Sheffield, Duke of Buckinghamshire, in 1723.[26] When Theobald came to produce his own edition of Shakespeare, in 1733, however, he explicitly repudiated Pope's editorial approach. As though answering Pope's mocking charge, in the *Dunciad Variorum*, that he 'laboured to prove *Shakespear* guilty of terrible *Anachronisms*, or low *Conundrums*', Theobald restored to the Shakespearean text almost all of the material that Pope had decorously excised.[27] In the *Tempest*, for instance, Theobald notes the first lines that Pope 'degraded' to the bottom of the page⸺Alonso's 'You cram these words into my ears against / the stomach of my sense'⸺and places a footnote nearby. This passage, he writes,

> seems to Mr. *Pope* to have been an Interpolation by the Players…. tho' I allow the Matter of the Dialogue to be very poor and trivial (of which, I am sorry to say, we don't want other Instances in our Poet;) I cannot be of this Gentleman's Opinion, that it is interpolated…. Mr. *Pope's* Criticism … is injudicious and unweigh'd…. poor and jejune as the Matter of the Dialogue is, it was certainly design'd to be of a ridiculous Stamp.[28]

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[24] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xxi.

[25] David Nichol Smith, *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928), 34.

[26] Peter Seary, *Lewis Theobald and the Editing of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 59n39.

[27] Pope, *Dunciad Variorum*, 15n.

[28] Lewis Theobald, ed., *The Works of Shakespeare*, 7 vols. (London, 1733), 1:24n.

At the corresponding point in the dialogue, Theobald restores Pope's degraded passage to the main text block. In a footnote to *Love's Labour's Lost*, Theobald states explicitly, 'I have made it a Rule throughout this edition, to replace all those Passages, which Mr. *Pope* … thought fit to *degrade*'.[29]

As these footnotes indicate, Theobald was anxious to confront Pope's editorial method as directly as he could. Bentleyan footnotes replace the system of degradations and brief glosses that Pope had employed. Moreover, Theobald attacks the assumptions behind Pope's criticism. Although he allows, for instance, that the dialogue in the comic parts of the *Tempest* is indeed 'very poor and trivial', Theobald attributes this fault to Shakespeare's own design. Shakespeare, Theobald writes, had not only written poorly in this passage, but had done so deliberately—the lines were *intended* 'to be … ridiculous'. As Peter Seary points out, Theobald, as a deviser of low-brow—but highly successful—pantomimes for John Rich, may have identified quite personally with what he saw as Shakespeare's surrender to the coarse theatrical tastes of his age.[30] In his note to *Love's Labour's Lost*, Theobald explicitly equates the '*Puns, Conundrum*, and *quibbling* Conceits' of the Elizabethan stage with the '*Arlequinades*' of eighteenth-century popular theatre.[31] For the author of *The Necromancer; Or, Harlequin Doctor Faustus* and *Harlequin a Sorcerer, with the Loves of Pluto and Proserpine*, this must have involved an element of self-reproach.[32]

In the final act of *Cymbeline*, Theobald performs a similar act of restoration. By reinstating the masque of Jupiter to the main text block, he again explicitly places the authority of the original text above that of Pope's recent editorial innovations. Yet, even here, Theobald is careful to indicate that his literary judgement of the passage coincides with Pope's. The note signalling the restoration reads defensively, even apologetically:

> All this intermediate Scene, from the Instant that *Posthumus* falls asleep to the *Exit* of the *Goaler* here, I could be as well content, as Mr. *Pope* is, should be left out. But as 'tis found in the earliest *Folio* edition, tho' it should have been an

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[29] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 2:109n.
[30] Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 143–44.
[31] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 2:110n.
[32] For details of Theobald's pantomime career, see Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 20–21, 204.

> Interpolation, and not of SHAKESPEARE's writing, I did not think, I had any Authority to discard it.[33]

Theobald's language here is ambiguous. He seems to indicate agreement with Pope that the masque is indeed an interpolation, but, in the next sentence, writes that he cannot use this as a basis for expunging it from the text. Even demonstrably un-Shakespearean material might, he implies, have to remain in the text if the Folio tradition demanded it.[34] Having taken this position, however, Theobald immediately proceeds to withdraw from it. As we have seen, Pope reserved a right to 'judge' which Folio plays were genuine based on his sense of 'the distinguishing marks of [Shakespeare's] style'.[35] In his note on *Cymbeline*, Theobald also uses an argument from connoisseurship, but does so in order to invert Pope's position. The presence of the 'Stamp of our Author' suggests that the masque—or some of it—is genuinely Shakespeare's:

> I own, to Me, what *Jupiter* says to the *Phantoms* seems to carry the Stamp of our Author: if the other Parts of the *Masque* appear inferior, I heartily wish, this were the only place where we have Reason to complain of inequalities, either in Style, or the Matter.[36]

As in his note on the comic dialogues in the *Tempest*, Theobald implies that Shakespeare is capable of writing beneath himself. Not all of the 'inequalities … in Style' in Shakespeare's plays are, he suggests, due to interpolation. Both of these episodes would seem to support the notion that a fundamental divide existed between the two editors in their attitude to the text. Pope edited on the basis of 'literary reputation', while Theobald aimed to restore 'the corpus of Shakespeare's text', even if that meant attributing to Shakespeare material that could only harm his claims to 'fame' and 'genius'.[37] (As I shall

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[33] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 6:449n.

[34] On this point, see Simon Jarvis, *Scholars and Gentlemen: Shakespearian Textual Criticism and Representations of Scholarly Labour, 1725–1765* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 96.

[35] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xx.

[36] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 6:449n.

[37] See Richard Nash, 'Translation, Editing, and Poetic Invention in Pope's *Dunciad*', *Studies in Philology* 89, no. 4 (1992): 481–82.

suggest, however, the truth might be more ambiguous. Pope and Theobald were not always diammetrically opposed to each other.)

CONTEXTS FOR A QUARREL

Disagreements over the ethics of authorial attribution seem to have occurred repeatedly in exchanges between the two men. In 1721, Pope had contributed two anonymous poems to Theobald's miscellany collection *The Grove; Or, A Collection of Original Poems, Translations, &c.* As Michael F. Suarez notes, the presence of Pope's name on the poems would have been a significant selling-point for the collection; Pope had, therefore, presumably insisted to Theobald that the pieces be anonymous.[38] In his Preface to *The Grove*, Theobald wrote, with, perhaps, a hint of exasperation,

> There are several Gentlemen's Names of Note who furnish'd … Parts of this Collection, (and whose Character might give a check to any Over-freedom in Censure) that might be added, but that I am not at Liberty to insert them.[39]

Pope, for his part, apparently felt that Theobald had never made an appropriate return for this and other early favours. Defending his treatment of Theobald in the *Dunciad* and the *Peri Bathous*, Pope wrote: 'You can hardly conceive how little either Pique or Contempt I bear to any Creature, unless for immoral or dirty Actions'.[40] Theobald's 'Actions' towards Pope in the 1720s were, Pope implies, a violation of the rules of gratitude and good conduct.

In 1728–9, the two clashed once more over the issue of attribution. Again, the disagreement had to do with Pope's concern with authorial reputation and his preoccupation with managing his own poetic canon. Between 1705 and 1710, Pope had been involved in 'correcting' the poems of his friend and sponsor William Wycherley

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[38] Suarez, 'Uncertain Proofs', 417–18.
[39] Quoted in Suarez, 'Uncertain Proofs', 418.
[40] Alexander Pope to Aaron Hill, 9 June 1738, in Alexander Pope, *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, ed. George Sherburn, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 4:102.

with an eye to eventual publication.[41] At some point, however, Pope claimed that Wycherley had decided against issuing an edition of his verses, judging that the poems were unworthy of being seen by anyone outside his immediate circle.[42] On New Year's Eve, 1715, Wycherley died, and, through a rather torturous series of events, Theobald obtained the rights to edit his poetry. Theobald had been the attorney employed by Wycherley's heirs, and was instrumental in having Wycherley's controversial death-bed marriage affirmed as legitimate in the resulting court case.[43] As Shef Rogers has argued, it must have seemed to Pope that Theobald's editorship was simply 'a crass reward … for the careful legal scheming' he had undertaken on his clients' behalf.[44] In 1728, Theobald's edition, entitled *The Posthumous Works of William Wycherley Esq; In Prose and Verse*, appeared on the London book market. The following year, Pope took the extraordinary step of issuing his own 'corrected' version of it. The directness of Pope's challenge to Theobald is evident in the fact that Pope simply appropriated the title of the former work, adding only *Vol. II* to the end of it. Pope's main contributions were a set of newly published letters between himself and Wycherley, an address 'To the Reader' (carefully written so as to conceal Pope's authorship of it), and an annotated version of the original contents page.[45] In the latter, Pope laid out precisely—even fussily—the details of authorship and attribution of which Theobald, as an outsider to the Wycherley circle, had been ignorant.

Pope clearly believed that Theobald's edition represented a threat to Wycherley's posthumous reputation, and his 1729 edition was an attempt to repair the damage he believed had been done to Wycherley's name, as well as his own. In the address, Pope both affirmed his regard for Wycherley's memory, and defined the authorship problem, relating it directly to the matter of authorial 'Character':

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[41] Raymond Stephanson, '*Letters of Mr. Alexander Pope* and the Curious Case of Modern Scholarship and the Vanishing Text', *Eighteenth-Century Life* 31, no. 1 (2007): 3.

[42] See Pope's address 'To the Reader', in Pope, *Correspondence*, 1:xxxv.

[43] Rogers, 'Uncovering Wycherley', 149, 153.

[44] Rogers, 'Uncovering Wycherley', 153.

[45] For Pope's authorship of the preface, see his letter to the Earl of Oxford, 16 October 1729, in Pope, *Correspondence*, 3:58–59.

> There cannot certainly be a greater Injury to a dead or living Author, than to publish such Works, the unfinish'd Parts of which will be ascrib'd to the one, the more finish'd to the other, and yet answerable to the Intent or Character of neither. It was therefore thought, that to represent the True State of this Case, would be doing the best Justice to the Memory of Mr. *Wycherley*.[46]

The problems with Theobald's edition, Pope argues, are manifold. It consists of unfinished and imperfect works that were not intended for print. There is no indication that Pope had revised, or 'touch'd upon', particular poems—Pope, in other words, has not been given credit for his own work. Finally, Pope suggests, Theobald himself had adulterated some of the verses in an attempt to foist off his own poetry as Wycherley's. In response to these problems, Pope offers his own editorial annotations and the letters between him and Wycherley. These 'will', he writes,

> enable the Reader to distinguish, which of the Pieces were touch'd upon, with the Author's own Consent and Concurrence, by his Friend; and which may have been finger'd after his Death, by others, without any Warrant but their own Arrogance, or Motive but their own Lucre.[47]

In the contents page, Pope inserts next to the names of the poems in the edition a series of judgements about their authorship, based upon both manuscript evidence and his sense of Wycherley's style. Beside the title of the 'Introduction' to the 'Maxims', for instance, Pope writes:

> This is most certainly written by some other hand, tho' some of the Thoughts are Mr. *Wycherley*'s. (Compare it with his Style in Prose, in the Preface to his POEMS in Fol. 1704. The Dedication to his PLAIN-DEALER, his LETTERS, &c.[48]

Elsewhere, while not exactly identifying which parts of particular poems are his, he places an asterisk next to the titles of those which he had revised.[49]

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[46] Pope, *Correspondence*, 1:xxxv.

[47] Pope, *Correspondence*, 1:xxxiv.

[48] Quoted in Vinton A. Dearing, 'Pope, Theobald, and Wycherley's *Posthumous Works*', *PMLA* 68, no. 1 (1953): 226. (Italics reversed.)

[49] Dearing, 'Pope, Theobald, and Wycherley', 227.

Pope's treatment of Theobald in the *Posthumous Works, Vol. II* indicates what it was that Pope found objectionable in the latter's treatment of authors. Firstly, Pope implies, Theobald's interest in editing is primarily a *financial* one.[50] His edition of Wycherley combines 'Arrogance' with a lack of first-hand knowledge about the circumstances behind the poems' production, and underlying both, Pope suggests, is a simple desire for 'Lucre'. Beside this portrayal of a mercenary editor, Pope places a contrasting—and highly self-serving—image of his own relationship with Wycherley. The *Posthumous Works* contain, he writes, the poems of

> Two Eminent Writers, remarkable for so long a Friendship at so great an Inequality of Years … And … in this we publish an *Example*, (very rarely to be found among any Authors, and never but among the Best,) of so much Temper, Sense of His own Deficiencies, and Deference to the Judgment of a Friend, in the One; and of so much Sincerity, Candor and Zeal for the Reputation of Friend, in the Other.[51]

Pope's preface carefully fashions his work on Wycherley's poems into an *exemplum* of gentlemanly collaboration, and emphasizes its roots in social intimacy. He then goes on to suggest that only one who is a 'Friend' to authors can do 'Justice' 'to their *Memories*'.[52] Theobald, who is barred from this condition by both social circumstance and editorial personality, should, Pope implies, be likewise prevented from editing. (Indeed, in 1731, Pope would attempt to dissuade Jacob Tonson, Jr., from publishing Theobald's *Shakespeare*, and was only consoled upon discovering that other booksellers would have brought out an edition had the Tonsons not intervened.[53])

Pope's suggestion—that editors like Theobald should be kept away from authors' literary remains—recurs in the preface's final paragraph. Here, Pope describes the present location of Wycherley's letters:

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[50] Rogers, 'Uncovering Wycherley', 154.

[51] Pope, *Correspondence*, 1:xxxv.

[52] Pope, *Correspondence*, 1:xxxv, xxxiv.

[53] See Pope, *Correspondence*, 3:241–45. In an April 15, 1729, letter to Matthew Concanen, Theobald similarly accuses of Pope of deliberately trying to deter subscribers to his projected *Remarks on Shakespeare* and also sabotage his benefit night for *Double Falshood* with his timing of the *Dunciad Variorum*'s publication. See John Nichols, ed., *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 2 (London, 1817), 222.

> The *Originals*, in the Author's own Hand-writing, (together with some other material Papers) may, upon Application, be view'd in the HARLEY-LIBRARY, by any Gentleman, or other Person, of such a Character as to be admitted.[54]

Access to private papers, Pope suggests, should properly depend on social standing and 'Character', two things which the preface strongly implies that Theobald lacks.[55]

Pope, of course, would develop this portrait of a 'venal and … vain' Theobald more fully in the notes to the *Dunciad Variorum*.[56] As the address 'To the Reader' did, Pope's *Variorum* commentary emphasized Theobald's supposed lack of respect for other authors, coupled with his disproportionately high regard for his own writings. What particularly seems to have annoyed Pope was what he saw as the self-servingness and hypocrisy of Theobald's approach to authorship. Theobald had been content to attribute to Wycherley verses that Pope had written; however, Pope claimed, Theobald was always assiduous in claiming his *own* literary property. In a footnote mocking Theobald's annotative style, Pope observes that, in his editions, 'sometimes a note, sometimes even *half* a note, are carefully owned by him'.[57] Scholarly annotation as Theobald practised it seemed to Pope to be a wholly parasitic mode of writing. The notes existed only to aggrandize the editor—to display his learning, his editorial conjectures, his total supremacy over the words of his author. The Bentleyan style of annotation was, Pope implies, a fitting one for a critic who could write 'anonymous letters in praise of' his own works, but would have so little 'reverence' for Shakespeare 'as to say in print, *He deserved to be whipt*'.[58]

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[54] Pope, *Correspondence*, 1:xxxv.

[55] For a glimpse of the machinations behind Pope's deposit of the letters in the library, see Pope's letters to the Earl of Oxford in September and October 1729, in Pope, *Correspondence*, 3:54, 58–59; and J. McLaverty, 'The First Printing and Publication of Pope's Letters', *Library* 6th ser., no. 2 (1980): 271.

[56] Jarvis, *Scholars and Gentlemen*, 78.

[57] Pope, *Dunciad Variorum*, 15n.

[58] See Pope, *Dunciad Variorum*, 11n, 15n.

'SO FAR HAD HE LOST HIS REVERENCE'?

Most modern criticism has been willing to accept Pope's division of himself and Theobald into different editorial categories. However, as Theobald's approach ultimately became the template for all that followed, the valency of the opposition has reversed.[59] Theobald, as the 'first modern editor' of Shakespeare, has been credited with a thoroughgoing 'scholarly' approach to the Shakespearean text—one that eschewed the avowedly 'aesthetic', or reputation-centred, concerns of Pope.[60] As Jean I. Marsden puts it,

> For Theobald, only evidence from Shakespeare's text, not an editor's faulty judgment, can authorize corrections and amendments…. Unlike Pope, Theobald's attitude towards Shakespeare is non-judgmental, and … he is deeply concerned with presenting the words Shakespeare himself penned.[61]

Theobald, with his reliance on the 'conference of places' principle for defending emendations, then, vests ultimate authority in Shakespeare's *text*, not his posthumous reputation.[62]

I certainly would not want to question the general truth of these statements. In conscious opposition to Pope, Theobald made scrupulous use of probabilistic arguments to defend his editorial emendations.[63] His notes on Shakespeare craft persuasive narratives about textual change using parallel passages, a knowledge of Elizabethan handwriting, and an understanding of contemporary stage practice. Similarly, while his annotations provided detailed information on Shakespeare's anachronisms, he attributed

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[59] See Nash, 'Pope's *Dunciad*', 481.

[60] Marcus Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing: The Beginnings of Interpretative Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 132, 16.

[61] Jean I. Marsden, *The Re-Imagined Text: Shakespeare, Adaptation, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995), 70.

[62] Walsh, *Shakespeare*, 142.

[63] See Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 6:416n, where Theobald notes where Pope has transposed a scene, and rather acidly remarks, 'Had Mr. *Pope* spar'd us a critical Note, to justify his Conduct in this Transposition, I might, perhaps, have submitted to the Sagacity and Weight of it'.

these faults to Shakespeare himself, and refused to excise them from the text.[64] Theobald repeatedly disavowed Pope's view that an editor should improve, or 'correct', the text when it fell short of its author's usual standards. Writing to William Warburton in 1729, he remarked that,

> I scarce need to observe to you, Sir, that I ever labour to make the smallest deviations that I can possibly from the text; never to alter at all, where I can by any means explain a passage into sense; nor ever by any emendations to make the Author better when it is probable the text came from his own hands.[65]

Four years later, in a note to *Love's Labour's Lost*, he reiterated the sentiment: 'where the Authority of all the Books makes the Poet commit a Blunder … 'tis the Duty of an Editor to shew him as he is'.[66]

Nevertheless, the notes to the 1733 *Shakespeare* show that Theobald did, on occasion, make editorial judgements on the basis of literary quality and his sense of what was 'worthy' of Shakespeare's name.[67] He was also capable of making harsh remarks about some of Shakespeare's dramatic and moral choices. This tendency is particularly marked when Theobald touched on the 'higher criticism'—the question of what Shakespeare did, and did not, write. In Theobald's writings as elsewhere in eighteenth-century Shakespeare criticism, the concerns of author-centred and aesthetic editing often bleed into one another. The question of whether Shakespeare wrote a particular play or passage becomes an aesthetic and a character-based one, in which literary quality and worthiness for canonical inclusion play deciding roles.

Theobald seems to have been particularly likely to regard as dubious any material that contained clear historical errors. The notes to the 1733 edition frequently show him labouring to ascribe these problems to agencies other than Shakespeare. In Act 5, scene

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[64] Peter Seary, 'Lewis Theobald, Edmond Malone, and Others', in *Reading Readings: Essays on Shakespeare Editing in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Joanna Gondris (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1998), 116–17.

[65] Nichols, ed., *Illustrations*, 2:209–10. Marcus Walsh (*Shakespeare*, 137) notes that in the original manuscript, Theobald has underlined his observation with red ink.

[66] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:112n; cf. Seary, 'Lewis Theobald', 116–17.

[67] Cf. Jonathan Brody Kramnick, *Making the English Canon: Print-Capitalism and the Cultural Past, 1700–1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 93–94.

1, of *Julius Caesar*, for instance, he alters Octavius' reference to Caesar's 'Three and thirty wounds' to 'three and twenty wounds' (5.1.53). In a footnote, he attributes the original to a 'Mistake' of the 'Transcribers', and says that he has made the change against the evidence of 'all the Editions …. on the joint authorities of *Appian*, *Plutarch*, and *Suetonius*'.[68] The *text's* authority, then, is outweighed by that of the Roman historians, and Theobald labours to excuse Shakespeare from having made the error, attributing it instead to stage functionaries—in this case, the book-keeper or prompter.[69]

Similar notes are sprinkled throughout the 1733 edition. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, 3.6.52, Theobald objects to the line 'The Ostentation of our Love, which left unshewn' on metrical grounds, insisting that last two syllables in 'Ostentation' were an actorly interpolation:

> This dragging, inharmonious *Alexandrine*, I am perswaded, is the Manufacture of our Player-Editors. They lov'd a sounding Word; and seeing One that did not fully answer to that End, and one that they, perhaps, were not immediately acquainted with, they, doubtless, took it for an Abbreviation.[70]

Again, Theobald defends his emendation on the aesthetic grounds. The 'dragging, inharmonious' defect is excised, and its presence in the text ascribed to the corrupting influence of the theatre. Heminge and Condell, Theobald implies, had been led into error through a combination of poor taste and linguistic ignorance. A further example of Theobald trying to 'acquit' Shakespeare of error in this way occurs in the Chorus's speech at the beginning of Act 3 *Henry V* (3.0.4). Noting that the received text has 'The well-appointed King at Dover peer', Theobald changes the text, against all preceding authorities, to '*Hampton* peer'.[71] In the accompanying footnote, he asks,

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[68] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 6:196–97n. See also the brief discussion in Horace Howard Furness, Jr., ed., *The Tragedie of Iulius Caesar*, A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare (Philadelphia: Lipincott, 1913), 244.

[69] Cf. Caroline Roberts, 'Lewis Theobald and Theories of Editing', in *Reading Readings: Essays on Shakespeare Editing in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Joanna Gondris (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1998), 198–99.

[70] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 6:272n.

[71] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:37.

could the Poet possibly be so discordant from himself, (and the Chronicles, which he copied;) to make the King here embark at *Dover*; when he has before told us so precisely, and that so often over, that he embark'd at *Southampton*? I dare acquit the Poet from so flagrant a Variation. The Indolence of a Transcriber, or a Workman at Press, must give Rise to such an Error. They, seing *pier* at the end of the verse, unluckily thought of Dover *pier*, as the best known to them; and so unawares corrupted the text.[72]

This desire to exculpate Shakespeare of charges of having written badly takes its most extreme form when Theobald turns to folio plays whose authorship he thought questionable. In the *Henry VI* sequence, the obtrusiveness of the plays' historical errors was such, he argued, that some other playwright must have been responsible for them. After outlining some of the plays' mistakes 'as far as the Order of Time is concern'd', Theobald goes on to argue,

> Indeed, tho there are several Master-Strokes in these three Plays, which incontestably betray the Workmanship of *Shakespeare*; yet I am almost doubtful, whether they are entirely of his Writing. And unless they were wrote by him very early, I shou'd rather imagine them to have been brought to him as a Director of the *Stage*; and so to have receiv'd some finishing Beauties at his hand. An accurate Observer will easily see, the *Diction* of them is more *obsolete*, and the *Numbers* more *mean* and *prosaical*, than in the Generality of his genuine Compositions.[73]

An observation about historical errors evolves, then, into one about authorship. As his references to the play's 'obsolete' language and 'mean' cadences indicate, Theobald's ultimate criterion for authenticity here is aesthetic judgement.[74] Although he admits that Shakespeare must have contributed something to the plays, these were no more than 'finishing Beauties'. Theobald's argument that Shakespeare had only revised the *Henry VI* plays would be taken up at the end of the eighteenth century by Richard Farmer and Edmond Malone, and his sense that the plays were not Shakespearean has been

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[72] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:37–38n. Although it has been rejected by modern editors, Theobald's emendation was accepted by his eighteenth-century editorial successors. See, for instance, Edmond Malone and James Boswell, eds., *The Plays and Poems of William Shakspeare*, 21 vols. (London, 1821), 17:334.

[73] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:110n.

[74] See Jones, *Lewis Theobald*, 186–87.

affirmed—at least in the case of *1 Henry VI*—by more recent scholarship.[75] However, what seems notable about Theobald's rhetoric here is its apparent hesitancy. Whereas Malone would devote a treatise to arguing against Shakespeare's authorship of the plays, Theobald summarizes his own aesthetic evidence in a sentence.

Just as Gildon had in writing about *Love's Labours Lost*, Theobald turns to the language of connoisseurship to articulate his sense of Shakespeare's presence in the play. Shakespeare's hand, he writes, is visible only in a few 'Master-Strokes'—the brush marks of a master painter drawn assertively across what is an otherwise apprentice canvas. As was his usual practice, Theobald develops an historical narrative to explain how this had happened. Combining his own knowledge of contemporary stage practice with the tradition, already present in Ravenscroft and Pope, that Shakespeare had been a 'Director of the Stage', Theobald posits that the *Henry VI* plays had been erroneously ascribed to Shakespeare on the basis of a few passing revisions. His language is (perhaps deliberately) vague enough to encompass both the possibility that these were old plays that Shakespeare touched up for a revival, or that they were new pieces brought to him for revision before first performance.[76]

During the late Jacobean and Caroline periods, the task of revising plays often fell to the company playwright.[77] By the late seventeenth century, however, the system had changed somewhat. It seems to have become normal practice for less experienced dramatists to leave a play in the hands of attached professionals like Dryden, who would often revise the script before seeing it through production.[78] Actor-managers, too, appear to have taken a prominent role in revising plays prior to performance.[79] Sometimes, plays

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[75] See Edmond Malone, *Dissertation on the Three Parts of King Henry VI* (London, 1787), and more recently, Gary Taylor, 'Shakespeare and Others: The Authorship of *Henry the Sixth, Part One*', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 7 (1995): 145–205, and Paul J. Vincent, 'When *harey* Met Shakespeare: The Genesis of *The First Part of Henry the Sixth*' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Auckland, 2005).

[76] For a more recent assessment of revision in the *Henry VI* plays, see Paul J. Vincent, 'Structuring and Revision in *1 Henry VI*', *Philological Quarterly* 84, no. 4 (2005): 377–402.

[77] Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time, 1590–1642* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971), 257.

[78] Tiffany Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 171.

[79] Stern, *Rehearsal*, 178–79.

touched up in this way subsequently became associated with their revisers' canons, rather than those of their original authors.[80] Something like this occurred in the case of *The Mistaken Husband*, which became identified as Dryden's on the basis of some textual revisions and the addition of a new scene.[81] At least one eighteenth-century source likewise credited Thomas Betterton with writing *The Revenge*, possibly an Aphra Behn play that he had revised for performance at Lincoln's Inn Fields.[82]

It seems to have been this system of authorship that Theobald had in mind when he 'imagined' the circumstances in which the *Henry VI* plays had been ascribed to Shakespeare. By identifying Shakespeare as a stage 'Director' to whom plays were 'brought' for revision, Theobald conflates him with figures like Betterton and William Davenant—managers whose power and autonomy stemmed from the newly centralized organizational structures that arose in the London theatres after the Restoration.[83] In doing so, he projects late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century theatrical norms backward onto the Elizabethan stage. Despite Theobald's attempt to ground his aesthetic response to the plays in historical evidence, then, his argument is—perhaps inevitably—anachronistic. Like other eighteenth-century critics of Shakespearean drama, Theobald ignores the subtle differences between the two stages, thereby remaking Shakespeare in the Augustan image.[84]

Shakespeare 'as Director of the *Stage*' plays a similar role in another of Theobald's Shakespearean de-attributions—*Titus Andronicus*. As we have seen, both Gildon and Pope had objected to this 'bloody butchering play', and Theobald merely elaborates on what had been said before.[85] *Titus Andronicus* is, he argues, an old play that Shakespeare—presumably as 'Director'—had altered for a later revival: 'that he …

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[80] See Stern, *Rehearsal*, 172.

[81] Alfred Harbage, 'Elizabethan-Restoration Palimpsest', *Modern Language Review* 35, no. 3 (1940): 305–6; Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, 'Attribution Problems in English Drama, 1660–1700', *Harvard Library Bulletin* 31, no. 1 (1983): 24–25.

[82] Judith Milhous, 'Thomas Betterton's Playwriting', *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 77, no. 4 (1974): 380.

[83] See Judith Milhous, 'Company Management', in *The London Theatre World 1660–1800*, ed. Robert D. Hume (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1980), 2–3.

[84] See Stern, *Rehearsal*, 123.

[85] For the quote, see Charles Gildon, ed., *The Works of Mr. William Shakespeare*, vol. 7 (London, 1710), 368.

introduc'd it a-new on the Scene, with the Addition of his own masterly Touches, is incontestable'.[86] Again, Theobald grounds his arguments against Shakespeare's authorship partly in aesthetics—'The Diction … where he has not taken the Pains to raise it … is', he writes, 'even beneath that of the Three Parts of *Henry VI*'.[87] However, he also takes care to buttress this judgement with historical evidence, in this case Jonson's jocular insinuation, in *Bartholomew Fair*, that *Titus Andronicus* was twenty-five or thirty years old in 1614. As Shakespeare would still have been in Stratford at this time, Theobald concludes, the play cannot have been his as first written. This, he wagers, is 'a Proof … that may put the Matter out of Question'.[88]

Perhaps significantly, considering Theobald's efforts to attribute historical errors in Shakespeare to other agencies, he also denigrates *Titus*' claims to historicity:

> The Story, we are to suppose, merely fictitious. *Andronicus* is a Sur-name of pure *Greek* Derivation: *Tamora* is neither mention'd by *Ammianus Marcellinus*, nor any body else that I can find. Nor had *Rome*, in the Time of her Emperours, any Wars with the *Goths*, that I know of …. And yet the Scene of our Play is laid at *Rome*, and *Saturninus* is elected to the Empire at the *Capitol*.[89]

Once more in Theobald's textual criticism, the question of literary spuriousness becomes bound up with that of historical unreliability. As he comments on these plays, he draws attention to their occasional absurdities, taking some care to insinuate that Shakespeare was not responsible for their commission. In Act 3 *1 Henry VI*, for instance, he footnotes Henry's claim to remember what his father had said about Talbot, remarking that Henry had been 'but nine Months old, when his father dy'd'. He draws two references to this fact from *2* and *3 Henry VI*, and concludes that,

> Forgetfulness … of this Pitch, (careless as our Author was in some respects,) could hardly come from him, had these Plays been his in the first Concoction:

[86] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 5:308n.
[87] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 5:308n.
[88] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 5:307n.
[89] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 5:308n.

however he might pass such an absurd Circumstance inadvertently, while he was only putting the finishing Hand to them.[90]

Theobald's notes are, however, oddly inconsistent in the way they ascribe authorship in *Titus Andronicus* and the *Henry VI* plays. Usually, Theobald seems content to regard the plays as Shakespearean. He defends readings and emendations with parallel passages drawn from the rest of the canon, implying that the plays are all, on some level, Shakespeare's. (He does, however, occasionally remark on how much more successfully the sentiments are expressed in other plays.[91]) The writer is, at these times, 'our Author'.[92] In other places, however, Theobald refers only to 'the Poet', 'the Author', or 'whoever else was the Author of this Play'.[93] Theobald's revision theory is flexible—or undeveloped—enough to encompass all these possibilities. Shakespeare's presence is only explicitly denied at moments like Henry VI's *faux pas* in Act 3 *1 Henry VI*, where Theobald judges the material so embarrassing that it 'could hardly have come from' Shakespeare's hand.[94]

As we have seen, Theobald's handling of authorship in the Shakespearean canon is discreet, even diffident. Any aesthetic judgements he makes about authorship are scrupulously supported with historical or documentary evidence. Not surprisingly, however, he was much less cautious in his opinions in private. In his correspondence with William Warburton, conducted on and off from 1729 to 1734, Theobald seems to have felt much less confined in sharing his negative responses to Shakespeare's plays and characters. Although Theobald would reuse much of this material in the notes to the 1733 *Shakespeare*, he left many of his strongest judgements about the authorship and aesthetic quality of folio plays in manuscript.

Theobald, like almost all eighteenth-century commentators, strongly disliked *Titus Andronicus*. However, in his edition, he was careful to combine his aesthetic

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[90] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:161n.

[91] See, for instance, Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:185n.

[92] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:185n

[93] See, for examples of each, Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:146n, 5:319n, and 5:353n, respectively.

[94] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:112n.

response to the play with historical evidence suggesting that Shakespeare had not originally composed it. Here is the full version of the note:

> This is one of those Plays, which I have always thought, with the better Judges, ought not to be acknowledg'd in the List of *Shakespeare*'s genuine Pieces. And, perhaps, I may give a Proof to strengthen this Opinion, that may put the Matter out of Question. *Ben Jonson* in the Induction to his *Bartlemew-Fair*, (which made its first Appearance in the Year 1614) couples *Jeronymo* and *Andronicus* together in Reputation, and speaks of them as Plays then of 25 or 30 Years standing. Consequently, *Andronicus* must have been on the Stage, before *Shakespeare* left *Warwickshire* to come and reside in *London*: and I have never heard it so much as intimated, that he turn'd his Genius to Stage-Writing, before he associated with the Players, and became one of their Body. However, that he afterwards introduc'd it a-new on the Scene, with the Addition of his own masterly Touches, is incontestable: and thence, I presume, grew his Title to it. The Diction in general, where he has not taken the Pains to raise it, is even beneath that of the Three Parts of *Henry VI*. The Story, we are to suppose, merely fictitious. *Andronicus* is a Sur-name of pure *Greek* Derivation: *Tamora* is neither mention'd by *Ammanius Marcellinus*, nor any body else that I can find. Nor had *Rome*, in the Time of her Emperours, any Wars with the *Goths*, that I know of: not till after the Translation of the Empire, I mean, to *Byzantium*. And yet the Scene of our Play is laid at *Rome*, and *Saturninus* is elected to the Empire at the Capitol.[95]

In the Warburton correspondence, however, his reaction to the play is much more clearly grounded in aesthetic and moral revulsion. Theobald's letter conveying his comments and emendations on the play, dated February 24, 1730, begins:

> I now proceed to Titus Andronicus, which, but for a few fine lines and descriptions, I could wish were not in the list of Shakespeare's acknowledged Plays. There is something so barbarous and unnatural in the fable, and so much trash in the diction, even beneath the three parts of Henry VI, that I am very much inclined to believe, it was not one of our Author's own compositions; but only introduced by him, and honoured with some of his masterly touches. The story, I suppose, to be merely fictitious. Andronicus is a name of pure Greek derivation: Tamora I can find no where else mentioned: nor had Rome, in the time of her Emperors, any wars with the Goths that I know of; not till after the translation of the empire, I mean, to Byzantium. But, to take it with all its absurdities…[96]

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[95] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 5:307–08n.
[96] Nichols, ed., *Illustrations*, 2:512.

This letter must have provided Theobald with the basis for his opening note to *Titus* in the 1733 *Shakespeare*. In a number of cases, he has recycled whole sentences, particularly in the last part. However, what seems most notable are the ways in which the two texts vary. Theobald has not only introduced the lengthy 'Proof' from *Bartholomew Fair*, he has carefully excised most of his own critical responses to the play. The references to the 'barbarous' and 'unnatural' qualities of the plot have been removed—and so too has the intimation that *Titus Andronicus* might contain 'fine lines and descriptions'. Theobald has also shifted the grounds for his suspicion that the play is un-Shakespearean from his own critical senses to those of 'the better Judges'—presumably unnamed aristocratic patrons and acquaintances. (Theobald had used a similar rhetorical strategy in the Preface to *Double Falshood*, where his first sentence refers to the positive 'Reception' the play 'found from those Great Judges, to whom I have had the Honour of communicating it in Manuscript'.[97])

Elsewhere in the 1733 edition, Theobald has softened considerably his earlier, harsher comments on the quality of folio plays. The opening note on *Richard III* judges the plot 'an *Oglio* of bloody Dissimulation and ambitious Cruelty'.[98] His remarks here, though critical, are much less directly hostile than in the Warburton correspondence, where Theobald states that, had some other author written it, the play 'would be as execrable to me as the character of its Hero', and goes on to muse that, 'I am sorry it was not of a better stamp, and more worthy of observation, because I have so many old copies of this Play'.[99] In discussing *Love's Labours Lost* with Warburton, Theobald calls it 'the very worst in the whole set', and concludes his remarks on a comically pained note: 'now I have done with this tedious bad Play, and I ought to conclude, with your old religious Editors, *Deo gratias*'.[100]

What are we to make of Theobald's attitude to the folio text? Despite Pope's insinuations, Theobald does seem to have edited with at least some concern for authorial reputation, and this affected the way in which he conceived of the Shakespearean canon.

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[97] Lewis Theobald, *Double Falshood; Or, The Distrest Lovers* (London, 1728), [A5]ʳ.
[98] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:400n.
[99] Nichols, ed., *Illustrations*, 2:453.
[100] Nichols, ed., *Illustrations*, 2:313, 329.

As Pope had done, Theobald tended to attribute aesthetic shortcomings in Shakespeare to external agencies—corruption, interpolation, or the 'prevailing Vice of the Times' he lived in.[101] Some of his *ex ingenio* emendations also appear to have been motivated by a desire to 'acquit the Poet' from historical errors and 'flagrant … Variation' within his own plots.[102] Similarly, Theobald's notes and letters show that he was willing to make strong aesthetic judgements about some of Shakespeare's plays, and that these sometimes hardened into suspicions that Shakespeare had not originally written them. The diffidence with which Theobald expressed these opinions, however, indicates that he trusted his aesthetic sense somewhat less than Pope did.

While Pope had literally excised those portions of the *Works* that reflected badly on Shakespeare's character, Theobald's regard for the authority of the text led him to retain them. Pope had tried with Shakespeare—as he would later do with Wycherley—to draw clear boundaries between authorial agents. In doing so, he endeavoured to rescue Shakespeare's reputation by identifying—and castigating—'low' material that he believed had been foisted on Shakespeare by the 'Players'. Theobald, on the other hand, explicitly resisted this method. Speaking of Pope's 'degradations', Theobald wrote: 'As We have no Authority to call them in Question for not being genuine … I thought I had no Authority to displace them'.[103]

This, of course, leaves the question of what was, or was not, 'genuine' among the plays. As we have seen with *Titus Andronicus* and the *Henry VI* plays, Theobald was unwilling—or unable—to follow through on his aesthetic convictions and 'displace' what he believed was not Shakespeare's.[104] The result was a mingled canon, in which the plays themselves jostled with Theobald's prefatory notes calling their authenticity into question, and in which the commentary that followed failed to take a consistent position. In the 1733 *Shakespeare*, a play like *Titus Andronicus* both is, and is not, Shakespeare's, as the object of Theobald's notes shuffles between 'our Author', 'the Author', and 'whoever'. Theobald might 'heartily wish for the Liberty of expunging' this material, but

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[101] For the latter, see, for example, Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 2:110n.
[102] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:38n.
[103] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 2:110n.
[104] Cf. Jones, *Lewis Theobald*, 187.

ultimately he seems to have been unwilling—or unable—to impose this level of coherence onto the Shakespearean text.[105]

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[105] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 2:110n.

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THE 'WHOLE' WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE?: LEWIS THEOBALD, *DOUBLE FALSHOOD*, AND THE APOCRYPHA

As we saw in the previous chapter, Lewis Theobald shared some of Pope's scepticism over the shape and contents of Shakespeare's folio canon. Pope argued that several plays included by Heminge and Condell—*Love's Labours Lost*, *Titus Andronicus*, *The Winter's Tale*—were largely the work of other dramatists, with Shakespeare's hand confined to one or two parts, 'single scenes, or perhaps a few particular passages'.[1] Theobald likewise believed that *Titus Andronicus* had only been revised by Shakespeare, and pronounced a similar judgement on the three *Henry VI* plays. Moreover, Theobald concurred with Pope that the Folio tradition was full of actorly interpolations and omissions. The text of each play in the First Folio, Theobald believed, had been assembled from individual actors' parts, and therefore 'had gone thro' as many Changes as Performers, either from Mutilations or Additions made to them'.[2]

However, unlike Pope, Theobald's scepticism about the folio canon extended outward as well as inward. Theobald held that as many as nine plays that Shakespeare may have been involved in had been omitted by 'the *Players*' in 1623. Yet when Theobald's *Shakespeare* finally appeared, none of these works appeared in it. What might account for the discrepancy between the Shakespeare canon as Theobald conceived of it, and the much less compendious *Shakespeare* that he produced in 1733? Why, after all their disagreements over canonicity, did Theobald finally accept the canonical boundaries that Pope had set in the 1725 edition? Finally, what happened to Theobald's 'lost' Shakespearean manuscript play, *Double Falshood*, and why was there no place for it in the 1733 *Works*? More than any of the other eighteenth-century

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[1] Alexander Pope, ed., *The Works of Shakespear*, 6 vols. (London, 1723-25), 1:xx.
[2] Lewis Theobald, ed., *The Works of Shakespeare*, 7 vols. (London, 1733), 1:xxxviii.

scholarly editions, perhaps, Theobald's *Shakespeare* raises questions about the relationship between *editors'* publishing intentions and those of their proprietors. Indeed, such is the gap between what Theobald believed Shakespeare had written and the canon of works in the 1733 edition, that some scholars have assumed that Theobald's publisher must have actively prevented him from producing the edition he had envisaged.[3] It is these paradoxes and contradictions in Theobald's Shakespeare canon that I want to examine in the remainder of this chapter.

INTRODUCING *DOUBLE FALSHOOD*

On the 13th of December 1727, a new play premiered at Drury Lane theatre, London. Its initial run lasted for another nine consecutive nights—an exceptionally successful performance by the standards of the early eighteenth-century English stage.[4] The play also attracted a large amount of press attention, receiving reviews and notices in newspapers that usually ignored the theatre world.[5] The play was *Double Falshood; Or, the Distrest Lovers*, and its author was Lewis Theobald. *Double Falshood*'s notoriety had come about because its author claimed to be restoring a lost Shakespearean play to the stage. Prior to its performance, Theobald had gone to the extent—unprecedented for a stage play at this time—of obtaining a royal license for its publication.[6] Petitioners for royal licenses in the eighteenth century were required to prove that their books would improve or educate the public.[7] However, as Shef Rogers points out, a royal license also had a valuable marketing function, and Theobald's actions must have been at least partly

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[3] See, for instance, Don-John Dugas, *Marketing the Bard: Shakespeare in Performance and Print, 1660–1740* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006), 213.

[4] G. Harold Metz, 'Stage History of *Cardenio-Double Falshood*', *Theatre History Studies* 6 (1986): 89–90. For details of the first-run performances, see Emmett L. Avery, ed., *The London Stage, 1660–1800* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960), 1, pt. 2:949–51.

[5] See Brean S. Hammond, 'The Performance History of Pseudo-Shakespearean Play: Theobald's *Double Falshood*', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 7, no. 1 (1984): 50–51.

[6] See John Freehafer, '*Cardenio*, by Shakespeare and Fletcher', *PMLA* 84, no. 3 (1969): 511.

[7] Shef Rogers, 'The Use of Royal Licenses for Printing in England, 1695–1760: A Bibliography', *Library* 7th ser., 1 (2000): 136.

motivated by a desire to increase the printed play's visibility to readers.[8] Theobald's

licence, dated 'the Fifth Day of *December*, 1727', grants him his rights on the basis of

the 'Expence' involved in obtaining the original manuscript and 'great Labour and Pains'

expended in revising it for the contemporary theatre:

> Whereas our Trusty, and Well-beloved *Lewis Theobald* … hath, by his Petition,
> humbly represented to Us, That He having, at considerable Expence, Purchased
> the Manuscript Copy of an Original Play of WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, called,
> *Double Falshood; Or, the Distrest Lovers*; and, with great Labour and Pains,
> Revised, and Adapted the same to the Stage; has humbly besought Us, to grant
> him Our Royal Privilege, and Licence, for the sole Printing and Publishing
> thereof, for the Term of Fourteen Years: We … are graciously pleased to
> condescend to his Request.[9]

Shortly after the play's initial run finished, the published version of *Double Falshood*

appeared. Theobald's Dedication is dated the 21st of December, and the play was entered

in the Stationers Register on the 29th of December, assigned to John Watts.[10] A second

edition, with a revised and expanded version of the Preface, followed in March 1728.[11]

In the paratextual material that surrounds the play, Theobald is understandably

anxious to establish its provenance. In an unusually ostentatious display of privilege, the

Royal License appears in full opposite the title page, and Theobald continues to seek

external authority for his beliefs about authorship in the Dedication and Preface.[12] He

asks his dedicatee, Sir George Dodington, to 'pronounce this Piece genuine', and thus

'silence' those who 'would fain insinuate that they are *imposed upon*'.[13] In the Preface,

he suggests that the play's theatrical success, and 'the Reception it found from those

Great Judges' who saw the play 'in Manuscript', render a defence from Theobald himself

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[8] On the marketability of books with Royal Licences, see Rogers, 'Use of Royal Licenses', 136n4.

[9] Lewis Theobald, *Double Falshood; Or, The Distrest Lovers* (London, 1728), A1v.

[10] See Rogers, 'Use of Royal Licenses', 162.

[11] For the dates of the editions, see G. Harold Metz, *Sources of Four Plays Ascribed to Shakespeare* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989), 258n4.

[12] As Freehafer, '*Cardenio*', 511, points out, Royal Licenses were usually indicated with 'Cum privelegio' on the title page. The complete reproduction of the License itself is atypical.

[13] Theobald, *Double Falshood*, A3v–A4r.

practically superfluous.[14] Nevertheless, Theobald proceeds to lay out for his readers the grounds for his belief that Shakespeare had written the original *Double Falshood*. Of the manuscripts he claims to own, one, he writes, appears to have been a prompt copy prepared for a revival of the play shortly after the reopening of the theatres in 1660. Theobald claims that this exemplar of the play is in the handwriting of 'the famous Old Prompter' John Downes (the author of *Roscius Anglicanus*).[15] He goes on to relate that someone has 'credibly inform'd' him that it subsequently passed into the hands of Thomas Betterton, but he cannot account for Betterton's failure to produce the play. At this point in the Preface, Theobald introduces another anonymous informant—a 'Noble Person' who has heard a tradition about the play that Theobald now repeats to his readers. The original play, according to this testimony, had earlier belonged to a 'Natural [i.e. illegitimate] Daughter' of Shakespeare's, 'for whose Sake' the playwright had initially composed it.[16]

In both the Dedication and the Preface, Theobald's anxiety about being thought to have 'imposed' upon his audience is palpable. In order to ward off the accusation, he seems to have assembled as many external authorities as he could. The King, Dodington, and the unnamed 'Great Judges' are enlisted to vouch for him and *Double Falshood*, and Theobald himself labours to turn the various stage traditions he has heard about the play into a story that can credibly link the manuscripts with Shakespeare. In accordance with contemporary 'epistemological decorum', Theobald uses his social connections with gentlemen and nobles to establish his character as a trustworthy speaker.[17] Having done that, he then shapes the anecdotes passed down by theatre tradition into a plausible historical narrative. All of these appeals to authority appear well in advance of any attempt by Theobald to appeal to aesthetics, or his own, subjective, sense of the play's Shakespeareanness.

When Theobald's Preface does turn to connoisseurship, his stance is a defensive one. Unnamed 'Others', he writes, have tried to devalue the play by questioning whether

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[14] Theobald, *Double Falshood*, [A5]ʳ.
[15] Theobald, *Double Falshood*, [A5]ʳ.
[16] Theobald, *Double Falshood*, [A5]ʳ.
[17] See Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 226–27.

Shakespeare had had any part in the original play. For them, 'the *Colouring*, *Diction*, and *Characters*, come nearer to the Style and Manner of FLETCHER'.[18] Rather than attempting to answer this objection directly, Theobald seems to defer to the 'Great Judges' he mentioned in his first sentence. The ascription to Fletcher, he says, 'is far from deserving any Answer'; 'I submit it', he continues, 'to the Determination of better Judgments'.[19] Yet, even here, he allows for the possibility of error in matters of his own taste and judgement: 'my Partiality for *Shakespeare*', he writes, 'makes me wish, that Every Thing which is good, or pleasing, in our Tongue, had been owing to his Pen'.[20] In the Preface to the second edition, Theobald appears to concede even more to the Fletcher camp. The revised version of this sentence reads: 'my Partiality for *Shakespeare* makes me wish, that Every Thing which is good, or pleasing, in that other great Poet, had been owing to *his* Pen'.[21] This small clarification suggests that Theobald now saw Shakespeare's rival for authorship of the manuscript not simply as an anonymous author—one who merely wrote 'in our Tongue'—but Fletcher himself.[22] As R. F. Jones observes, Theobald's changes here do seem to indicate that he thought Fletcher might have been involved in the play.[23]

The second edition of *Double Falshood* contains one other detail about the play's authorship. In the paragraph dealing with Fletcher's claims, Theobald adds that he had once considered writing a '*Dissertation*' about the play, which would have included a detailed argument outlining a case for Shakespeare's authorship of it. This piece, which Theobald says would have been based on internal evidence—the 'remarkable Peculiarities in the *Language*, and the Nature of the *Thoughts*' in the manuscript—he now defers 'for a better Occasion'. Other than a letter in *Mist's Weekly Journal*

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[18] Theobald, *Double Falshood*, [A5]ᵛ.

[19] Theobald, *Double Falshood*, [A5]ᵛ.

[20] Theobald, *Double Falshood*, [A5]ᵛ.

[21] Lewis Theobald, *Double Falshood; Or, the Distrest Lovers*, 2nd ed. (London, 1728), [A5]ᵛ.

[22] See Paul Bertram, *Shakespeare and The Two Noble Kinsmen* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1965), 184.

[23] Richard Foster Jones, *Lewis Theobald: His Contribution to English Scholarship with Some Unpublished Letters* (1919; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1966), 102–3.

defending lines attacked by Pope in *Peri Bathous*, however, Theobald never produced anything like his 'dissertation'.[24]

The most significant announcement in the revised Preface, however, was Theobald's promise to produce an edition of Shakespeare's works. Deferring once more to the 'great Judges', he couches this not as a personal ambition but as a dictate from his aristocratic supporters:

> I am honour'd with so many powerful Sollicitations, pressing Me to the Prosecution of an Attempt, which I have begun with some little Success, of *restoring* SHAKESPEARE from the numerous Corruptions of his Text: that I can neither in Gratitude, nor good Manners, longer resist them. I therefore think it not amiss here to promise, that, tho' *private Property* should so far stand in my Way, as to prevent me from putting out an *Edition* of *Shakespeare*, yet, some Way or other, if I live, the Publick shall receive from my Hand his *whole* WORKS corrected, with my best Care and Ability.[25]

Double Falshood will, he hopes, present him with an opportunity to expand his proposed three-volume set of notes on Shakespeare into a proper edition. The announcement functions both as a way of reassuring existing subscribers and eliciting new support. Booksellers—either the Tonsons, or competitors willing to challenge their monopoly hold on Shakespeare—seem to be the undeclared object of his address. Theobald's language also teasingly suggests that *Double Falshood* itself might form part of this projected edition. The word '*whole*' is italicized, and he insinuates that the future 'WORKS…. may furnish an Occasion for speaking more at large concerning the present *Play*'.[26] At this point, coyly holding out the possibility of further revelations while avoiding any direct promises, Theobald drops his discussion of the play's author(s).

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[24] See Freehafer, '*Cardenio*', 511, and Hammond, 'Performance History', 53.

[25] Theobald, *Double Falshood*, 2nd ed., [A5]ᵛ.

[26] Theobald, *Double Falshood*, 2nd ed., [A5]ᵛ.

DOUBLE FALSHOOD'S EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY RECEPTION

Double Falshood was undoubtedly a financial success for Theobald. The initial run afforded him no fewer than three benefit nights; he received another in the play's second run, on April 21, 1729.[27] Moreover, he was able to sell his Royal License for the comparatively enormous sum of one hundred guineas—far in advance of the market price for a play's copyright in early eighteenth-century London.[28] As John Freehafer notes, this is the highest sum that the license's purchaser, John Watts, is known to have spent on *any* dramatic copyright during his career.[29] Despite this, however, the staging and publication of *Double Falshood* as a Shakespearean play represented an enormous risk for Theobald, and the play was to come under sustained attack from Pope and his faction. Partly, this seems to have been done in the hope of undermining Theobald's credibility as a scholar. 'Pope attacked the play', as Gamaliel Bradford puts it, 'for the sake of attacking Theobald'.[30] However, as Brean Hammond points out, there seems to have been a political dimension to the Scriblerians' assault on Theobald and his play. Theobald was best known as a deviser of successful pantomimes—the epitome of what Pope and his circle saw as the 'bread and circuses' cultural policy of the Walpole administration.[31] The play also came with a prologue, by whig author Philip Frowde, that seems almost comical in its unstinting praise of 'this Age' and the Hanoverian regime. Frowde writes that Shakespeare's works,

> Display the Talents of a British Mind,
> Where all is great, free, open, unconfin'd

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[27] Metz, 'Stage History', 90.

[28] The deed of sale is reproduced in Peter Seary, *Lewis Theobald and the Editing of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 220.

[29] Freehafer, '*Cardenio*', 513.

[30] Gamaliel Bradford, Jr., 'The History of Cardenio by Mr. Fletcher and Shakespeare', *Modern Language Notes* 25, no. 2 (1910): 52.

[31] Hammond, 'Performance History', 52.

before going on to enshrine George II as a new Augustus, whose light far outshines that of the monarch in whose reign Shakespeare wrote:

> Oh! Could the Bard, revisiting our Light,
> Receive these Honours done his Shade To-night,
> How would he bless the Scene this Age displays,
> Transcending his *Eliza's* golden Days!
> When great AUGUSTUS fills the *British* Throne,
> And his lov'd *Consort* makes the Muse her own.
> How would he joy to see fair Merit's Claim
> Thus answer'd in his own reviving Fame![32]

As Hammond observes, such a tempting political and cultural target would have been unlikely to have passed unmolested by opposition writers.[33]

In attacking Theobald and *Double Falshood*, Pope and his allies mounted a two-pronged assault. Firstly, they focussed upon what they saw as the absurdities in the play's language, so as to suggest that Shakespeare could not have been the author. Secondly, they insinuated that Theobald himself had been responsible for the entire play. By ascribing the whole piece to Theobald, they could not only tie the play's literary shortcomings to his name, but also expose him as a fundamentally untrustworthy figure, whose excursions into the cultural sphere were motivated only by fame and money. In *Peri Bathous*, published in the same month as the second edition of *Double Falshood*, Pope held several of the play's phrases up to ridicule. The line 'None but *Himself* can be his *Parallel*' was singled out as the crowning example of bathos—'*Profundity* itself', in Pope's judgement.[34] Other lines from the play appeared under the categories of 'The HYPERBOLE, or *Impossible*', and 'the CUMBROUS' and 'the BUSKIN', or overly florid metaphor for 'the most vulgar and low Actions of Life'.[35]

Throughout the *Bathous*, Pope also turned repeatedly to Theobaldian pantomime, sarcastically praising it for the 'incredible satisfaction' it engendered in 'the *British*

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[32] Theobald, *Double Falshood*, [A6]ᵛ–[A7]ʳ (italics reversed).

[33] Hammond, 'Performance History', 52.

[34] Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift, *Miscellanies: The Last Volume* (London, 1736), 37 (italics reversed). As Hammond ('Performance History', 53) notes, Pope has (deliberately, or otherwise) misquoted Theobald's line.

[35] Pope and Swift, *Miscellanies*, 55–56, 72, 71.

Spectator', and archly suggesting that there had been a 'great Addition of Children and Nurses to the [London theatre] Audience, since the new Entertainments'.[36] The play, slightingly referred to as 'a thing call'd the *Double Falshood*', also made a brief appearance in the Preface to the second edition of Pope's *Shakespear*, inserted in the list of apocryphal Shakespearean works.[37]

In the following year's *Dunciad Variorum*, however, Pope went beyond simply trying to demonstrate *Double Falshood*'s literary worthlessness and accused Theobald of writing the play himself. After inserting the line 'None but Thy self can be thy parallel' into the poem, complete with an ironically dignified left-hand quotation mark, Pope glosses it as follows: 'A marvellous line of *Theobald*; unless the Play call'd *Double Falshood* be (as he would have it believed) *Shakespear*'s …. It is granted … no man doubts but herein he is able to imitate *Shakespear*'.[38] In the next note, Pope belittlingly summarizes the arguments that Theobald had presented in support of his manuscripts' authenticity:

> The former Annotator [i.e., Pope himself] seeming to be of the opinion that the *Double Falshood* is not *Shakespear*'s; it is but justice to give Mr. *Theobald*'s Arguments to the contrary: first that the MS. was more than sixty years old; secondly, that once Mr. *Betterton* had it, or he hath heard so; thirdly, that somebody told him the author gave it to a bastard-daughter of his: But fourthly and above all, 'that he hath a *great mind* every thing that is good in our tongue *should be* Shakespear*'s*'. I allow these reasons to be truly critical.[39]

Theobald, as we have seen, had claimed authority for his account of the *Double Falshood* manuscripts by appealing to the testimony of unnamed gentlemen. Here, in the *Dunciad Variorum*, Pope ruthlessly unpicks this technique, reducing Theobald's 'credible information' to a series of unsourced and unreliable assertions. Having focussed on the inadequacy of Theobald's claims, Pope seeks to undermine him further by drawing out what he sees as their *scurrility*. Among other things, Pope seems to have objected to Theobald's suggestion that Shakespeare had had a 'bastard-daughter'. For Theobald to

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[36] Pope and Swift, *Miscellanies*, 49, 86.

[37] Alexander Pope, ed., *The Works of Shakespear*, 9 vols. (London, 1728), 1:xxi.

[38] Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad Variorum* (London, 1729), 69n.

[39] Pope, *Dunciad Variorum*, 69n.

profess a 'Partiality' for Shakespeare while simultaneously including such a detail in his account no doubt seemed to Pope both hypocritical and self-serving.

The Theobald that Pope enshrines in the *Bathous* and the *Dunciad Variorum* is not merely a ridiculous figure—he is also a culturally dangerous one. In mocking the new afterpiece 'entertainments' that Theobald was composing for John Rich, Pope emphasized the infantilizing power of pantomime spectacle.[40] Theobald and Rich, Pope suggested, were reducing theatrical taste to its primeval origins. If, contrary to Pope's insinuations, children and nursemaids did not actually provide the bulk of pantomime's audience, Pope suggests that *culturally* speaking, London theatre was being reduced to a child-like state. Similarly, in the *Dunciad Variorum*, Pope accused Theobald of degrading the Shakespearean text to the primal cacophony of the First Folio. By restoring the 'puns', 'blunders', and anachronisms that subsequent editors had cut out, Theobald was returning Shakespeare to Elizabethan cultural and linguistic barbarity. *Shakespeare Restored* was, in other words, a mock-Restoration, one that coarsened, rather than improved, its object. In both cases, Pope implies, Theobald's work threatened to subject culture to the majoritarian rule of 'the *People'*, whose influence on Shakespeare Pope had so lamented.[41]

If he seems never to have quite forgiven Theobald, in later life Pope tried to soften the most extravagant of his accusations—that Theobald had written *Double Falshood* himself. When, in 1738, Aaron Hill accused him of being unjustly hostile in his critiques of *Double Falshood* in the *Peri Bathous*, Pope claimed he had never thought the play Theobald's at all. Despite having repeatedly ascribed the play to Theobald, Pope told Hill that he believed the play genuinely Elizabethan, if not Shakespearean: 'He [Theobald] gave it as *Shakespear*'s, and I take it to be of that Age'.[42] While Pope himself may have privately withdrawn his position on the play, however, other eighteenth-century critics continued to use *Double Falshood* to attack Theobald's credibility. The largely hostile account of Theobald in the *Lives of the Poets*, for instance, takes the

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[40] John O'Brien, *Harlequin Britain: Pantomime and Entertainment, 1690–1760* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 114–15.

[41] See Pope, ed., *Works 1728*, 1:vii.

[42] See Alexander Pope, *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, ed. George Sherburn, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 4:102.

Dunciad's attacks on the play at face value. The biography's compiler, presumably Robert Shiels, lists *Double Falshood* among Theobald's original compositions, and suggests that, in attributing the play to Shakespeare, Theobald 'defended absurdities, and palliated extravagant blunders'.[43] He also passes on the anecdote, later popularized by Richard Farmer, that Theobald had a habit of claiming as his own any lines in *Double Falshood* that others happened to like.[44] After a 'gentleman of great judgment' commended some lines in the first act, Shiels relates, Theobald 'assured him he wrote them himself, and only them in the whole play'.[45]

Although *Double Falshood* was republished in 1767, and had a presence on the London stage until 1791, it had disappeared almost entirely from Shakespearean scholarship by the late eighteenth century.[46] Farmer toyed with it briefly in his *Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare*, before ascribing it, rather off-handedly, to James Shirley.[47] Johnson and Steevens ignored it in the prolegomena to the 1778 *Shakspeare*, and Malone omitted any mention of it in his 'Attempt to Ascertain the Order' of Shakespeare's plays, which includes 'rejected' as well as 'genuine' pieces. In his additions to the revised *Biographia Dramatica*, Malone says he 'inclines to believe it written by Massinger'.[48] If, in 1728, Pope had at least listed *Double Falshood* among the 'wretched' plays that 'could not be admitted as' Shakespeare's, by the end of the century it had lost even this status.[49] Perhaps Farmer's and Malone's attributions were thought to have settled the matter. However, the success of Pope's *Dunciad* campaigns against Theobald's critical authority,

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[43] Theophilus Cibber, *The Lives of the Poets*, 5 vols. (London, 1753), 5:286. For the authorship of 'Cibber's' *Lives*, see William R. Keast, 'Johnson and "Cibber's" Lives of the Poets, 1753', in *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature: Essays in Honor of Alan Dugald McKillop*, ed. Carrol Camden (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 89–91.

[44] See Richard Farmer, *An Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1767), 28, for another version of the anecdote.

[45] Cibber, *Lives of the Poets*, 5:286.

[46] For *Double Falshood*'s stage history in the second half of the eighteenth century, see Hammond, 'Performance History', 55–57.

[47] See Farmer, *Essay*, 26–29.

[48] David Erskine Baker, *Biographia Dramatica, Or, A Companion to the Playhouse*, 2 vols. (London, 1782), 2:92. See also Edmond Malone, ed., *Supplement to the Edition of Shakspeare's Plays Published in 1778*, 2 vols. (London, 1780), 2:718–19n.

[49] See Pope, ed., *Works 1728*, 1:xxi.

along with doubts about how much of the play Theobald had written, no doubt also militated against its being accepted, even as one of the 'spurious' plays.

ASSESSING THEOBALD'S CLAIMS

This mixture of scepticism and neglect on the part of eighteenth-century scholars effectively consigned *Double Falshood* to oblivion. All of Theobald's manuscripts have since disappeared, and, as Hammond observes, unless one of them resurfaces, reaching any final conclusions about the play's authorship is probably impossible.[50] However, although accusations of forgery are occasionally still made against him, more recent criticism has been kinder to Theobald.[51] In particular, the discovery of documentary evidence that Shakespeare and Fletcher collaborated on a play called *Cardenio*, which, like *Double Falshood*, appears to have been based on Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, has made Theobald's claims seem retrospectively more likely.[52] The King's Men performed a play variously called *Cardano*, *Cardenno*, or *Cardenna* at Court in 1613.[53] In 1653, the publisher Humphrey Moseley entered in the Stationers' Register a manuscript play called *The History of Cardenio*, attributed to 'Mr. Fletcher and Shakespeare'.[54] Like most of the other items Moseley entered at that time, *Cardenio* was never published. Nonetheless, Alfred Harbage has shown that it is possible that some, at least, of the Moseley manuscripts found their way to the theatres after Moseley's death in 1661 and were

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[50] Brean Hammond, 'Theobald's *Double Falshood*: An "Agreeable Cheat"?' *Notes and Queries* n.s. 31, no. 1 (1984): 2.

[51] The main twentieth-century proponent of the theory that Theobald wrote *Double Falshood* himself and invented its Shakespearean provenance has been Harriet C. Frazier. See Harriet C. Frazier, 'Theobald's *The Double Falsehood*: A Revision of Shakespeare's *Cardenio*?' *Comparative Drama* 1, no. 1 (1967): 218–33, and Harriet C. Frazier, 'Speculations on the Motives of a Fraudster', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 72 (1971): 287–96. For a recent variation on the theory, see Katherine West Scheil, *The Taste of the Town: Shakespearian Comedy and the Early Eighteenth-Century Theater* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2003), 210–12.

[52] Malone mentioned this possibility as early as 1782, but, as Freehafer notes, the possible connection between the two plays would not be noticed again until the early twentieth century. See Baker, *Biographia Dramatica*, 2:155, and Freehafer, '*Cardenio*', 501.

[53] Bradford, 'History of Cardenio', 51.

[54] Freehafer, '*Cardenio*', 501.

recast as 'new' plays.[55] London theatre companies are known to have performed versions of three of Shakespeare's other late collaborative plays in the early 1660s, *Pericles*, *Henry VIII*, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.[56] This, combined with Harbage's theory, provides at least the outlines of a performance context for the Downes manuscript that Theobald claimed to own. The original version of *Double Falshood* may, then, have been an adaptation, written some time in the 1660s, of a Shakespearean-Fletcherian original.

If the Lincolns-Inn Fields version of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Davenant's *The Rivals* (1664), is a fair indication, such a revised play might already have had much of its recognizably Shakespearean language removed.[57] Drastic revision by a Restoration playwright might also explain why the unnamed 'Others' of Theobald's *Double Falshood* Preface (and, perhaps, Theobald himself) had difficulty seeing Shakespeare's hand in the original play. The ur-*Double Falshood* could, therefore, have genuinely derived from a lost Shakespearean play, and have a plausible set of theatrical traditions linking it to Shakespeare's name, but, ironically, little or nothing of Shakespeare remaining in it.[58]

Linguistic evidence also suggests that Theobald was revising, not fabricating, a play when producing *Double Falshood*. The play, for instance, has a relatively high rate of unregulated 'auxiliary "do"' verbs (about 12%)—uncharacteristic of eighteenth-century English, but compatible with early modern usage.[59] Moreover, these rates shift markedly between Act 1 and the rest of the play. This is, as Jonathan Hope argues, consistent with there being two distinct personal styles in the underlying manuscript, but inconsistent with original composition by Theobald, who might have been expected to aim at a uniformly 'archaic' register.[60] Other studies have found extensive parallels, both

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[55] See Alfred Harbage, 'Elizabethan-Restoration Palimpsest', *Modern Language Review* 35, no. 3 (1940): 287–319.

[56] John Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, ed. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume (1708; reprint, London: Society for Theatre Research, 1987), 44; Freehafer, '*Cardenio*', 502.

[57] Stephan Kukowski, 'The Hand of John Fletcher in *Double Falshood*', *Shakespeare Survey* 43 (1991): 81.

[58] Cf. Bertram, *Shakespeare*, 192, 196.

[59] Jonathan Hope, *The Authorship of Shakespeare's Plays: A Sociolinguistic Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 95–96.

[60] Hope, *Authorship*, 97.

verbal and schematic, with the works of Fletcher in *Double Falshood*.[61] As Stephen Kukowski drily observes, these parallels would seem to count against Theobaldian authorship, unless Theobald had unluckily managed to 'forge … the wrong writer'.[62]

CARDENIO, THE APOCRYPHA, AND THE 1733 EDITION

All of this evidence, largely unavailable to Theobald in the 1720s and 1730s, would seem to indicate that a *Cardenio* play did survive into the 1660s, and that it might have formed the basis, at least, for the manuscripts that Theobald claimed to own. Although Theobald was unable to make this case himself, he does not appear to have modified his views on the play's authorship between 1728 and 1733. In a note subjoined to *1 Henry VI* in the 1733 *Shakespeare*, he lists a series of verbal parallels for the line, 'Nought, but *itself*, could be its *Parallel*', in the plays of Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, and 'the best *Roman* classics', adding,

> I have produced these Authorities, in Reply to a Criticism of Mr. *Pope*'s; because, in the Gaiety of his *Wit* and *good Humour*, he was pleas'd to be very smart upon me, as he thought, for a Line, in a *posthumous* Play of our Author's which I brought upon the Stage … Double Falshood.[63]

If the text of the play did not appear in the 1733 *Shakespeare*, Theobald at least managed to include his critical opinion on its authorship, even if were buried in the notes to a canonical play whose authenticity he doubted.

Cardenio/Double Falshood was not, however, the only play omitted from the 1733 *Shakespeare* that Theobald believed was genuinely Shakespearean. In his Preface to the edition, he states unequivocally that all of the plays added by Chetwind in 1664 are, at least in part, in Shakespeare's hand. Of 'those Seven', he writes, 'I can, beyond all

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[61] Bradford, 'History of Cardenio', 51–56; Kukowski, 'Hand of John Fletcher', 81–89; Jeffrey Kahan, 'The *Double Falshood* and *The Spanish Curate*: A Further Fletcher Connection', *ANQ* 20, no. 1 (2007): 34–36.

[62] Kukowski, 'Hand of John Fletcher', 89.

[63] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:188n.

Controversy, prove some Touches in every one of them to have come from his Pen'.[64] As if to underline this claim, Theobald makes occasional use of these plays for parallel passages in his critical notes. This extension of the 'conference of places' method to include disputed plays thus acts as a form of canonical rhetoric. By drawing on non-canonical plays as if they were indeed Shakespeare's, he confers upon them a *de facto* critical authority that their textual exclusion would seem at first to deny.[65] At other times, as in his note on *Double Falshood*, he states explicitly that these plays are, in some way at least, genuinely Shakespearean.

Locrine rates at least three mentions in the 1733 edition, and on each occasion Theobald stresses the possibility that Shakespeare wrote it. When emending 'Bail' to 'Bale' in *Coriolanus*, he writes, 'we meet with [Bale] … in a Play, attributed to [Shakespeare], call'd *Locrine*.[66] In a note to *2 Henry VI*, he places yet more emphasis on the attribution's claim to authority: '*Locrine*' is 'a Play ascrib'd to our Author, and printed above 20 years before his Death'.[67] In the footnotes to *Titus Andronicus*, it is simply 'his *Locrine*'.[68] *Pericles*, too, though again referred to only in passing, receives a strong endorsement of genuineness, if not quality, from Theobald. 'This absurd Old Play', he writes,

> was not entirely of our Author's penning; but he has honour'd it with a Number of Master-Touches, so peculiar to himself, that a knowing Reader may with Ease and Certainty distinguish the Traces of his Pencil.[69]

During his preparations for the edition, Theobald discussed the play with Warburton.[70] In a letter dated 20 May 1730, he mentions that he is sending Warburton a copy of *Pericles* in quarto, with the reminder that 'you were so kind to say, tho' bad you would take the

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[64] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 1:vii.
[65] See also Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 135n14, and Jones, *Lewis Theobald*, 185–86..
[66] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 6:9n.
[67] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:291n.
[68] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 5:350n.
[69] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 2:490n; for a similar statement, see Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 4:20n.
[70] See Jones, *Lewis Theobald*, 186n73.

Trouble of reading over [the play] wth. a strict Eye'.[71] Theobald also seems to credit the suggestion that Shakespeare had collaborated on *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, 'a Play in which', he observes in a note to *Coriolanus*, 'there is a Tradition of our Author having been jointly concerned'.[72] (Elsewhere, however, he attributes it solely to Beaumont and Fletcher.[73])

Given Theobald's conviction that *Locrine* and *Pericles* were Shakespeare's, at least in part, it is not surprising that he had devised some emendations on them. On March 10, 1730, as he and Warburton neared the end of their marathon epistolatory commentary on Pope's 1728 *Shakespear*, Theobald asked Warburton whether his copy contained 'the ninth volume, which contains the contested Plays of our Shakespeare'. If so, Theobald promised him 'some entertainment from the emendations that I have made upon Locrine and Pericles, by way of excursion, if you will indulge me in this liberty'.[74] (Warburton's response is unrecorded in the *Illustrations*, and Theobald's own remarks there end with *Othello*, the last play in Pope's eighth volume.[75]) A considerable number of Theobald's emendations on *Pericles* have nevertheless survived, marked up on copies of Q4 (1619) and Q6 (1635) now housed in the Folger Shakespeare Library and the University of Pennsylvania, respectively.[76] Theobald appears to have read through the play at least twice, collating the later quarto copies against both Q1 and Rowe's text, and recording his conjectures in the margins.[77]

What might account for the discrepancy between the inclusive Shakespeare that Theobald hints at in his notes and preface, and the conservative, thirty-six play canon that actually appears in the 1733 edition? Why, after all their conflicts over canonicity, did Theobald finally restrict himself to the works that Pope had identified as Shakespeare's in 1725? And why, indeed, did he use Pope's 1728 *Shakespear* as his copy-text, while

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[71] Jones, *Lewis Theobald*, 272.

[72] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 6:100n.

[73] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 7:260n.

[74] John Nichols, ed., *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 2 (London, 1817), 557.

[75] See Nichols, ed., *Illustrations*, 2:600.

[76] Suzanne Gossett, ed., *Pericles* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2004), 38.

[77] See Suzanne Gossett, 'Emendations, Reconstructions, and the Uses of the Past', *TEXT* 17 (2005): 42.

simultaneously dismissing it as 'of no Authority' in his table of Shakespearean editions?[78] Peter Seary has suggested one possible solution to this puzzle. According to Seary, Theobald would have had no say over choice of copy-text or which plays to include in the edition. These decisions, he argues, were treated entirely as commercial ones, and were calculated to preserve Tonson's monopoly interests in Shakespeare. The 1710 'copyright' act guaranteed a fourteen-year exclusive right for the publication of new material, and, Seary suggests, Tonson used this to assert a series of 'new' rights in Shakespeare throughout the early decades of the eighteenth century.[79] By having his editors devise, and then sign over to him, a constant stream of new dedications, prefaces, notes, glossaries, and indices, Tonson would have been able to create a perpetually self-renewing right in Shakespeare.[80] In order to preserve this unbroken chain, Theobald would have been directed to use as the basis for his own text the most recent in the sequence, Pope's 1728 edition, and thus the boundaries of Pope's canon came to determine those of his own. Tonson's strategy for maintaining a monopoly hold over Shakespeare, Seary's scenario suggests, effectively prevented Theobald from including plays that Pope had not edited—*Double Falshood*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and the apocryphal plays.[81] Don-John Dugas has recently extended Seary's claims, suggesting that Theobald had clearly wanted to publish some or all of these plays in 1733, but that 'Tonson … would not allow Theobald to include them in his edition'.[82]

Seary's hypothesis is both elegant and plausible. Theobald wrote to Warburton shortly after signing articles with Tonson, saying that the latter had sent him a 'Shakespeare interleav'd' to use as the textual base of his edition.[83] As Richard Corballis has shown, this was a copy of Pope's 1728 duodecimo set.[84] Moreover, the strategy of using editorial matter to justify a new right in an author seems to have been a common

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[78] See Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 133. Theobald dismisses the textual authority of Pope's duodecimo edition in Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 7:[Ii4]ʳ.

[79] Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 134.

[80] See the sixth item in Theobald's 1731 publishing contract with Tonson, reproduced in Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 217.

[81] Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 135.

[82] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, 213.

[83] Jones, *Lewis Theobald*, 280.

[84] Richard Corballis, 'Copy-Text for Theobald's Shakespeare', *Library* 6th ser., 8 (1986): 157.

one in the eighteenth century. John Urry and Bernard Lintot apparently based their application for a Royal License to publish Chaucer on this claim.[85] The License grants Urry his fourteen-year term on the grounds that, through the 'Alterations, Amendments and Additions' his edition makes to the text, 'the Work is in a manner become new'.[86] The compilers of the Urry Chaucer included almost all of the material that had been attributed to Chaucer in earlier editions, and added three further works from manuscript.[87] Perhaps, at one point, Theobald planned to produce a similarly inclusive edition of Shakespeare.

Attractive as Seary's and Dugas's theories are, however, they cannot prove that Tonson actually prevented Theobald from abandoning the received text or adding new plays in the 1733 *Shakespeare*. The fact that Tonson had allowed Pope to exclude the apocryphal plays in 1725 indicates that the received canon was, at least potentially, malleable. Even had Theobald been forced to restrict himself to those works included in the 1728 edition, it is difficult to understand why this would have prevented him from editing the apocrypha. These plays had, after all, been included in the ninth volume of the 1728 *Shakespear*. If Seary is correct, and Tonson was reinforcing his claims to Shakespeare by 'claiming successively the fourteen-year copyrights in work of each of his editors', it is hard to see why this 'work' could not have stretched to the addition of new plays.[88]

Was Theobald planning to add new plays in 1733? The fact that he had devised emendations on *Locrine* and *Pericles* by early 1730 certainly lends some plausibility to this idea. The diffidence with which he expressed himself when mentioning them to Warburton—the emendations are 'by way of excursion', an 'indulgence', and a 'liberty'—might, however, suggest that they were ancillary to his plans even then.[89] If Theobald had had any thoughts about including *Double Falshood* in a future edition of

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[85] William L. Alderson and Arnold C. Anderson, *Chaucer and Augustan Scholarship* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970), 91.

[86] 'Proposals for Printing […] the Works of […] *Jeoffrey Chaucer*', bound with Alexander Pope, *The Temple of Fame* (London, 1715), [n.p.].

[87] For the contents of the Urry Chaucer, see Kathleen Forni, *The Chaucerian Apocrypha: A Counterfeit Canon* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 80–81.

[88] Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 134.

[89] Nichols, ed., *Illustrations*, 2:557.

Shakespeare, they might well have been short-lived. As we have seen, Theobald sold his royal license, and with it the copyright to *Double Falshood*, only four months after the second edition appeared. Both Freehafer and Seary argue that Theobald probably surrendered any rights he had to his manuscripts at that time.[90] This suggestion rests on several points of evidence. Firstly, the sum that Watts paid for the License—one hundred guineas—was, as Freehafer points out, exceedingly high for a single play. This price alone might indicate that Watts received more than just the right to reprint *Double Falshood*.[91] Secondly, he argues, because Theobald had received his royal license on the grounds that he had, 'at considerable Expence, Purchased the Manuscript Copy of an Original Play' by Shakespeare, Watts 'must have received the three manuscripts that Theobald was known to have' when he bought the License.[92] Both Freehafer and Seary come to the same conclusions over Watts's role in the sale. Watts, they suggest, had been instructed by Jacob Tonson, Jr., to obtain copyright in order to protect the Tonsons' monopoly hold over Shakespeare.[93]

Watts maintained a close business partnership with Jacob Tonson the elder, and, after 1717, with Tonson's nephew, Jacob Tonson, Jr.[94] In the light of this, it is, as Freehafer and Seary suggest, entirely possible that he was acting under a Tonson assignment when buying the rights to *Double Falshood*. As the various collected editions of Chaucer in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries indicate, the inclusion of new manuscript material could be used to generate a new publishing right in an author's collected works.[95] The existence of a new, putatively Shakespearean manuscript play might, therefore, have posed a threat to the Tonsons' interests in Shakespeare. However, the suggestion that Watts received all of Theobald's *Double Falshood* manuscripts is more debatable. The deed of sale makes no mention of them, unless we are to assume

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[90] Freehafer, '*Cardenio*', 512–13; Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 219.

[91] Freehafer, '*Cardenio*', 513.

[92] Freehafer, '*Cardenio*', 512.

[93] Freehafer, '*Cardenio*', 512; Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 219–20.

[94] See David Foxon, *Pope and the Early Eighteenth-Century Book Trade*, ed. James McLaverty (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 12–18.

[95] See Alderson and Anderson, *Chaucer*, 44–45, 48.

that they are absorbed in the 'Copy' of the play.[96] Similarly, while the sum that Watts paid for the play was high, it was not an unprecedented one, especially considering *Double Falshood*'s theatrical success and public profile. Colley Cibber had, for example, received £105 for the copyright to *The Non-Juror* in 1718.[97] Freehafer rests much of the weight of his argument on the precise wording of Theobald's Royal License. These licenses were, however, highly formulaic, and almost always referred to the 'Expence' incurred by the petitioner in producing the item for which the patent was granted.[98] It is, therefore, unclear if an eighteenth-century reader would have regarded the License as binding in the quite the way that Freehafer does. While a transfer to Watts would explain why no manuscripts corresponding to *Double Falshood* or *Cardenio* appeared in the posthumous sale catalogue of Theobald's library, Freehafer's account falls short of proving that this is in fact what happened.[99]

Even if he had ceded all his manuscripts to Watts, it should have been possible for Theobald to negotiate with him, had Theobald wanted to include either *Double Falshood* or *Cardenio* in the 1733 *Shakespeare*. Watts was one of the edition's printers.[100] A December 1732 letter from one 'L. H.', addressed to Watts, asks Watts to pass on to Theobald 'a few small remarks' on Shakespeare for possible inclusion in the text.[101] Moreover, if, in 1728, the likelihood that *Double Falshood* might elude the Tonsons' ownership raised the possibility of a 'new' copyright in Shakespeare, by 1733 it was under Tonson control. Why, then, was it, or *Cardenio*, not included in the edition? Perhaps the Tonsons feared setting a precedent. Unlike Chaucer's printers, no publisher of Shakespeare's *Works* after 1623 had added manuscript material to the canon before.[102] If *Cardenio* were annexed to Shakespeare's *Works*, perhaps the Tonsons thought this

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[96] See Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 220.

[97] Shirley Strum Kenny, 'The Publication of Plays', in *The London Theatre World, 1660–1800*, ed. Robert D. Hume (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1980), 310.

[98] See Rogers, 'Use of Royal Licenses', 136.

[99] For the possibility that one, at least, of Theobald's manuscripts survived into the nineteenth century, see Hammond, "Agreeable Cheat?", 2–3.

[100] See Nichols (*Illustrations*, 2:631n), who notes that Watts 'was … employed on Mr. Theobald's Shakespeare'.

[101] Nichols, ed., *Illustrations*, 2:631–33.

[102] For the implications of this point, see E. H. C. Oliphant, '"Double Falsehood": Shakespeare, Fletcher and Theobald', *Notes and Queries* 12th ser., 5 (1919): 32.

might encourage rival publishers to search the archives for other putatively

Shakespearean manuscript plays, and use them to contest the Tonsons' copyright.

However, it is by no means clear that Theobald himself would have added

Cardenio to the 1733 edition, even if he had been able to act entirely independently of

his booksellers. As *Double Falshood*'s critical reception indicates, the play had caused

him no small measure of discomfort. Printing it in the Collected Works would have

provided Pope with a fresh opportunity to attack him, and his failure to include it might

have been, at least in part, motivated by a desire to avoid any further embarrassment of

this kind.[103] However, there is no indication that Theobald thought the original *Double*

Falshood manuscripts were worthy of publication in their own right. If, by the early

eighteenth century, antiquarians had started to invest historical documents with a certain

amount of cultural authority, dramatic manuscripts do not seem to have achieved the

same status.[104] Theobald himself, in the 1733 Preface, stated that 'no authentic

Manuscript' of Shakespeare's 'was extant'.[105] The theatrical documents that underlay

Shakespeare's text were, he supposed, mostly assembled from corrupt and interpolated

actors' parts.[106] Those manuscripts of *Double Falshood* that he had managed to acquire

would have fallen into the latter category. Restoration transcripts of what Theobald

would have regarded as old and unreliable theatre documents, they stood at some

distance from the lost authorial manuscripts that could conclusively 'set [Shakespeare's]

Meaning right'.[107]

Some indication of Theobald's attitude to the authority of the original *Double*

Falshood manuscripts can, of course, be seen in the fact that he had felt the need to

revise and adapt the play before it could be performed. Another appears in the 1728 letter

he published in *Mist's Weekly Journal* defending the play against Pope's *Peri Bathous*.

Vindicating the line, 'None but itself can be its parallel', Theobald writes,

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[103] Richard Proudfoot, *Shakespeare: Text, Stage and Canon* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2001), 79.

[104] For the cultural status of medieval manuscripts in the eighteenth century, see Alderson and Anderson, *Chaucer*, 43.

[105] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 1:xxxvii.

[106] For Theobald's theories on the manuscript copy underlying particular plays, see Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 142–48.

[107] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 1:xli.

> If this were such nonsense as Pope would willingly have it, it would be a very bad plea for me to alledge, as the truth is, that the line is in Shakespear's old copy; for I might have suppressed it.[108]

As this passage indicates, the boundary between adaptation and editing seems to have been somewhat blurred for Theobald, at least when it came to *Double Falshood*. Theobald hints that he, as adapting playwright, has both the power and the obligation to 'suppress' material that might harm Shakespeare's reputation. In his earlier dispute with the playwright-watchmaker Meystayer over who should take credit for *The Perfidious Brother*, Theobald displayed a similar belief that unrevised dramatic manuscripts did no credit to their authors. In response to Meystayer's claims that Theobald had stolen his play, Theobald threatened to publish the original manuscript, minus Theobald's corrections, thus allowing 'the world to judge of [its] Grammar, Concord, or English'.[109] I certainly would not want to imply that Theobald's attitudes to *Double Falshood* and *The Perfidious Brother* were identical. However, there are commonalities between the two episodes. In both, Theobald reserves the right to 'create anew' or 'suppress' parts of the original text, and, in the case of *The Perfidious Brother*, at least, he insinuates that publication of the 'uncorrected' document might not not be in the best interests of its author's reputation.

Theobald's treatment of *Double Falshood* seems to have been part of a wider change in the status of older dramatic manuscripts that took place in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Pre-Commonwealth manuscript plays had ceased to be published, other than in adapted form, by the late seventeenth century.[110] Any that had not found their way into print by that time tended to remain in manuscript. They became objects of antiquarian interest, in other words—items to be 'treasured up', as the last remaining *Cardenio* manuscript apparently was, rather than published. (Indeed, as Nick Groom points out, publishing such 'relics' robbed them of their defining quality—their

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[108] Cibber, *Lives of the Poets*, 5:284.

[109] Harbage, 'Palimpsest', 297.

[110] Freehafer, '*Cardenio*', 504. See also Greg's account of the eventual fates of the manuscript plays entered in the Stationers' Register by Humphrey Moseley in 1653 and 1660, in his 'Bakings of Betsy', *Library* 3rd ser., 2 (1911): 249–52.

uniqueness. It was in the interests of manuscript owners to preserve the 'exclusivity' of their possessions by withholding them from the printing press.[111]) On the one hand, *Double Falshood* could be exhibited on the stage once it had received the adornments and corrections of a contemporary playwright. On the other, the original manuscripts were shut away from public view, reserved for the private gaze of the collector and his intimates.[112] At the same time, the edges of Shakespeare's dramatic canon had narrowed. Now, only plays that had received the dual authority of print and inclusion in previous collected editions could be admitted as Shakespeare's works.

What are we to make of the canonical paradoxes in the 1733 *Works of Shakespeare*? Don-John Dugas has recently argued that it was the Tonsons' 'copyright-extension' scheme that prevented Theobald from including the apocrypha, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and *Cardenio/Double Falshood* in the 1733 *Shakespeare*. Had Theobald 'been free to choose for [himself]', he suggests, the edition would have been much different, and 'we might have another Shakespeare play in the canon, *Cardenio*'.[113] While this does provide a tidy solution to the problem, I believe that it attributes too much coherence to Theobald's publishing intentions, and too little agency to Theobald himself.[114] Although, as I have indicated, the Tonsons might well have had commerical reasons for barring the apocrypha and *Cardenio/Double Falshood* from the *Works*, both the culture of eighteenth-century editorial scholarship and Theobald's own personality also militated against their inclusion. Pope's execration of the apocrypha in 1725 had created a powerful precedent, and Pope's ridicule of *Double Falshood* had put Theobald's own critical reputation at risk.[115] It was Pope's cultural and literary authority, and the prospect of being mocked for his lack of taste in Shakespeare, I want to suggest, that deterred Theobald from rejecting the canonical boundaries set for him by Pope's

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[111] Nick Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 36, 38.

[112] John Cadwalader, 'Theobald's Alleged Shakespeare Manuscript', *Modern Language Notes* 55 (1940): 108–9, provides evidence that Theobald may have offered some of his aristocratic correspondents a glimpse of the original manuscript.

[113] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, 237, 213.

[114] On the latter point, see Richard Finkelstein, review of *Marketing the Bard: Shakespeare in Performance and Print 1660–1740*, by Don-John Dugas, *Shakespeare Quarterly* 58, no. 2 (2007): 256.

[115] Cf. Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, 210.

edition. In the Advertisement to his 1766 *Twenty of the Plays of Shakspeare*, George Steevens remarked that he had omitted the apocryphal plays 'out of respect for the judgment of those who had omitted them before'.[116] Similar considerations—motivated, perhaps, by fear, rather than respect—impelled Theobald to do the same.

Dugas's argument also does not take into account Theobald's diffidence in matters of connoisseurship and attribution. As we saw in the previous chapter, Theobald was notably reticent when expressing aesthetic judgements against folio plays whose Shakespearean authorship he doubted—*Titus Andronicus* and the *Henry VI* trilogy. When making positive arguments for Shakespeare's involvement in the apocrypha and *Double Falshood*, he showed similar discretion. Indeed, Theobald's arguments often seem conditional, as though there were some obstacle preventing him from speaking freely. Definitive proofs are often promised, but deferred into the future and then never realized. In the 1733 Preface, Theobald asserts that he 'can, beyond all Controversy, prove some Touches in every one of [the apocryphal plays] to have come from [Shakespeare's] pen'.[117] Yet, having argued his ability to make this proof, he simply drops the matter—the apocrypha are not referred to again in the Preface. The 'Dissertation' on the authorship of *Double Falshood* follows a similar pattern:

> I had once design'd a *Dissertation* to prove this Play to be of *Shakespeare*'s Writing, from some of its remarkable Peculiarities in the *Language*, and Nature of the *Thoughts*: but as I could not be sure that the Play might be attack'd, I found it adviseable, upon second Consideration, to reserve *that* part of my *Defence*. That Danger, I think, is now over; so I must look out for a better Occasion.[118]

Theobald promises a resolution, mentions temporary matters that prevent him from writing at length, and 'reserves' the matter for a 'better Occasion' that never, in fact, arrived. Even in his private correspondence with Warburton, he seems to have felt the need to adopt a 'complaisant' tone when making positive claims about Shakespeare's

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[116] Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, eds., *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 10 vols. (London, 1778), 1:171.
[117] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 1:vii.
[118] Theobald, *Double Falshood*, 2nd ed., [A5]ᵛ.

authorship of uncanonical plays.[119] Theobald offered Warburton his emendations upon *Locrine* and *Pericles* 'by way of excursion, if you will indulge me in this liberty', and, having apparently been rebuffed, made no further mention of them.[120]

Noting Theobald's tendency to back away from making detailed arguments about authorship, R. F. Jones speculates that, 'had Theobald's life been less fraught with adversities, and had he received more encouragement in this field of investigation, perhaps he would have established his opinions on firmer grounds'.[121] Perhaps. Theobald's life was full of ambitious scholarly endeavours that he was never able to complete. A planned edition of Shakespeare's poems seems to have been abandoned in the mid-1730s, and Theobald died while preparing a collaborative edition of Beaumont and Fletcher.[122] (Fittingly, perhaps, Theobald's death came when he was one act into a set of editorial conjectures on 'a favourite' play of his, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.[123])

In the end, however, Theobald was content to restrict his opinions on the Shakespeare canon to the Preface and footnotes of his edition. Indeed, the Bentleyan note seems to have been the ideal format for the ambivalent and circumspect style of higher criticism that Theobald practised. Unlike Pope, who, having eschewed notes, had had to physically disrupt the text itself to express his canonical judgements, Theobald left the text block undisturbed. Instead, he undermined it, sniping at the folio canon with notes that questioned the authenticity of certain canonical plays, and vouched for the genuineness of others that had been excluded from it. In doing so, he set the scene for the footnote-laden variorum editions that would dominate Shakespearean textual scholarship

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[119] For Theobald's tendency towards excessive 'complaisance' when disagreements arose with correspondents, see Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 126n82.

[120] Nichols, ed., *Illustrations*, 2:557.

[121] Jones, *Lewis Theobald*, 187.

[122] For the edition of Shakespeare's poems, see Warburton's queries in Nichols, ed., *Illustrations*, 2:634, 654. Theobald had devised manuscript notes and an index to his copy of Lintot's 1709 *Poems … by Mr. William Shakespeare*, presumably in preparation for the edition. See Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 236.

[123] See William Seward, ed., *The Works of Mr. Francis Beaumont, and Mr. John Fletcher*, 10 vols. (London, 1750), 10:5–6n.

by the late eighteenth century.[124] Yet, by restricting his opinions about authorship to the notes field, Theobald ultimately enabled *Pope's* version of the Shakespeare canon to prevail. Shakespearean 'Touches' or no, the 1733 edition confirmed Pope's decision to remove the apocryphal plays from the *Works*, a precedent duly noted by subsequent editors. The apocrypha were issued singly by both Tonson and Robert Walker during their 1734–5 dispute over the right to publish Shakespeare, but would not be edited again until Malone's 1780 *Supplement*.[125] Theobald's footnote strategy would have even more long-lasting and irrevocable consequences for *Cardenio/Double Falshood*. Even though he did fulfill his promise to 'speak… more at large concerning the present *Play*' in the 1733 *Works*, Theobald's decision to restrict his remarks on *Double Falshood* to a single note ultimately rendered it, too, no more than an 'intriguing footnote' in the history of Shakespeare's text.[126]

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[124] See A. R. Braunmuller, 'Shakespeares Various', in *In Arden: Editing Shakespeare: Essays in Honour of Richard Proudfoot*, ed. Ann Thompson and Gordon McMullan (London: Thomson Learning, 2003), 9–10.

[125] For the contention between Tonson and Walker, see Giles E. Dawson, 'Robert Walker's Editions of Shakespeare', in *Studies in the English Renaissance Drama*, ed. Josephine W. Bennett, Oscar Cargill, and Vernon Hall, Jr. (London: Peter Owen and Vision Press, 1961), 58–81.

[126] Theobald, *Double Falshood*, 2nd ed., [A5]ᵛ; Hammond, 'Performance History', 49.

7.

'FRAGMENTS MINUTELY BROKEN': TEXT, PARATEXT, AND AUTHORSHIP IN THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EDITION

When, in the early years of the twentieth century, the New Bibliographers started to formulate their arguments about the Shakespearean text, one of their key concerns was to restore the reputation of the 1623 First Folio. This project rested on two evidentiary foundations. Firstly, A. W. Pollard's division of the early quartos into 'good' and 'bad' categories seemed to affirm the good faith of the Folio editors. Heminge and Condell had claimed that, prior to the Folio, Shakespeare's plays were 'maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealths of injurious impostors'. Since the eighteenth century, most commentators had interpreted this statement as applying to *all* pre-1623 Shakespearean quartos. Once editors had realized that certain Folio texts themselves derived from quarto copy, they had concluded that Heminge and Condell were both lazy and unreliable. However, Pollard's demonstration suggested that the Folio editors had meant to stigmatize only a small subset of texts—the 'bad quartos'.[1] As Peter Alexander put it, this promised to 'restore the good name and authority of Heminge and Condell' by showing that 'their statements square[d] with the facts'.[2]

The second strand of New Bibliographical revisionism was the suggestion that some of the Folio texts, and many of the 'good' quartos, had been set from Shakespearean 'foul papers'.[3] Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century editors had imagined that the Folio editors had relied on corrupt scribal documents for their texts. In opposition

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[1] See W. W. Greg, *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare: A Survey of the Foundations of the Text* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942), 7–14.

[2] Peter Alexander, *Shakespeare's Life and Art* (London: James Nisbet, 1939), 36.

[3] For the argument that many of the quartos were derived from Shakespearean autographs, see R. B. McKerrow, 'The Elizabethan Printer and Dramatic Manuscripts', *Library* 4th ser., 12 (1932): 264–65, 275.

to this, the New Bibliographers provided evidence that Shakespeare's own manuscripts underlay many of the early editions. Whereas earlier accounts of Shakespeare's textual history had been sunk in a 'quagmire of … despondency', these findings suggested new directions for research.[4] The result, Pollard suggested, would be to replace the pervasive attitude of pessimism in Shakespearean textual studies with one of 'optimism'.[5]

As Pollard's and Greg's choices of title make clear, the New Bibliography aimed to set Shakespeare's text on new foundations. Greg was fully aware of the revolutionary import of the movement, and, in a strain of slightly self-mocking hyperbole, he portrayed himself and his allies as a cadre of radical conservatives poised to sweep away the errors of the intervening years and restore Shakespeare to his original form. 'An attitude of textual pessimism … had long been traditional when Pollard blew the trumpet of revolt', he wrote. 'Perhaps never has so conservative a spirit led so revolutionary a crusade'.[6] Fundamental to the 'attitude of textual pessimism' that Greg wanted to replace were a set of textual assumptions inherited from the eighteenth century. One passage in particular seemed to exemplify the problem, and the New Bibliographers returned to it repeatedly. In his 1756 'Proposals' for a new edition of Shakespeare, Samuel Johnson had crafted an almost apocalyptic account of the depredations that Shakespeare's works had undergone. Once Shakespeare had sold his plays to the theatre companies, Johnson wrote,

> They were immediately copied for the actors, and multiplied by transcript after transcript, vitiated by the blunders of the penman, or changed by the affectation of the player; perhaps enlarged to introduce a jest, or mutilated to shorten the representation; and printed at last without the concurrence of the authour, without the consent of the proprietor, from compilations made by chance or by stealth out of the separate parts made for the theatre …. No other authour ever gave up his works to fortune and time with so little care: no books could be left in hands so likely to injure them, as plays frequently acted, yet continued in manuscript … no

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[4] W. W. Greg, *The Shakespeare First Folio: Its Bibliographical and Textual History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 92.

[5] A. W. Pollard, 'The Foundations of Shakespeare's Text', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 10 (1923): 383–84.

[6] Greg, *Editorial Problem*, 18.

other editions were made from fragments so minutely broken, and so fortuitously reunited.[7]

Johnson's suggestion that Shakespeare's text were protean, multitudinous, and fragmentary was the very antithesis of the New Bibliographers' attitude of textual optimism. No matter how whimsical Greg was in referring to the movement as a 'revolt' and a 'crusade', he and his associates nevertheless were proposing a radical break with pre-existing modes of Shakespearean textual criticism. In order to bring this about, they needed to discredit Johnson's view of the text, and the accounts of other eighteenth-century editors—Pope, Theobald, Steevens—who shared it. Greg himself responded to Johnson's conjectures by simply dismissing them as 'nightmare fantasies', which it 'would be absurd now to take seriously'.[8] For Greg, Johnson's 'fanciful hypotheses' were the product of editorial inexperience—the Proposals had come out before Johnson started to seriously grapple with the Shakespearean text. In a flight of his own fancy, Greg imagined an older Johnson looking back on the Proposals and concluding, 'as on another occasion, "Ignorance, pure ignorance"'.[9] Pollard's account of the passage was similarly dismissive. Responding to Johnson's claim that the plays had been printed from 'fragments … minutely broken'—in other words, actors' parts—Pollard asked 'whether for once in his life the great Doctor did not descend … to writing sheer nonsense'.[10] For the New Bibliographers, who imagined the manuscript sources of Shakespeare's text as a series of ideal-typical precursors to the printed book—foul papers, prompt books, full-text private transcripts—Johnson's account of a radically fragmented Shakespeare seemed barely comprehensible.[11]

Over the past thirty years, the New Bibliographical consensus in Shakespearean textual studies has largely dissolved. However, one of its key assumptions—the essential

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[7] Arthur Sherbo, ed., *Johnson on Shakespeare*, 2 vols., The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 7:52.

[8] Greg, *Editorial Problem*, 156.

[9] Greg, *Shakespeare First Folio*, 97n3, 84.

[10] A. W. Pollard, 'The Improvers of Shakespeare', *Library* 3rd ser., 7 (1916): 282; cf., however, Pollard, 'Foundations', 385–86.

[11] For a discussion of the ideal-typical nature of Greg's categories, see Paul Werstine, 'Plays in Manuscript', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 492–95.

unity of dramatic texts—has not been seriously questioned.[12] Accordingly, I want to revisit the eighteenth century's preoccupation with a textually fragmented Shakespeare. Rather than simply dismissing the Johnsonian narrative as wrong-headed, I shall ask what it might tell us about eighteenth-century conceptions of dramatic authorship. After all, many of the eighteenth-century editors of Shakespeare had themselves had direct experience with the London playhouses. Johnson, as a friend of Garrick's and the author of *Irene*, had a working knowledge of the stage, and, as Tiffany Stern has pointed out, this understanding is reflected in his textual criticism.[13] He was, for instance, familiar with the use of actors' parts and knew that songs were often lost because they were not usually transcribed into them.[14] Steevens was an amateur actor and keen theatre-goer, and he, like Johnson, showed a willingness to bring this theatrical knowledge to bear on editing.[15] Pope, too, had had some experience writing for the playhouses and acting as a 'consultant' to dramatists.[16] Moreover, this knowledge of the contemporary stage arguably gave them a certain amount of insight into the conditions under which Shakespeare's plays had been performed. The London theatre world was a highly conservative one, and many of the conventions and practices of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century stages continued into the eighteenth century.[17]

One of the most notable aspects of Augustan approaches to the authorship of Shakespeare's works is their modular nature. Editors saw the plays as an assemblage of fragments, whose authorship could be broken down in predictable ways. What we might, following Gérard Genette, term dramatic 'paratexts'—prologues, epilogues, and

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[12] See Tiffany Stern, 'Re-patching the Play', in *From Script to Stage in Early Modern England*, ed. Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 170.

[13] Tiffany Stern, '"I do wish that you had mentioned Garrick": The Absence of Garrick in Johnson's Shakespeare', in *Comparative Excellence: New Essays on Shakespeare and Johnson*, ed. Eric Rasmussen and Aaron Santesso (New York: AMS Press, 2007), 87.

[14] Stern, 'Absence of Garrick', 87–88.

[15] See Arthur Sherbo, *The Achievement of George Steevens* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990), 94.

[16] See Malcolm Goldstein, *Pope and the Augustan Stage* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1958), 1–33.

[17] Tiffany Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 122–23.

songs—were especially likely to be singled out as un-Shakespearean.[18] In this chapter, I shall examine the theoretical underpinnings and editorial consequences of this 'part-based' approach to the question of authorship. What were its rhetorical and evidentiary foundations? What were its aesthetic commitments? Finally, what impact did it have on eighteenth-century ideas about Shakespearean authorship and canonicity?

AN ANATOMY OF FOLIO ABUSE: POPE TO STEEVENS

The foundational document for the eighteenth century's belief that Shakespeare's text was fundamentally broken and corrupt was undoubtedly Pope's 1725 Preface to *Shakespear*.[19] For Pope, the 'almost innumerable Errors' in Shakespeare's text sprang 'from one source, the ignorance of the Players'.[20] None of the printed versions of Shakespeare's plays, he insisted, was reliable due to their common origins in the primal corruption of the playhouse. The confusion in which Shakespeare's dramatic texts lay is exemplified, Pope writes, by the multiple texts offered by different quarto editions of the same play. These have 'whole heaps of trash different from the other', a circumstance 'occasion'd', Pope suggests, 'by their being taken from different copies, belonging to different Play-houses'.[21] Pope's narrative describes an editor's nightmare—a Shakespearean text defined not by one authoritative source, but by many corrupt copies. Each play, he implies, was essentially owned in common by the London theatre community, the actors and scribes in each playhouse multiplying errors and adding their own non-authorial 'trash' to the dialogue.

If the manuscripts that the quarto editions stemmed from had been corrupted by the actors, the degree of theatrical contamination in the Folio was, Pope suggests, of a different order entirely. Pope's account of the textual transmission of Shakespeare's plays in the early modern theatre describes a system almost diabolically inventive in its

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[18] For a definition of paratexts, and a discussion of their functions, see Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, translated by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[19] See Peter Seary, *Lewis Theobald and the Editing of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 138.

[20] Alexander Pope, ed., *The Works of Shakespear*, 6 vols. (London, 1723–25), 1:xiv.

[21] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xvi.

capacity to generate error. In the Folio, writes Pope, 'the additions of trifling and bombast passages are … far more numerous' than in the quartos.[22] This he attributes almost solely to actorly interpolation: 'For whatever had been added, since those Quarto's, by the actors, or had stolen from their mouths into the written parts, were from thence conveyed into the printed text'.[23] The actors' replacement of Shakespeare's authority with their own has, Pope writes, led to all manner of unauthorized changes to the text. In some cases, 'beautiful passages' extant in the quartos have been cut out of the Folio text, 'it seems, without any other reason, than [the actors'] willingness to shorten some scenes'.[24] In others, 'mean conceits and ribaldries' of the players' own invention have been shuffled in amongst Shakespeare's lines.[25] As proof that the Folio's amplifications had come about through playhouse, rather than authorial, agency, Pope offers his own eyewitness testimony. While preparing the edition, he writes, he came across one old quarto, 'which seems to have belonged to the playhouse', with 'several of those very passages … added in a written hand, which are since to be found in the folio'.[26]

Throughout the Preface, Pope singlemindedly attempts to discredit the Folio text and its compilers. In their Address 'To the great Variety of Readers', Heminge and Condell had described themselves as Shakespeare's 'friends', and emphasized the 'care and pain' they took in having 'collected and publish'd' his plays. Pope's brief account of this Address omits all mention of 'care and pain', but adds the information that Heminge and Condell were merely 'two Players', and that their edition was published 'seven years after [Shakespeare's] decease'.[27] The Folio editors claimed to have printed Shakespeare's plays from the 'Original Copies'. Pope responds by trying to prove even these to be corrupt and unreliable. Rather than passing on Shakespeare's original manuscripts, Heminge and Condell had instead given the printers:

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[22] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xvi.
[23] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xvi.
[24] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xvii.
[25] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xvi.
[26] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xvii. For brief discussion, see Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, 139n26.
[27] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xvi.

those [copies] which had lain ever since the Author's days in the playhouse, and had from time to time been cut, or added to, arbitrarily. It appears that this edition … was printed (at least partly) from no better copies than the *Prompter*'s *Book*, or *Piece-meal Parts* written out for the actors.[28]

In attacking the sources of the Folio text so vehemently, Pope means to undermine any claim they have to textual authority. Rather than a unified and reliable whole, the Folio is, he implies, a mass of broken and corrupted parts. The seeming unity of the collection thereby dissolves, in Pope's hands, into mere illusion. Instead of a monument, the Folio becomes a travesty—a mock-, or stage-Shakespeare, whose words are intermingled with the voices of 'Plebians and Clowns', overseen by mock-editors, who were themselves only players.

Pope's image of a Shakespeare dismembered by playhouse manuscript conventions would receive more nuance and detail eight years later, in Lewis Theobald's Preface to his Shakespeare edition. Like Pope, Theobald emphasizes the error-ridden nature of the Folio text, the supposed ignorance of the actors who had assembled it, and the generally corrupting influence of the playhouse itself:

> When the *Players* took upon them to publish [Shakespeare's] Works intire, every Theatre was ransack'd to supply the Copy; and *Parts* collected which had gone thro' as many Changes as Performers, either from Mutilations or Additions made to them…. Scenes were frequently transposed, and shuffled out of their true Place, to humour the Caprice or supposed Convenience of some particular Actor…. For there ever have been, and ever will be in Playhouses, a Set of assuming Directors, who know better than the Poet himself the Connexion and Dependance of his Scenes; where Matter is Defective, or Superfluities to be retrench'd.[29]

Despite Heminge and Condell's pretensions to have published a collection edition of Shakespeare, Theobald's rhetoric suggests, the 1623 *Works* were anything but 'intire'. Instead, Shakespeare's plays were broken down into minute parts, which in turn became the property of the actors who portrayed them. Thus individuated, they were 'mutilated' by non-authorial, part-based revision, and 'retrench'd' by stage managers who presumed

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[28] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xvii.
[29] Lewis Theobald, ed., *The Works of Shakespeare*, 7 vols. (London, 1733), 1:xxxviii.

to know better than Shakespeare himself how his plays ought to be performed. After observing that a number of Hamlet's lines extant in the 1604 quarto are missing from the Folio, Theobald attributes this to Heminge and Condell's reliance upon theatre manuscripts as copy-text. 'The first motive of leaving [these lines] out', he writes, 'was to shorten Hamlet's speech, and ease the Actor; and the reason why they find no place in the first folio, is, that that edition was made from the Playhouse castrated copies'.[30] The Folio is, in other words, insufficient—'castrated' by the shifting exigencies of theatrical production. In Theobald's account, as in Pope's, the playhouse's almost endless capacity for manuscript production overwhelms and obliterates whatever 'authentic Manuscripts' of Shakespeare may once have existed.[31]

This editorial campaign against the First Folio's authority was to assume perhaps its most vivid form in George Steevens's 1793 edition of Shakespeare. Steevens's account leaves the Popean narrative intact, but heightens it to the level of grotesque caricature. Summing up the printing history of the quartos and First Folio, he writes that, 'The integrity of dramas thus prepared for the world, is just on a level with the innocence of females nursed in a camp and educated in a bagnio'.[32] In order to defend his practice of substituting First Folio readings with those of later editors, Steevens adopted Pope's *ad hominem* strategy of attacking the Folio editors on social grounds. No-one of Heminge and Condell's rank, Steevens implies, deserved the respect, or even the attention, of their editorial successors:

> we have sometimes followed the suggestions of a Warburton, a Johnson, a Farmer, or a Tyrwhitt, in preference to the decisions of a Hemings or a Condell, notwithstanding their choice of readings might have been influenced by associates whose high-sounding names cannot fail to enforce respect, viz. William Ostler, John Shanke, William Sly, and Thomas Poope.[33]

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[30] John Nichols, ed., *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 2 (London, 1817), 574.

[31] See Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 1:xxxvii.

[32] George Steevens, ed., *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 15 vols. (London, 1793), 1:xii.

[33] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 1:xii–xiii.

As in Pope's 1725 Preface, social status ultimately determines the cultural, and textual, authority of the 'players' edition'. The 'lowness' of the social milieu from which the First Folio emerged effectively disqualifies it from receiving any special stamp of textual reliability.[34] Instead, Steevens argued for a profoundly eclectic text; one that combined readings taken from the 'corrected' 1632 Folio with those emendations he saw fit to adopt from the eighteenth-century editorial tradition.[35]

The radicalism of Steevens's proposals was not lost on his contemporaries, who accused him of trying to return Shakespearean editing to the taste-based eclecticism of Pope and Hanmer. Edmond Malone, in particular, read Steevens's 1793 edition as the product of envy and sour grapes.[36] Having himself made a thorough collation of the First Folio and the early quartos for his 1790 *Shakspeare*, Malone saw Steevens's attack on the early editions as a retaliatory attempt at sabotage. In trying to undermine the value of collation itself, Steevens, Malone suspected, was merely attesting to the success of the 1790 text, and his own regret that Malone had pre-empted him:

> finding that by collating the original quartos and the first folio … I had established a text beyond all controversy … he then for the first time maintained that collation was of no value; that it only served to restore the *blunders* of the ignorant printers and editors of the quartos and folio; that it was impossible that Shakspeare should ever have written a line not perfectly smooth and metrical … and that therefore, wherever we find a line defective in this particular, we may *add* or *expunge* at pleasure.—Proceeding on this new principle, he has made his last edition the most unfaithful perhaps that has ever appeared.[37]

Steevens's renewal of Pope's and Theobald's assault on the Folio's compilers, then, served two different purposes. Firstly, it formed part of his campaign against Malone's editorial authority. In collating manifestly corrupt originals so carefully, Malone, Steevens implied, was 'disgrac[ing]' the 'implements of criticism' by using them to

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[34] See above, Chapter Four.

[35] Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print: A History and Chronology of Shakespeare Publishing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 94.

[36] See Arthur Sherbo, 'George Steevens's 1785 Variorum *Shakespeare*', *Studies in Bibliography* 32 (1979): 245–46.

[37] Arthur Tillotson, ed., *The Percy Letters: The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and Edmond Malone*, vol. 1 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1944), 94.

handle 'objects' unworthy of them, as he had earlier done by editing Shakespeare's Sonnets.[38] Secondly, the assault on the Folio enabled Steevens to more freely exercise his editorial conjecture, or, as Malone saw it, introduce 'capricious alterations, omissions and interpolations … under pretence of rectifying the *metre*' and removing theatrical corruption.[39]

In his Advertisement and notes to Shakespeare, Steevens widened his predecessors' assault on the Folio's text to encompass its other, paratextual, features. One of these targets was Heminge and Condell's Address 'To the Great Variety of Readers', which, on the basis of verbal parallels, he attributed instead to Ben Jonson. 'Perhaps Old Ben was author of the *Players' Preface*', Steevens observed casually in a footnote, 'and, in the instance before us, has borrowed from himself'.[40] (A more fully documented version of the argument, probably revised and extended by Edmond Malone, appeared in the 1821 Malone-Boswell *Variorum* edition.[41]) By suggesting that, in the Folio, as elsewhere in their professional lives, the 'player editors' were simply mouthing words written for them by somebody else, Steevens was effectively trying to silence Heminge and Condell. If they had no authentic voice of their own, he seems to be saying, they could convey no authoritative testimony about Shakespeare's works.

Steevens's self-conscious editorial radicalism extended to omitting a portrait of Shakespeare from its traditional place at the front of the edition. Instead, he devoted the first part of his Advertisement to arguing that no authentic portrait of Shakespeare existed.[42] Having spent six pages discussing the claims of the Chandos portrait and various eighteenth-century candidates, he dismissed the Folio Shakespeare—the Droeshout engraving—in half a paragraph. This plate, he wrote, was 'worn out', and in

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[38] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 1:vii.

[39] Tillotson, ed., *Percy Letters*, 1:65.

[40] Isaac Reed, ed., *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 21 vols. (London, 1803), 1:166n7.

[41] See Edmond Malone and James Boswell, eds., *The Plays and Poems of William Shakspeare*, 21 vols. (London, 1821), 2:663–74. See Greg, *Shakespeare First Folio*, 26, for the argument that the 1821 note is partially Malone's.

[42] See Margreta de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim: The Reproduction of Authenticity and the 1790 Apparatus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 85–86.

any case, 'so "abominable an imitation of humanity"' did not merit restoration.[43]
Unsurprisingly, Steevens did not vest any special authority in Heminge and Condell's
canon either. He admitted *Pericles* into the 1793 edition, on the 'advice of Dr. Farmer',
and implied that he might have omitted *Titus Andronicus*, had his publishers not
intervened on its behalf.[44] Both Farmer and the proprietors of the 1793 edition, in other
words, were accorded more canonical authority than Heminge and Condell themselves.

As these examples suggest, one of the central preoccupations of the eighteenth-
century Shakespearean editorial project was dissolving the perceived unities of the First
Folio. Pope, Theobald, and Johnson all provided detailed accounts of manuscript
practices in the early modern playhouse, observing how these led to a radically
fragmented text. Steevens, meanwhile, focussed his disintegrative vision on the First
Folio as an edited collection. Under this combined scrutiny, text, editorial preface,
portrait, and canon became detached from one another. Instead of a unified
collection—Shakespeare's 'Works intire'—the First Folio was reduced to an assemblage
of mangled and disorderly theatre documents, whose integrity the editor would then try
to salvage.

In many ways, the rhetorical posture that editors from Pope to Steevens assumed
towards the early editions of Shakespeare resembled the process of 'breaking and
remaking' that Ronald Paulson has observed at work in Augustan satire. A writer like
Swift '"blasts" the poetry of the past in order to build his own out of its ruins'.[45] Editors
like Pope and Steevens insist on the broken nature of Shakespeare's text in order to
renew it with their own editorial interventions. As Theobald put it,

> the natural Veneration, which we have for [Shakespeare], makes us apt to
> swallow whatever is given us as *his*, and let off with Encomiums; and hence we
> quit all Suspicions of Depravity: On the contrary, the Censure of so Divine an

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[43] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 1:vi. For the vexed history of Steevens and Shakespeare's portrait in
the late eighteenth century, see Samuel Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives*, 2nd ed. (Oxford:
Clarendon Press, 1991), 209–12.
[44] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 1:vii. Malone had pre-empted Steevens by including *Pericles* in his
1790 edition, but Steevens evidently chose not to mention this precedent.
[45] Ronald Paulson, *Breaking and Remaking: Aesthetic Practice in England, 1700–1820* (New
Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 31.

Author … produces an exact Scrutiny and Examination, which ends in finding out and discriminating the true from the spurious.[46]

The false idol of the Folio, the 'Veneration' of which concealed many a 'Depravity', had to be smashed so that a 'true' Shakespeare could be reconstructed from the iconoclasted pieces. In order to do so, however, editors had to demonstrate that the existing fabric was indeed rotten. The kind of editorial 'Scrutiny and Examination' of Shakespeare's textual foundations that Theobald prescribes is, therefore, predicated on there being 'Suspicions of Depravity'.

ANATOMIZING SHAKESPEARE: THE PLAY AS A COLLECTION OF FRAGMENTS

Since the latter part of the seventeenth century, revising dramatists and critics had used a variety of images to represent the fragmented nature of Shakespeare's plays. Borrowing a trope from Epicurus, Dryden had described his adaptation of *Troilus and Cressida* as an attempt to redeem the play from the 'heap of Rubbish, under which' so much of it 'lay wholly bury'd'.[47] Nahum Tate, in the Preface to his adaptation of *King Lear*, notoriously referred to the original play as a 'Heap of Jewels, unstrung and unpolisht'.[48] In both cases, the adapting playwrights claimed to be *restoring* the Shakespearean original—lifting his plays out of the original disrepair in which they had found them.[49] For eighteenth-century editors of Shakespeare, the preferred simile for representing this textual and artistic confusion was an architectural one. Shakespeare's text became a gothic cathedral—awe-inspiring in its size and scope, but structurally

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[46] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 1:xxxvi.

[47] John Dryden, *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. Maximillian E. Novak and George E. Guffey, vol. 13 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), 226. For the Epicurean origins of the metaphor, see Maximillian E. Novak, 'Johnson, Dryden, and the Wild Vicissitudes of Taste', in *The Unknown Samuel Johnson*, ed. John J. Burke and Donald Kay (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 57.

[48] Nahum Tate, *The History of King Lear* (London, 1681), A2ᵛ.

[49] See Jack Lynch, '*King Lear* and "the Taste of the Age," 1681–1838', *1650–1850* 10 (2004): 287.

unsound and, perhaps, in need of renovation for its full beauty to be realized.[50] In the final paragraph of the Preface to his edition, Pope likened Shakespeare's works to

> an ancient majestick piece of *Gothick* Architecture, compar'd with a neat Modern building: The latter is more elegant and glaring, but the former is more strong and solemn. It must be allow'd, that in one of these there are materials enough to make many of the other. It has much the greater variety, and much the nobler apartments; tho' we are often conducted to them by dark, odd, and uncouth passages. Nor does the Whole fail to strike us with greater reverence, tho' many of the Parts are childish, ill-plac'd, and unequal to its grandeur.[51]

Theobald continued where Pope left off, starting his own Preface with an extended architectural trope. Shakespeare, he wrote, was a 'splendid dome' containing 'many gaudy apartments', the whole providing the spectator with 'a gay confusion of pleasing Objects, too various to be enjoyed but in a general Admiration'.[52]

As Nick Groom has pointed out, 'the use … of architectural images to describe old language' was a something of a philological commonplace in eighteenth-century English scholarship.[53] However, the architectural trope was more than just a way of describing the condition of Shakespeare's text; it carried with it an implied license to rebuild or restore. As Johnson put it in his Preface to Shakespeare, 'The first care of the builder of a new system, is to demolish the fabricks which are standing'.[54] Rendering Shakespeare's text as an old or '*Gothick*' 'fabrick', then, suggested instability, outmodedness, and the need for renovation. Pope's assertion that 'Parts' of the Shakespearean corpus were 'childish, ill-plac'd, and unequal' accorded with his desire to remove those pieces from the main structure.[55] Steevens resisted Malone's Folio and quarto collations in similar terms. Restoring original readings without first subjecting them to aesthetic judgement, Steevens wrote, threatened to 'revive the anomalies,

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[50] R. D. Stock, *Samuel Johnson and Neoclassical Dramatic Theory: The Intellectual Context of the Preface to Shakespeare* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), 155.

[51] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xxiii–xxiv.

[52] Theobald, ed., *Works 1733*, 1:[i].

[53] Nick Groom, 'Thomas Chatterton Was a Forger', *Yearbook of English Studies* 28 (1998): 282.

[54] Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, eds., *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 10 vols. (London, 1778), 1:42.

[55] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 1:xxiv.

barbarisms and blunders of [the] ancient copies', casting aside the more decorous improvements of the Second Folio and subsequent editors in a way that was 'by no means honourable to our author'.[56] Likewise, he continued, the philological method of illustrating phraseology by observing parallels in contemporary authors risked replacing Shakespeare's authentic voice with those of 'irregular humourists and ignorant sectaries and buffoons'.[57] Malone's edition, in other words, introduced alien and corrupted elements at those very points where it pretended to restore what Shakespeare had originally composed.

Instead of continuing the 'pretence of restoration' promised by Malonean collation, Steevens proposed a more radical programme of editorial reconstruction. 'The style of many an ancient building', he wrote,

> has been characteristically restored. The members of architecture left entire, have instructed the renovator how to supply the loss of such as had fallen into decay. The poet, therefore, whose dialogue has often, during a long and uninterrupted series of lines, no other peculiarities than were common to the works of his most celebrated contemporaries … ought not so often to be suspected of having produced ungrammatical nonsense, and such rough and defective numbers as would disgrace a village school-boy in his first attempts at English poetry.[58]

This equation of the editor's role with that of a supervizing architect places connoisseurship and aesthetic judgement at centre-stage. It is Steevens's appreciation of Shakespeare's uncorrupted style that will allow him to discern where the text has 'fallen into decay'. Likewise, his sense of Shakespearean metre will enable him to restore the lost rhythms of the unpreserved original lines. The metrical 'blunders' and lexical 'barbarisms' that Steevens detects are, he implies, the unauthorized excrescences of actors and prompters, and it is the editor's task to remove them.

Steevens's architectural vision anatomizes the Shakespearean text into its individual components. Like the antiquarian who picks over the 'artificial ruin' of 'Thomas Rowley' in Vicesimus Knox's account of the Chatterton forgeries, Steevens

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[56] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 1:xiv–xv, xiii.
[57] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 1:xiii.
[58] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 1:xiii–xiv.

reduces Shakespeare to 'single stones', subjecting each one to authenticating scrutiny.[59] While his metrical innovations were the most notorious feature of the 1793 edition, Steevens did not stop there in his quest for omissions and interpolations in the Shakespearean text. His belief that the early editions had been set from piece-meal parts enabled him to develop a theory of widespread contamination by theatre personnel:

> To a reader unconversant with the licenses of a theatre, the charge of more material interpolation than that of mere syllables, will appear to want support; and yet whole lines and passages in the following plays incur a very just suspicion of having originated from this practice … for the propensity of modern performers to alter words, and occasionally introduce ideas incongruous with their author's plan, will not always escape detection.[60]

Actors' ad libs could, moreover, Steevens argued, make their way into the prompt-book and, over time, displace the original text. To illustrate this, he gives the example of an (unnamed) actress in John Home's *Douglas* who, having changed one of her lines, caused 'the prompter's book' to be 'thus corrupted', resulting in the altered line appearing in a later revival.[61] (At no point, however, does he explain exactly *how* the ad lib might have entered the Drury-Lane prompt-book.[62]) Steevens intimates darkly that, 'Many other instances of the same presumption might have been subjoined, had they not been withheld through tenderness to performers now upon the stage'.[63] That corresponding interpolations had entered Shakespeare's plays could now, he wrote, 'only be suspected', and the passages themselves thus 'remain unexpelled'.[64]

Steevens's account of the supposed prompt-book alterations in *Douglas* and their significance for Shakespeare is notable for two reasons. Firstly, it shows how mutable he believed early modern theatrical manuscripts to have been. Secondly, his argument indicates how willing many eighteenth-century textual critics were to use contemporary

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[59] Quoted in Groom, 'Thomas Chatterton', 282.

[60] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 1:xvii.

[61] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 1:xviii.

[62] Cf. Gary Taylor and John Jowett, *Shakespeare Reshaped, 1606–1623* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 108.

[63] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 1:xviii.

[64] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 1:xviii.

examples to illustrate Elizabethan stage practice. Steevens's editorial gaze shifts from the Globe theatre to Drury-Lane and back again, as though the two playhouses existed in an unbroken continuum. In his hands, the question of seventeenth-century manuscript transmission becomes an opportunity for attacking *contemporary* stage performances. As we shall see, this dramatically informed anti-theatricalism pervaded Steevens's editorial rhetoric, especially when he was arguing against Shakespeare's authorship of particular passages.

PARATEXTS AND SHAKESPEAREAN AUTHORSHIP

To eighteenth-century editors of Shakespeare, prologues, epilogues, songs, and comic dialogue occupied especially ambiguous places in the Shakespearean corpus. They were embedded within the plays, but contemporary stage practice taught that these kinds of texts were more ephemeral, and less likely to be Shakespeare's, than the material surrounding them. Accordingly, they were often singled out as playhouse additions, and editors stressed the flimsiness with which they were attached to the Shakespearean mainpiece. In the pre-Commonwealth theatre world, prologues and epilogues were often written by someone other than the author of the play they accompanied.[65] (Writing these additional pieces seems to have been one of the duties of the company dramatist.[66]) Similar conventions held on the Restoration and eighteenth-century stages, although they tended to be expressed in the languages of friendship and sociability rather than those of commerce or contract law. The writing of a prologue for another author's play resembled a kind of sociable exchange. Dryden wrote a prologue for Nahum Tate's *Loyal General* (1679); Tate reciprocated by contributing commendatory poems to *Absalom and Achitophel* and *The Medall*.[67] Pope, meanwhile, composed a prologue to *The Fond Husband* as a favour to Thomas D'Urfey, apparently at Joseph Addison's request.[68]

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[65] Tiffany Stern, '"A small-beer health to his second day": Playwrights, Prologues, and First Performances in the Early Modern Theater', *Studies in Philology* 101, no. 2 (2004): 183.
[66] Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time, 1590–1642* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971), 135–37.
[67] Dustin Griffin, 'Augustan Collaboration', *Essays in Criticism* 37, no. 1 (1987): 8.
[68] See Goldstein, *Pope*, 12.

Prologues and epilogues in this period were often figured as the outward signs of friendship—they placed a dramatist, as Dustin Griffin puts it, 'among his peers'.[69]

Augustan critics projected this social vision of the stage back onto Shakespeare and his contemporaries, imagining prologues and epilogues as tokens of favour exchanged between playwrights. Johnson, for instance, identified the prologue and epilogue of *Henry VIII* as the work of Ben Jonson, and speculated that he had written them out of 'friendship or officiousness' on the occasion of the play's revival.[70] Familiarity with the contemporary stage also seems to have given eighteenth-century editors a keen sense of the ephemerality of prologues and epilogues. (In eighteenth-century stage practice, as in the early modern theatre, prologues and epilogues were usually reserved for new plays, or for revivals.[71]) In this vein, Johnson could dismiss the epilogue to *2 Henry IV* as a 'merely occasional' piece, written for 'some theatrical transaction' that the passage of time had rendered obscure.[72] For Johnson and his contemporaries, prologues and epilogues were not integral parts of the Shakespeare canon. Instead, they were seen as records of the social world in which dramatists moved, or as remnants of performance contexts—those unknown 'theatrical transactions' that occurred between theatre companies, their audiences, and their patrons.

As I discussed in Chapter Four, Pope relegated the entire Masque of Jupiter in 5.5 *Cymbeline* to a footnote, identifying it as an interpolation 'foisted in … for mere show' some time after Shakespeare had completed the play.[73] A number of subsequent editors agreed with his judgement. Steevens, in particular, was unsparing in his hostility towards the theatre manager whom he thought had arranged for 'this contemptible nonsense' to be added to the finished drama:

> The subsequent narratives of Posthumus … seem to have excited some manager
> of a theatre to disgrace the play by the present metrical interpolation. Shakspeare,
> who has conducted his fifth act with such matchless skill, could never have

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[69] Griffin, 'Augustan Collaboration', 8.

[70] Sherbo, ed., *Johnson on Shakespeare*, 8:658. I examine this in more detail in Chapter Nine.

[71] See Stern, *Rehearsal*, 190, 282–83.

[72] Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 5:[613]n.

[73] Pope, ed., *Works 1725*, 6:219n.

designed the vision to be twice described by Posthumus, had this contemptible nonsense been previously delivered on the stage.[74]

The practice of dramatists adding new material to pre-existing plays in order to 'theatricalize' them would have been familiar enough to eighteenth-century theatre historians.[75] Dryden, for instance, wrote a new scene for the old manuscript play *The Mistaken Husband* on the occasion of its first staging in the early 1670s.[76] However, Malone's recovery of surviving pre-Commonwealth theatrical documents appeared to give new support to the earlier editors' presumption that Shakespeare's plays had been revised and added to by others. Malone himself wrote in agreement with Pope's and Steevens's opinions about *Cymbeline*, adding evidence from the records of Sir Henry Herbert that the 'addition of a new scene, and sometimes an entire act, to an old play, appears … to have been common'.[77] After citing five examples from the Caroline period of payments made to playwrights for 'additions' and 'new scenes', Malone speculated that, were the papers of Edmund Tilney and George Buc ever found, they would show 'the *Vision*, *Masque*, and *Prophecy*, in the fifth act of *Cymbeline* … to have been interpolated by the players after [Shakespeare's] death'.[78]

In a note included in the 1793 *Shakspeare*, Joseph Ritson made a similar case for posthumous revision in Act 5 of *Cymbeline*, but, unlike Malone, based his argument entirely on a connoisseur's view of the text. Not only did Ritson believe that the scene's stylistic qualities marked it out as an un-Shakespearean addition, but he explicitly endorsed Pope's suggestion that the scene be removed from the play entirely. 'One would think', Ritson wrote, 'that … the managers had employed some playwright of the *old school* to regale [the audience] with a touch of "King Cambyses' vein." The margin would be too honourable a place for so impertinent an interpolation'.[79] Steevens's

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[74] Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 9:315n.

[75] Stern, *Rehearsal*, 170–71.

[76] Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, 'Attribution Problems in English Drama, 1660–1700', *Harvard Library Bulletin* 31, no. 1 (1983): 24–25.

[77] Edmond Malone, ed., *The Plays and Poems of William Shakspeare*, 10 vols. (London, 1790), 1, pt. 1:406.

[78] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 1, pt. 1:406, 407n.

[79] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 13:202–3n.

inclusion of so many of Ritson's notes in the 1793 edition may have been partly motivated by a desire to antagonize Malone, whom Ritson had repeatedly and vituperatively attacked.[80] Nevertheless, Ritson's comments, and Steevens's approval of them, show how prevalent an essentially Popean view of style and authorship continued to be in scholarly circles, even at the very end of the eighteenth century. Malone may have been trying to ground authorship studies in documentary evidence, but this 'revolution' by no means immediately erased all signs of the older mode of style-based higher criticism.[81]

Shakespeare's songs were another part of the eighteenth-century canon where the ties between author and text were deemed fragile. Theobald had recognized that some of the songs in Shakespeare's plays were published elsewhere. In *Hamlet*, for instance, the verses sung by the Gravedigger were, he wrote, 'not of Shakespeare's composition, but owe their original to the old Earl of Surrey's poems'.[82] Direct borrowing of this nature was, he thought, either parodic, or, alternatively, a gesture of tribute on Shakespeare's part. The presence of other songs in Shakespeare, however, posed larger editorial questions. As Theobald had been the first to point out, the song that begins 4.1 *Measure for Measure*, 'Take, oh take those lips away', appears in a longer version in the Beaumont and Fletcher play *The Bloody Brother*. This raised obvious issues of priority and authorship. Malone thought that the lines were Shakespeare's, and indeed that 'All the songs … introduced in [Shakespeare's] plays' were of 'his own composition'.[83] In his 1821 edition of the *Plays and Poems*, however, the younger James Boswell politely set aside Malone's views. Fletcher, he wrote, was both better known and more successful as a lyricist than Shakespeare, and therefore more likely to have written the original version of the song.[84] Boswell's explanation for how this putatively Fletcherian song had found its way into Shakespeare's play suggests something of how fragmentary and modular

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[80] Peter Martin, *Edmond Malone, Shakespearean Scholar: A Literary Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 171–72.
[81] Cf. de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim*, 51–52.
[82] Nichols, ed., *Illustrations*, 2:577.
[83] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 10:340n.
[84] Malone and Boswell, eds., *Plays 1821*, 20:419–20n.

Shakespeare's texts were in the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century editorial imagination:

> as we often find, in our old dramas, the stage direction [Here a song], I have great doubts whether this delicate little poem may not, from its popularity at the time, have been introduced by the printer to fill the gap, and gratify his readers.[85]

In the pre-1642 theatre, songs appear to have been written out on 'scrolls' and physically carried onto stage by the actors who would sing them.[86] They were not transcribed into actors' parts, and, occupying their own pieces of paper, were essentially detachable from the rest of the play.[87] When dramatic manuscripts eventually came to the printing house, it seems likely that sometimes these scrolls had indeed become separated from the rest of the play. On occasions like this, songs would leave only traces of their former existence in the headings and stage directions of the printed play.[88] If Boswell's suggestion that printers would make the effort to fill 'gaps' in this way has seemed unlikely to subsequent scholars, he at least appears to have been sensitive to the detachable nature of dramatic songs.[89] This circumstance no doubt contributed to his willingness to see their authorship as fluid and debatable, not essentially or straightforwardly Shakespearean.

Hecate's song in 4.1 *Macbeth*, 'Black spirits and white', raised similar questions of authorship and possible interpolation for eighteenth-century editors. Only the first two words of 'Black spirits and white' appear in the 1623 text. In the 1773 Johnson-Steevens edition, Steevens noted that the full version of the song appeared in William Davenant's 1674 adaptation of the play. Rather than crediting Davenant with recovering the Shakespearean original, Steevens surmised that the song 'was … in all probability a traditional one'.[90] While preparing the 1778 text, however, he had a chance to examine

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[85] Malone and Boswell, eds., *Plays 1821*, 20:420n.

[86] Tiffany Stern, 'Letters, Verses and Double Speech-Prefixes in *The Merchant of Venice*', *Notes and Queries* n.s. 46, no. 2 (1999): 232.

[87] See Stern, 'Re-patching the Play', 158.

[88] Stern, 'Letters', 232–33.

[89] For a brief critique of Boswell's theory, see Taylor and Jowett, *Shakespeare Reshaped*, 124.

[90] Reprinted in Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 4:557n.

Thomas Middleton's manuscript play *The Witch* and realized that the same verses also appeared there. Steevens eventually devised a more complex theory of revision and interpolation to account for the song's presence in the two plays. In a long footnote to Malone's 'Attempt to Ascertain the Order [of Shakspeare's Plays']', Steevens suggested that Shakespeare had borrowed from Middleton:

> our author (who as actor, and manager, had access to unpublished dramatic performances) has so often condescended to receive hints from his contemporaries, that our suspicion of his having been a copyist in the present instance, might not be without foundation.[91]

Malone evidently agreed with Steevens, imagining that Shakespeare had written into *Macbeth* material from *The Witch* that was already 'well-known' and 'in the possession of the managers of the Globe Theatre'.[92] (By asserting that Middleton's play already belonged to Shakespeare's company when *Macbeth* was written, Malone no doubt wanted to avoid suggesting that Shakespeare had plagiarized it.)

At some later point, however, Steevens changed his mind about the source of Hecate's songs in *Macbeth*. Rather than attributing the episode to Shakespeare 'receiv[ing] hints' from Middleton, Steevens now accused the actors of interpolating 'Black spirits and white' into the play. 'Perhaps', he surmised, 'this musical scrap (which does not well accord with the serious business of the scene) was introduced by the players, without the suggestion of Shakspeare'.[93] Gary Taylor and John Jowett suggest that the 1869 Clarendon edition of *Macbeth* was the first to argue that *The Witch*'s songs had been interpolated into the Shakespearean play.[94] However, Steevens's footnote shows that this conclusion had been drawn much earlier. If some more recent critics have seen Shakespeare's songs as 'integral parts of the plays', Steevens evidently thought the opposite.[95] Instead, as his notes on *Macbeth* indicate, he tended to regard them as mere

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[91] Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 1:328n.
[92] Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 1:329.
[93] Reed, ed., *Plays 1803*, 10:208n.
[94] Taylor and Jowett, *Shakespeare Reshaped*, 124n47.
[95] Quote from Peter J. Seng, *The Vocal Songs in the Plays of Shakespeare: A Critical History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), xii.

'scraps'—insignificant pieces with unsecure connections to the action around them and the author of the plays in which they appeared.

Steevens's abiding scepticism about the canonical status of songs in Shakespeare expressed itself more forcefully in his response to Feste's closing song in *Twelfth Night*. In part, his rejection of this song as a theatrical interpolation appears to stem from critical puzzlement—a reaction to what Nora Johnson calls the 'manifest sense of incongruity' that Feste engenders in the closing scene.[96] In particular, Steevens seems confused as to why the play ends with a song apparently unconnected with the action, and that refuses to tie up the many loose ends that the plot has left dangling. 'Though we are well convinced', he writes,

> that Shakspeare has written slight ballads for the sake of discriminating characters more strongly, or for other necessary purposes … it is scarce credible, that after he has cleared his stage, he should exhibit his Clown afresh, and with so poor a recommendation as this song, which is utterly unconnected with the subject of the preceding comedy.[97]

At this point, Steevens's note veers into contemporary performance criticism. Feste's song is, he implies, on the same level as the anonymous actress's ad lib in *Douglas*—an ephemeral piece of stage business that the prompt-book has inadvertently immortalized. 'I do not hesitate to call the nonsensical ditty before us', he continues,

> some buffoon actor's composition, which was accidentally tacked to the Prompter's copy of *Twelfth-Night*, having been casually subjoined to it for the diversion, or at the call, of the lowest order of spectators. In the year 1766, I saw the late Mr. Weston summoned out and obliged to sing *Johnny Pringle and his Pig*, after the performance of Voltaire's *Mahomet*, at the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane.[98]

The outrageous collision of French neoclassical decorum and English cultural unruliness that Steevens describes here may seem a little too good to be true, especially

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[96] Nora Johnson, *The Actor as Playwright in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 157.
[97] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 4:173n.
[98] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 4:173n.

considering Steevens's well-known 'love of hoax and deception'.[99] Nevertheless, *Mahomet* was revived at Drury Lane in 1765–6, and had at least six performances during the 1766 season.[100] (*The London Stage* does not record Thomas Weston as being among the actors, but surviving cast-lists are, of course, neither exhaustive nor complete.) Whether or not we accept Steevens's words at face value, his account does seem to convey a genuine sense of unease about the mingling of high and low cultures on the eighteenth-century stage. That an audience might want 'Johnny Pringle and his Pig', and that an actor would be willing to provide it for them, suggests something of the power that 'the lowest order of spectators' had over events on stage, at least in Steevens's mind. The transition from drama to 'ditty' that Steevens chronicles also reveals another area of anxiety in the eighteenth-century critical imagination—the relationship of mainpieces to the songs, dances, and entertainments with which they shared the bill.[101] Both Steevens's anecdote about Thomas Weston and his speculations about the closing song in *Twelfth Night* depict the ends of plays as vulnerable points for dramatic authority. Here, agency returns to the audience and 'diversion' resumes, physically encroaching on the performing space, and, in the case of *Twelfth Night*, the text itself.

As in his earlier account of prompt-book alteration in *Douglas*, the mode of theatre history that Steevens practised here was a resolutely *presentist* one. Supposed corruptions and interpolations in Shakespeare's text are explained via eighteenth-century stage anecdotes, which in turn reflect badly upon the current state of the playhouse. The theatrical past thus becomes a kind of cudgel with which to beat the present stage for its 'licenses' and lapses in taste.[102] (Something similar occurs in Thomas Davies's *Dramatic Miscellanies*, where a note on Hamlet's instruction to the players that clowns are 'to speak no more than is set down for them' expands into a discourse on eighteenth-century

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[99] On Steevens as hoaxer, see John H. Middendorf, 'Steevens and Johnson', in *Johnson and His Age*, ed. James Engell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 128.

[100] George Winchester Stone, Jr., ed., *The London Stage, 1600–1800, Part 4: 1747–1776*, 2 vols. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1962), 1:1146–47, 1149, 1153, 1169, 1200.

[101] For the contentious relationship between drama and 'entertainment' in eighteenth-century criticism, see John O'Brien, *Harlequin Britain: Pantomime and Entertainment, 1690–1760* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 38–40.

[102] Cf. Robert D. Hume, 'Before the Bard: "Shakespeare" in Early Eighteenth-Century London', *ELH* 64, no. 1 (1997): 65.

comic actors and their tendency to 'correspond… with the gods' rather than read from their parts.[103]) For Steevens, however, this presentism also enabled him to see the texts *as* plays. *Twelfth Night* appeared to him as a prompt-book with an additional song 'tacked' to it. Unlike practitioners of pure connoisseurship, Steevens was able to defend his authorship theories with speculations about the physical properties of the manuscript copy underlying the printed text.

Perhaps Steevens's most ambitious attempt to fragment authorship in the 1793 edition came in his notes to *Troilus and Cressida*. Steevens had written nothing about the play's authorship in either the 1773 or 1778 editions. However, Malone's discovery in the Henslowe papers that Dekker and Chettle had composed a play called *Troyelles & Cresseda* in 1599 evidently led Steevens to reconsider the matter.[104] Combining the evidence that *Troilus and Cressida* had been a late insertion into the First Folio with the Henslowe records, Steevens now expressed scepticism about the play's integrity and provenance. Both the prologue, and portions of the main action, were, he suggested, un-Shakespearean. 'I cannot', Steevens wrote,

> regard this Prologue (which indeed is wanting in the quarto editions) as the work of *Shakspeare*; and perhaps the drama before us was not entirely of his construction. It appears to have been unknown to his associates, Hemings and Condell, till after the first folio was almost printed off. On this subject, indeed, (as I learn from Mr. Malone's *Emendations and Additions* …) there seems to have been a play anterior to the present one.[105]

Evidently, Steevens believed that the manuscript from which *Troilus and Cressida* was printed had come from another playhouse, and Heminge and Condell had not known of Shakespeare's involvement in its writing until 1623. Although his wording is slightly ambiguous, it seems that he suspected that *Troilus and Cressida* might have been Shakespeare's revised version of Dekker and Chettle's play. (This is confirmed in a note to Act 5: 'Perhaps this play was hastily altered by Shakspeare from an elder piece', he

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[103] Thomas Davies, *Dramatic Miscellanies*, 3 vols. (London, 1784), 2:86.

[104] For Malone's transcriptions of the *Troyelles & Cresseda* records from Henslowe's papers, see Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 1, pt. 2:319.

[105] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 11:214n.

surmized. 'Some of the scenes therefore he might have fertilized, and left others as barren as he found them'.[106]) Ritson agreed that the prologue was un-Shakespearean, but suggested instead that it had been added during a *later* revision. 'Some *Kyd* or *Marlowe* of the time' had composed the prologue in the course of '*altering* and *amending*' the play.[107] Despite the contradiction between their arguments, Steevens and Ritson agreed on three points. The prologue was neither Shakespearean nor an essential part of the play, and the authorship problems they detected had come about through revision.

Although Steevens apparently suspected that much of the play was un-Shakespearean, most of his (and Ritson's) more sceptical notes appeared in the final act. In 5.3 and again at 5.11 of the Folio text, Troilus' contemptuous dismissal of Pandarus—'Hence broker, lackie, ignomy, and shame'—appears twice. In the 1609 quarto, the lines occur only once, just before Pandarus delivers the play's epilogue.[108] Modern editors have detected here a Shakespearean revision. Either Shakespeare first placed Pandarus' dismissal at 5.3, but, when he decided to have Pandarus speak an epilogue, he transferred it to its new location, or, conversely, when the epilogue was *deleted* from the play, Pandarus' final appearance was moved back to 5.3.[109] Predictably, perhaps, in the 1778 edition Steevens instead invoked playhouse contamination to account for the differences between Q and F.[110] Troilus' lines, he surmised, were written for delivery at the end of the play, but the chaotic and piece-meal nature of the early modern playhouse manuscript enabled them to be 'shuffled' out of order:

> There can be no doubt but that the players shuffled the parts backward and
> forward *ad libitum*; for the poet would hardly have given us an unnecessary

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[106] Reed, ed., *Plays 1803*, 15:474–75n.

[107] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 11:214n.

[108] See Phebe Jensen, 'The Textual Politics of *Troilus and Cressida*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (1995): 417.

[109] For the first theory, see Greg, *Shakespeare First Folio*, 346; for the second, see Gary Taylor, '*Troilus and Cressida*: Bibliography, Performance, and Interpretation', *Shakespeare Studies* 15 (1982): 99–136.

[110] On the enduring nature of what she terms this '"old" revisionist theory', see Grace Ioppolo, '"Old" and "New" Revisionists: Shakespeare's Eighteenth-Century Editors', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 52, no. 3 (1989): 348.

repetition of the same words, nor have dismissed Pandarus twice in the same manner.[111]

For the 1793 edition, Steevens seems to have changed his mind. Rather than suggesting that this scene was to have appeared at the end of the play, he now argued that Æneas' couplet, 'Strike a free march to Troy!—with comfort go: / Hope of revenge shall hide our inward woe', just prior to the exit of the Trojan forces, marked the end of the play.[112] Nothing beyond this point was Shakespeare's, being either 'a subsequent and injudicious restoration from the elder drama' that Shakespeare had reworked, 'or the nonsense of some wretched buffoon who represented Pandarus'.[113]

The ur-*Troilus and Cressida* that Steevens saw buried beneath Shakespeare's play remains as a never-quite-suppressed force. Pieces of it, such as the prologue and epilogue, were prone to resurface, juxtaposing awkwardly with Shakespeare's style and dramaturgy. Allied to this was the problem of playhouse interpolation. As in *Twelfth Night*, Steevens saw performers—particularly those who played clowns—as a continual threat to Shakespeare's dramatic intentions. Their eagerness to entertain, combined with the traditional license comic actors had to extemporize, led them to subvert Shakespeare's dramatic structures:

> our author would scarce have trusted the conclusion of his piece to a subordinate character whom he had uniformly held up to detestation. It is still less probable that he should have wound up his story with a stupid outrage to decency, and a deliberate insult to his audience.—But in several other parts of this drama I cannot persuade myself that I have been reading Shakspeare.[114]

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[111] Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 9:150n. The transposition of scenes that Steevens imagines here would have been impossible to produce with early modern parts, which were continuous scrolls, not collections of individual speeches. See Stern, 'Absence of Garrick', 87.

[112] This is also the position taken by the editors of the 1986 Oxford *Complete Works*, although, unlike Steevens, they did not question Shakespeare's authorship of the epilogue. Wells and Taylor relegate Pandarus' closing speech to a footnote—something that not even Steevens had been prepared to do. See Jensen, 'Textual Politics', 416.

[113] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 11:449–50n.

[114] Steevens, ed., *Plays 1793*, 11:450n.

Steevens's 'moral bent', as well as his abiding concern with 'the doctrine of decorum', are well represented in this passage.[115] Pandarus' epilogue, as an 'outrage to decency', threatens Shakespeare's reputation as a moral artist and cannot be allowed to stand. Conflating his own definition of 'decency' with Shakespeare's, Steevens manages to persuade himself that he has not, after all, 'been reading Shakespeare'.

'All recorded texts', D. F. McKenzie once observed, are 'collaborative creations—the product of social acts involving the complex interventions of human agency acting on material forms'.[116] Eighteenth-century editors, from Pope to Steevens, recognized this multivocality. They understood that actors might revise their parts, or that managers might add to or retrench plays in performance. Dramatists, they knew, might revise and 'correct' existing works, or write together on new play-scripts. Contemporary stage practices, meanwhile, taught them that prologues and epilogues were ephemeral pieces, and that a play's songs were often composed by someone other than the playwright. However, the canonization of the singular author, Shakespeare, led them to deny or devalue many of these collaborative networks.[117] Although, as I will show in the next two chapters, the language of genteel sociability provided a positive set of idioms for describing dramatic collaboration, interaction with actors and stage managers was different. While it might be something of an honour to collaborate with another playwright, the 'lowness' of the actors meant that they, by contrast, were sources of social contamination. Instead, eighteenth-century editors tried to redeem Shakespeare from his actorly associations—to separate him from the 'perverse acquaintance' of the theatre. Breaking the text into authorial and putatively non-authorial fragments enabled Shakespeare to escape with his reputation intact.

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[115] See Sherbo, *Achievement*, 94.

[116] D. F. McKenzie, '"What's Past Is Prologue": The Bibliographical Society and the History of the Book', in *Making Meaning: "Printers of the Mind" and Other Essays*, ed. Peter D. McDonald and Michael F. Suarez, S. J. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), 262.

[117] Cf. Marcus Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing: The Beginnings of Interpretative Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 7.

8.

WHAT WAS A CO-AUTHOR? EARLY MODERN COLLABORATION IN THE POST-1660 CRITICAL TRADITION

In the decade before the closure of the London theatres in 1642, the number of plays published with title-page attributions to more than one dramatist dropped sharply.[1] After the theatres re-opened in 1660, rates of reported collaboration fell even further. According to figures collected by Paulina Kewes, only 3% of the plays written for London companies between 1660 and 1720 had more than one author.[2] Despite the virtual disappearance of multiple authorship from the contemporary stage, however, the cultural memory of collaboration endured. Theatrical anecdotes preserved accounts of earlier dramatists writing together. Biographical dictionaries likewise recorded, and often celebrated, the collaborative authorial practices of the pre-Commonwealth stage. If, in the theatre, multiple authorship had come to suggest 'inadequacy and failure', in contemporary biography and theatre history, earlier collaborations were described in highly positive terms.[3]

What might account for this disparity? In late seventeenth- and early-eighteenth century criticism, I shall argue, collaborative authorship was increasingly read as a form of genteel sociability. Relationships among co-authors were reinterpreted according to 'the rules of social discourse, friendship', and 'social engagement'.[4] For eighteenth-century critics, collaborative plays provided insights into the reputations, social

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[1] Douglas A. Brooks, *From Playhouse to Printing House: Drama and Authorship in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 176–77.

[2] Paulina Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation: Writing for the Stage in England, 1660-1710* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 235.

[3] For the low critical regard in which collaborative Restoration plays were held, see Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation*, 179.

[4] Paul Trolander and Zeynep Tenger, 'Abandoning Theory: Towards a Social History of Critical Practices', in *Critical Pasts: Writing Criticism, Writing History*, ed. Philip Smallwood (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2004), 40.

behaviour, and personal morality of early modern dramatists. Indeed, so closely was collaboration identified with sociability, that *not* sharing authorship could be seen as a form of suspect behaviour. This reading of collaboration would, in turn, exert a considerable influence over the way in which eighteenth-century editors would interpret multiple authorship in the Shakespearean canon.

DRAMATIC CO-AUTHORSHIP IN THE ENGLISH BIOBIBLIOGRAPHY

Toward the end of the seventeenth century, biographers began, for the first time, to write the lives of English dramatists. Drawing on play catalogues, title pages, theatre anecdotes, and the prefatory matter of printed plays, these writers gathered biographical details, measured the extent of authors' canons, and tracked down the sources that had been used in particular plays.[5] Although, as one recent authority has put it, these works were, on their own, 'rather slight productions', together they formed the basis for eighteenth-century biographical theatre scholarship.[6] Viewed as historical documents, they provide a valuable source of contemporary opinions about canonicity, authorship, and collaboration. The first English biographical dictionary to include the lives of dramatists was Edward Phillips's *Theatrum Poetarum: Or A Compleat Collection of the Poets* (1675). The *Theatrum Poetarum* is a derivative work, largely consisting of translations and paraphrases of continental works, with some unattributed borrowings from a handful of English sources.[7] For information about sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English drama, Phillips seems to have relied upon Francis Kirkman's catalogues of published plays—both that attached to the 1661 issue of *Tom Tyler and His Wife* and his revised, 1671 version of the list.[8]

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[5] For a general account of these works, see René Wellek, *The Rise of English Literary History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 2–15.
[6] Allan Pritchard, *English Biography in the Seventeenth Century: A Critical Survey* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 24.
[7] Sanford Golding, 'The Sources of the *Theatrum Poetarum*', *PMLA* 76, no. 1 (1961): 48–53.
[8] Golding, 'Sources', 51–52.

Kirkman's catalogues listed a number of works as being written by more than one dramatist, and Phillips duly recorded this information under the headings of the authors concerned. Mostly, his discussions of these (presumed) collaborations are brief and perfunctory. He writes, for instance, that Robert Greene 'was associated in the writing of several Comedies' with Lodge, and that William Rowley was 'an Associate with *Middleton*, in the writing of several Comedies and Tragi-Comedies', as well as having 'joyn'd with *Webster*' in a handful of other plays.[9] At other times, however, Phillips's accounts are slightly more elaborate, and reveal something of his attitude to the literary properties of collaborative works. Of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, he remarks that the poem was 'left unfinished by *Marlow*, who in some riotous Fray came to an untimely and violent End', but was then 'thought worthy of the finishing hand of *Chapman*'. The result of this posthumous collaboration, however, is qualitatively uneven: 'in the performance', Phillips judges, Chapman's contribution to the poem 'fell short of the Spirit and Invention with which it was begun'.[10]

The fullest—and most influential—rendering of literary co-authorship in the *Theatrum Poetarum*, however, occurs in Phillips's entries on Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher. Of Beaumont, Phillips records that he was 'an inseparable Associate and Coadjutor to *Fletcher* in the making of many of his plays', and, in his account of John Fletcher's career, he develops the idea of literary partnership more fully.[11] Repeating the old idea that there had been a triumvirate among the pre-Commonwealth playwrights—Shakespeare, Jonson, and Fletcher—each 'perfect' in his own way, Phillips writes that Fletcher's talent lay in his 'pure vein of wit' and 'courtly Elegance'. Above all, however, Fletcher possessed

> a wit and invention so overflowing, that the luxuriant branches thereof were frequently thought convenient to be lopt off by his almost inseparable Companion *Francis Beaumont*.[12]

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[9] Edward Phillips, *Theatrum Poetarum, Or, A Compleat Collection of the Poets* (London, 1675), 162, 193–94.

[10] Phillips, *Theatrum Poetarum*, 24–25.

[11] Phillips, *Theatrum Poetarum*, 42.

[12] Phillips, *Theatrum Poetarum*, 108–09.

Although variations on this trope must have been circulating in London prior to Phillips—John Aubrey records that he had 'heard Dr. John Earles (since bishop of Sarum), who knew them, say that [Beaumont's] maine businesse was to correct the overflowings of Mr. Fletcher's witt'—Phillips's version was evidently thought good enough for others to appropriate.[13] William Winstanley's *Lives of the Most Famous English Poets* (1687), which reproduces many other passages from the *Theatrum Poetarum* almost verbatim, provides a more copious rendering of the metaphor.[14] Winstanley, rather than providing separate entries for Beaumont and Fletcher, as Phillips had done, draws them together under one heading. The first part of the entry repeats, with minor adjustments, Phillips's entry on Fletcher. Then, still following Phillips, Winstanley writes that Fletcher had

> a Wit and Invention so overflowing, that the luxuriant Branches thereof were frequently thought convenient to be lopt off by Mr. *Beaumont*; which two joyned together, like *Castor* and *Pollux*, (most happy when in conjunction) raised the *English* to equal the *Athenian* and *Roman* Theaters; *Beaumont* bringing the Ballast of Judgment, *Fletcher* the Sail of Phantasie, but compounding a Poet to admiration.[15]

Phillips's account of the two playwrights figures Beaumont as a kind of literary gardener whose role was largely correctional: pruning the wild natural growth of Fletcher's poetic invention. Winstanley's nautical metaphor makes Phillips's translation of Beaumont and Fletcher's partnership into the language of neoclassical theory still more explicit. Beaumont is cast as 'Judgment', Fletcher as 'Phantasie', and together Winstanley sees them 'compounding' into a single creative force. Their co-authored works thus, in Winstanley's account, are an amalgam that embodies the neoclassical ideal of art and judgement combined.

 That Winstanley saw in the dramatic collaborations of the former age a mode of composition that enabled authors to achieve more together than they could singly is

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[13] John Aubrey, *'Brief Lives', Chiefly of Contemporaries, Set Down by John Aubrey, Between the Years 1669 and 1696*, ed. Andrew Clark, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898), 1:95–96.

[14] For the derivative nature of Winstanley's work, see Samuel Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 84.

[15] William Winstanley, *The Lives of the Most Famous English Poets* (London, 1687), 128.

apparent from his other remarks on Beaumont and Fletcher. While he rejects the idea that either playwright was completely dependent upon the other for artistic support—Beaumont produced some singly authored poems, while Fletcher was able to write 'some good Comedies of himself' after the death of his collaborator—the results, he implies, were beneath the standard set by their jointly authored works.[16] Fletcher may not have been like Ulysses, unable to function without the support of his Diogenes, but, Winstanley suggests, his later, singly authored plays were generally thought worse than those that had received the assisting hand of Beaumont. The reason for this is the mere fact of these plays' non-collaborative mode of composition. Some observers, writes Winstanley, see Fletcher's unaided plays as 'inferior' to those written with Beaumont, 'and no wonder if a single thread was not strong as a twisted one'.[17] As Kewes puts it, collaboration in Winstanley's account 'figures as a guarantee of artistic power and strength, a kind of positive reinforcement of individual talent and skill'.[18] Single authorship, by contrast—particularly in those who collaborated elsewhere—is made to seem weak and one-dimensional.

Winstanley may have been indebted to the antiquarian Thomas Fuller for the figure of the authorial 'compound' that he uses to round out his account of Beaumont and Fletcher. Fuller's account of the life of Shakespeare in his *History of the Worthies of England*, which Winstanley appropriated almost word-for-word, had described Shakespeare as a 'compound' writer, in whose works the exemplary poets of the classical past appear to collide and meld. He was, writes Fuller, one

> in whom three eminent Poets may seem in some sort to be compounded. 1. *Martial* in the *warlike* sound of his Sur-name … *hasti-vibrans*, or *Shakespear* …. 2. *Ovid*, the most *naturall* and *witty* of all Poets …. [and] 3. *Plautus*, who was an exact Comedian, and yet never any Scholar, as our *Shake-spear* (if alive) would confess himself …[19]

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[16] Winstanley, *Lives*, 129.
[17] Winstanley, *Lives*, 130.
[18] Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation*, 152.
[19] Thomas Fuller, *History of the Worthies of England* (London, 1662), 126. See also Winstanley, *Lives*, 130–31.

CO-AUTHORSHIP, HONOUR, AND REPUTATION

If it was Winstanley who began to elaborate upon the genteel account of pre-Commonwealth dramatic collaboration that his predecessors provided, Gerard Langbaine's *Account of the English Dramatick Poets* (1691) and Giles Jacob's *Poetical Register* (1719) would bring this way of rendering co-authorship to full fruition. What is immediately noticeable about the biographical tradition as it reaches Langbaine and Jacob is its translation of the available facts about pre-Commonwealth dramatic authorship into the contemporary languages of friendship and politeness. In these accounts, collaboration is rendered as a kind of gentlemanly conversation, and its 'social dimension' continually insisted upon.[20] Thus Fuller takes the memory of the *poetomachia*—the tradition that there had been a hostile exchange of plays between Jonson and Shakespeare—and reconfigures it as a series of literal, duel-like '*wit-combats*' between the two playwrights.[21] Winstanley describes Beaumont and Fletcher 'meeting … in a Tavern, to contrive the rude Draught of a Tragedy', while Aubrey records somewhat more explicitly the social and sexual arrangements that their 'entire friendship' was rumoured to consist of:

> They lived together on the Banke side, not far from the Play-House, both batchelors; lay together … had one wench between them, which they did so admire; the same cloathes and cloake, &c., betweene them.[22]

Aubrey's project of simply recording in manuscript, without intending to publish, what his informants passed on allowed him to take down the franker biographical vignettes circulating in Restoration gossip.[23] Langbaine, however, preferred to render co-authorship as a product of more decorous forms of sociability, seeing its participants as engaging in the kind of reciprocal exchange of favours that characterized genteel

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[20] Dustin Griffin, 'Augustan Collaboration', *Essays in Criticism* 37, no. 1 (1987): 7.
[21] James P. Bednarz, *Shakespeare and the Poets' War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 13, 19–20.
[22] Winstanley, *Lives*, 129; Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, 1:96.
[23] See Pritchard, *English Biography*, 89–90.

friendships. So, for instance, Langbaine writes of George Chapman that he was a 'Gentleman of no mean Repute', and that he, Langbaine, could 'give him no greater Commendation, than that he was so intimate with the famous *Johnson*, as to engage in a Triumvirate with Him, and *Marston* in a Play called *Eastward-Hoe*'.[24] Likewise, Langbaine writes of William Rowley's 'intimate Acquaintance with the prime Poets' of his time, adding that: 'He was not only beloved by those Great Men, *Shakespear*, *Fletcher*, and *Johnson*; but likewise writ with the former, *The Birth of Merlin*'.[25]

For Langbaine, co-authorship necessarily entails social intimacy, the identity of an author's collaborative partners signalling the level of his 'repute'. (After demonstrating Rowley's association with the 'prime Poets of that Age', Langbaine goes on to mention his various collaborations with 'Poets of the second Magnitude'—Heywood, Middleton, Day, and Webster.[26]) A dramatist's ability to 'club together' with other playwrights indicated that he had the esteem and acceptance of his contemporaries. Langbaine adapted the concept of gentlemanly honour to describe the gradations of literary hierarchy that he believed these partnerships to reveal. A superior playwright could extend an 'honour' to inferior contemporaries by offering to make them assistants on his own play, while an invitation to collaborate from an equal likewise affirmed one's literary 'excellence'.[27] Those collaborators who played minor or junior roles in a play's composition were usually referred to as 'assistants', an apparent borrowing from the language of craftsmanship that might seem to render the main author as 'master'. Yet, unlike other contemporaneous uses of the term—in, for instance, Restoration scientific writing—authors in the biobibliographic tradition portrayed the role of the assistant playwright as a fluid one, not bound by social class.[28] While the scientific assistant was usually anonymous, Langbaine and Jacob are scrupulous about

[24] Gerard Langbaine, *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets* (Oxford, 1691), 57.

[25] Langbaine, *Account*, 428.

[26] Langbaine, *Account*, 428.

[27] Peter Burke, *The Art of Conversation* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 105, notes that the collocation 'he did me the honour of [some action]' was prescribed in contemporary conduct books to assist readers in describing favours conferred upon them by social superiors.

[28] On the role of, and language used to describe, the scientific assistant in Restoration England, see Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 356, 364.

identifying collaborative plays and naming the dramatists who assisted on them. Similarly, while the scientific assistant was typically a servant who could not expect to progress beyond the position of inferior worker, anyone, it seems, could be an assistant on a play. Langbaine records that James Shirley 'was assisted by' George Chapman in two plays, while Jacob states that 'Shakespeare assisted' in the composition of Samuel Rowley's *Birth of Merlin*.[29] 'Assisting', in these late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century accounts of the earlier stage, seems analogous to the 'favours' that one gentlemanly associate could expect from another. While a playwright might have been expected to 'assist' more often at the beginning of his career, the term seems to have been used rather to refer to an author who had not written 'the greatest part' of a particular play.[30]

Langbaine's account of Philip Massinger's playwrighting career reveals how he believed this literary economy, based upon the exchange of gentlemanly favours, had functioned:

> He [Massinger] was extreamly belov'd by the Poets of that Age, and there were few but took it as an Honour to club with him in a Play: witness *Middleton*, *Rowley*, *Field*, and *Decker*: all which join'd him in several Labours. Nay, further to shew his Excellency, the ingenious *Fletcher*, took him in as a Partner in several Plays … [31]

Intimacy with inferior dramatists, however, could not be a lasting source of reputation in this honour-inflected conception of co-authorship. Theophilus Cibber's *Lives of the Poets* records that Richard Brome regarded Thomas Dekker as a 'Father', but then goes on to observe that these kinds of 'applauses', offered by those with little reputation of their own, 'confer no great honour on those who enjoy them'.[32]

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[29] Langbaine, *Account*, 476–77; Giles Jacob, *The Poetical Register: Or the Lives and Characters of the English Dramatic Poets* (London, 1719), 214–15.
[30] See Langbaine, *Account*, 219.
[31] Langbaine, *Account*, 353.
[32] Theophilus Cibber, *The Lives of the Poets*, 5 vols. (London, 1753), 1:152.

CO-AUTHORSHIP, CONVERSATION, AND IMPROVEMENT

Since the discovery of the Henslowe papers, a very different picture of the economic conditions in which early modern playwrights worked has emerged. From the nineteenth century until comparatively recently, scholars have tended to see Elizabethan dramatic collaboration purely in terms of financial expediency.[33] In the words of W. J. Lawrence,

> Elizabethan dramatic collaboration was a matter of necessity, not choice. It implied an urgent demand for the goods. So far from a playwright seeking a complementary mind to aid him in his work, the choice was seldom, if ever, his. The association of collaborators was mostly mere matter of chance, an arbitrary arrangement on the part of the intermediary who commissioned the play.[34]

Viewed from this perspective, the efforts of Restoration and Augustan biographers to translate dramatic co-authorship into the language of genteel friendship may seem nonsensical. As Kewes puts it, the 'omission of the financial dimension of collaborative writing' from these discussions has the effect of distancing it entirely 'from the economic realities of the theatrical marketplace'.[35] However, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century observers did not necessarily see these 'realities' in the same way. England at this time was still a face-to-face society, and economic relationships were largely thought of in social terms rather than those of individual self-interest.[36] It was, as Keith Wrightson has recently argued, through *social* relationships—those of kinship, friendship, and associational or guild sociability—that participants in this economy 'mapped their society and rendered it "legible"'.[37] The biographers' emphasis on the sociable aspect of

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[33] For a partial critique of this position, see Neil Carson, 'Collaborative Playwriting: The Chettle, Dekker, Heywood Syndicate', *Theatre Research International* 14, no. 1 (1989): 14, 22.

[34] W. J. Lawrence, 'Early Dramatic Collaboration: A Theory', in *Pre-Restoration Stage Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927), 341.

[35] Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation*, 147.

[36] See Craig Muldrew, 'Interpreting the Market: The Ethics of Credit and Community in Early Modern England', *Social History* 18, no. 2 (1993): 163–83.

[37] Keith Wrightson, 'Mutualities and Obligations: Changing Social Relationships in Early Modern England', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 139 (2006): 163.

collaboration, then, probably reflected less deliberate 'myth-making' than the influence of contemporary ways of understanding collective economic endeavour.

The belief that intellectual production took place ideally within a community of friends was a common one in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[38] Participants in the 'Republic of Letters', for instance, both in England and on the continent, decorously referred to their epistolary exchanges in terms of honour, friendship, and mutual obligation.[39] Indeed, the very fact of correspondence itself implies reciprocity. This mutualism, as Dena Goodman has described it in the context of the French Enlightenment, 'both reflected and strengthened the sense of equality that structured relations among citizens of the Republic of Letters'.[40] These relations were typically assumed to be grounded in friendship, with letters being the equivalent of gifts offered to each other by intimates, or verbal exhanges in an on-going conversation.[41] Steven Shapin has likewise described the way in which the ideals of gentlemanly sociability were adapted for use in the scientific community of post-Restoration London.[42]

Contemporary dramatists were also capable of deploying the concept of honour to describe their own collaborative relationships and flatter their contemporaries. Dryden, in the 1669 preface to his and Davenant's adaptation of *The Tempest*, remarks that his participation in the play had come about through the invitation of Davenant, 'who', he says, 'did me the honour to joyn me with him in the alteration of it'.[43] Dryden's careful use of the collaborative metaphor here both directs a posthumous compliment towards Davenant, by suggesting the older playwright's social and literary superiority to him, and, cunningly, abrogates responsibility for the (unsuccessful) play by emphasizing his

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[38] Lawrence E. Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness: Moral Discourse and Cultural Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 5–6, 9–10.

[39] See Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680-1750* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 12–30.

[40] Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 18.

[41] Goodman, *Republic of Letters*, 37, 117.

[42] See Shapin, *Social History of Truth*, 121–24.

[43] John Dryden, *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. Maximillian E. Novak and George E. Guffey, vol. 10 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970), 3.

junior role in its composition.[44] All of these examples testify to the popularity of eighteenth-century languages of sociability, drawn from traditional concepts of genteel conduct, for describing relationships between authors. Each imagines literary communities as bound by mutual ties of honour and obligation, with authorial reputation conferred or enhanced by the willingness of other authors to confer upon them the 'mutual courtesy' of collaboration.[45]

Co-authorship, then, as reconfigured in Restoration and early eighteenth-century accounts, is above all a form of sociable interaction—of *conversation*—between playwrights. Like the concept of 'acquaintance' in humanist discourses of friendship, where the aim was 'to better others or be bettered by them', collaboration was seen as a mechanism for improvement.[46] One of the compliments Dryden pays Davenant in the 1669 preface to *The Tempest* is that their interactions improved the quality of his writing. While the two playwrights worked together, Dryden recalls, his 'writing received daily [Davenant's] amendments, and that is the reason why it is not so faulty, as the rest I have done without the help or correction of so judicious a friend'.[47] Writing similarly, in his 'Essay on the Genius and Writings of Shakespear', John Dennis suggests that Shakespeare's faults as an author derived from his literary isolation—the lack of 'Friends' of 'Capacity and Integrity' in his social circle with whom he could share his work.[48] As a result, writes Dennis,

> *Shakespear* having neither had Time to correct, nor Friends to consult, must necessarily have frequently left such faults in his Writings, for the Correction of which either a great deal of Time or a judicious and a well-natur'd Friend is indispensably necessary.[49]

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[44] See Michael Werth Gelber, *The Just and the Lively: The Literary Criticism of John Dryden* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 92.

[45] For the eighteenth-century idea of honour as a kind of currency binding genteel relationships together, see Markku Peltonen, *The Duel in Early Modern England: Civility, Politeness and Honour* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 38–39.

[46] On 'acquaintance', see Lawrence E. Klein, 'The Third Earl of Shaftesbury and the Progress of Politeness', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 18, no. 2 (1984-5): 196.

[47] Dryden, *Works*, 10:4.

[48] John Dennis, *The Critical Works of John Dennis*, ed. Edward Niles Hooker, 2 vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1943), 2:15.

[49] Dennis, *Critical Works*, 2:16.

Winstanley, as we have seen, regarded the plays that Beaumont and Fletcher wrote in concert as superior to the work of either one of them writing alone. Langbaine too concurred with the sentiment that 'a single thread was not as strong as a twisted one'.[50] Elaborating on Phillips's and Winstanley's descriptions of the pair as the decorous union of invention and judicious correction, Langbaine writes that:

> Mr. *Fletcher*'s Wit was equal to Mr. *Beaumont*'s Judgment, and was so luxuriant, that like superfluous Branches, it was frequently prun'd by his Judicious Partner…. In a word, *Fletcher*'s Fancy, and *Beaumont*'s Judgment combin'd, produc'd such Plays, as will remain Monuments of their Wit to all Posterity.[51]

In their insistence that commerce between authors could improve and correct their writings, these passages come close to adumbrating Shaftesbury's model of the ideal conversation, where discursive partners 'polish one another', rubbing off their 'Corners and rough Sides by a sort of *amicable Collision*'.[52] Co-authorship thus becomes a mechanism for elevating politeness and polishing discourse, in the same way that Giles Jacob's 1719 *Poetical Register* could attribute John Gay's 'progress' as a dramatist to his exposure to 'the Conversation of Mr. *Pope*'.[53] The equation between stylistic and literary 'correction' and personal intimacy would persist in epistolatory friendships throughout the eighteenth century.[54]

This translation of English literary history into the specifically gentlemanly language of polite sociability was, however, not uncontroversial. Firstly, it presupposed social equality between authors, and therefore raised the problem of how to describe partnerships between apparently unequal authors. Secondly, the fiction of authors as gentlemen could easily be made to appear presumptuous, or worse, ridiculous, when the

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[50] Winstanley, *Lives*, 130.

[51] Langbaine, *Account*, 204.

[52] Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, 4th ed., 3 vols. (London, 1727), 1:64.

[53] Jacob, *Poetical Register*, 114–15.

[54] See Katherine O'Donnell, '"Dear Dicky," "Dear Dick," "Dear Friend," "Dear Shackleton": Edmund Burke's Love for Richard Shackleton', *Studies in English Literature* 46, no. 3 (2006): 624.

actual social backgrounds of particular authors were known. Pope, for example, evidently found Jacob's use of the language of genteel sociability to describe the lives of contemporary London writers comically inappropriate. In the footnotes to the *Dunciad Variorum*, Pope quotes mockingly and at length from the *Poetical Register*'s more idiosyncratic literary and social judgements, for instance Jacob's assertion that Colley Cibber's 'wit' was 'much improved by the *conversation* he enjoys, which is of the *best*'.[55] In the case of Edward Ward, Pope reproduces Jacob's biographical account of the poet almost verbatim: 'He has of late Years kept a publick house in the City (but in a genteel way) and with his wit, humour, and good liquor (Ale) afforded his guests a pleasurable entertainment'.[56] Pope's sole change is the interpolation of the word 'Ale'. As James McLaverty has noted, Pope here seeks to underscore the 'pretentiousness' of Jacob's account by referring to the social realities Jacob tries to conceal: 'the dunces … were, or ought to have been, alehouse keepers, and there was no point in Jacob's trying to disguise that fact'.[57] Jacob's adoption of Shaftesburian politeness discourse threatened to elevate the dunces above their proper literary and social stations, a move that Pope, ever attentive to matters of social hierarchy, felt obliged to counter.

THE ABUSES OF AUTHORSHIP: COLLABORATION AND ITS ANTI-TYPES

If, as I have been suggesting, late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century commentators represented pre-Commonwealth dramatic authorship as a kind of communally based 'moral economy', they likewise saw it as being hierarchically arranged and governed by the rules of genteel conduct.[58] This ethics of social practice permeates accounts of relations between authors during the Restoration and Augustan periods. In Langbaine's *Account*, and the biographical dictionaries that derived from it, collaboration between authors becomes part of this ethics of social behaviour. The nature

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[55] Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad Variorum* (London, 1729), 20n1.
[56] Pope, *Dunciad Variorum*, 17n4.
[57] J. McLaverty, 'Pope and Giles Jacob's *Lives of the Poets*: The *Dunciad* as Alternative Literary History', *Modern Philology* 83, no. 1 (1985): 30.
[58] Cf. Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*, 227–28, 242.

of those partnerships, judged according to the type of sociability they represent, was one of the chief means by which an assessment of a playwright's character and reputation could be made.

Late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century social theorists defined politeness as the art of 'pleasing in company', and its chief virtues were judged to be 'agreeableness', generosity, and a genteel refinement of manners and verbal expression.[59] As we have seen, writers in the biobibliographic tradition described Beaumont and Fletcher's literary relationship as a kind of ideal conversation, and Langbaine's *Account* duly emphasizes both their social connections with nobility and the linguistic refinement of their dialogue:

> These Poets perfectly understood Breeding, and therefore successfully copy'd the Conversation of Gentlemen. They knew how to describe the Manners of the Age; and *Fletcher* had a peculiar tallent in expressing all his thoughts, with Life and Briskness.[60]

In the prefatory biography appended to the 1709 *Works of Shakespear*, Nicholas Rowe compliments Shakespeare in similar terms. Shakespeare, Rowe alleges, was an ideal social actor, possessed of the kind of exemplary manners and verbal agreeableness that could not but gain him access to 'the best Conversations of those Times':

> Besides the advantages of his Wit, he was in himself a good-natur'd Man, of great sweetness in his Manners, and a most agreeable Companion …. His exceeding Candor and good Nature must certainly have inclin'd all the gentler Part of the World to love him, as the power of his Wit oblig'd the Men of the most delicate Knowledge and polite Learning to admire him.[61]

This image of Shakespeare as a 'good man', in the classical sense, would become one of the enduring commonplaces of eighteenth-century Shakespearean biography.[62]

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[59] Klein, *Shaftesbury*, 4–8.

[60] Langbaine, *Account*, 204.

[61] Nicholas Rowe, ed., *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear*, 6 vols. (London, 1709), 1:viii, x.

[62] Paulina Kewes, 'Shakespeare's Lives in Print, 1662–1821', in *Lives in Print: Biography and the Book Trade from the Middle Ages to the 21st Century*, ed. Robin Myers, Michael Harris, and Giles Mandelbrote (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2002), 78.

Politeness, however, occupied only one part of a spectrum of social behaviours, and the good man was seen as being flanked on both sides by less acceptable figures. Contemporary social theory represented these anti-types of politeness in the equally undesirable extremes of the 'clown' and the 'courtier'. As Lawrence E. Klein puts it, in this moral economy of social behaviour,

> the Clown's madness was the unhinging of the isolated mind whereas the Courtier's folly was the heteronomic vacuity of the mind incapable of independence. [This] assertion, then, implied a spectrum from excessive autonomy to excessive sociability. Its mean, occupied by a figure who might be called the fully polite gentleman, involved some balance between autonomy and sociability.[63]

A similar range of social judgements appears in contemporary biographical accounts of collaborating authors. If Beaumont, Fletcher, and Shakespeare were thought to occupy the *via media* of social conduct, other dramatists were consigned to its margins. The stances that Jonson, Dekker, and Middleton were believed to have taken on co-authorship seem to have been especially problematic for writers in the biobibliographical tradition.

Although Jonson himself had testified to the importance of 'good fellowship', and a strong tradition of anecdotes describing Jonson's tavern sociability survived well into the 1700s, by the late seventeenth century he was often depicted as having been silent, solitary, truculent, and uncivil in his relationships with others.[64] Winstanley, for example, had suggested that Jonson, when in company, would sit silently and 'suck up the humours' of those surrounding him.[65] Rather than contributing to conversation, Winstanley implies, Jonson selfishly consumed it, transmuting the words and mannerisms of his conversation partners into material for his own art. While Langbaine's filial loyalty to Jonson—his father and Jonson had been friends—made Langbaine

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[63] Lawrence E. Klein, 'Sociability, Solitude, and Enthusiasm', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 60, no. 1 and 2 (1997): 155.

[64] On Jonson and 'good fellowship', see Jeffrey Knapp, *Shakespeare's Tribe: Church, Nation, and Theater in Renaissance England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 25–26. For the survival of tavern anecdotes concerning Jonson, see S. Schoenbaum, 'Shakespeare and Jonson: Fact and Myth', in *The Elizabethan Theatre II*, ed. David Galloway (London: Macmillan, 1970), 6–7.

[65] Winstanley, *Lives*, 129.

reluctant to criticize Jonson's imitative compositional methods, he does comment upon, and critique, Jonson's solitary authorial persona.[66] In his entry on Chapman, having evidently noted Jonson's preference for sole authorship, Langbaine interprets Jonson's presence alongside Chapman in *Eastward Ho* as a mark of special favour or esteem for the younger playwright. Collaboration, Langbaine observes, was, after all, 'a Favour which the haughty *Ben* could seldome be perswaded to'.[67]

This idea of an unsociable Jonson, who might accept, but would rarely return, the favours of others would find its most famous expression in Rowe's 1709 biography of Shakespeare. Rowe, possibly on the information of Davenant, suggests that Shakespeare had been responsible for Jonson's career, having intervened in his company's rejection of one of Jonson's first plays, and having thereafter 'recommended' Jonson 'to the Publick'.[68] Yet, Rowe implies, Jonson's 'Proud and Insolent' nature meant that he was unlikely to have made 'an equal return of Gentleness and Sincerity' on Shakespeare's 'remarkable piece of Humanity and good Nature'.[69] As late as 1779, Edward Capell repeated the idea that Jonson's preference for single authorship indicated that he either did not understand, or deliberately ignored, the principle of reciprocity in friendship. Discussing Jonson's claim, in the preface to *Sejanus*, that he had excised the work of a collaborator when revising the play for publication, Capell records that

> tradition has handed down to us the following anecdote;—that [Shakespeare] was the "happy *Genius*," whose pen had "so good a share" in this play, as it was first written: for which assistance, he is here sneer'd at by the person he gave it to; was quarrel'd with, at the time, and oppos'd, and ill-treated, ever after.[70]

Collaboration, for Capell, is the equivalent of a favour—an act of 'assistance'—offered to one friend by another, and, accordingly, he views Jonson's reported behaviour as deliberately insulting. Jonson's withdrawal from collaborative relations, from the vantage

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[66] On Langbaine's fealty to Jonson, see Kevin Pask, 'Plagiarism and the Originality of National Literature: Gerard Langbaine', *ELH* 69, no. 3 (2002): 735.
[67] Langbaine, *Account*, 57.
[68] See Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives*, 57–58.
[69] Rowe, ed., *Works 1709*, 1:xii–xiii.
[70] Edward Capell, *Notes and Various Readings to Shakespeare* (London, 1779; reprint, New York: Burt Franklin, 1970), 1:479.

point of this ethically charged 'theory of conversational manners', is not simply a personal preference, but a flight from sociability itself.[71]

While Jonson may have been criticized for refusing, rather than embracing, co-authorship, Langbaine and his successors accuse other playwrights of *abusing* it. This is especially so in their accounts of apparently minor dramatists—those with little or no eighteenth-century reputation—who had collaborated with more well-known authors. In such supposedly unequal partnerships, inferior authors were assumed to have relied upon the assistance of their coadjutors for any success they achieved. Like the 'overly socialized' figure of the courtier in Klein's schema, these playwrights are 'incapable of independence'.[72] Langbaine, for example, appears slightly puzzled as to why Thomas Dekker, an author of no 'great Reputation … gain'd by his own Writings', 'wanted not his Admirers, nor his Friends amongst the Poets'.[73] In his subsequent interpretation of Dekker's career, Langbaine represents the playwright's relationship to his contemporaries as one of dependence. Dekker owed his fame, Langbaine suggests, to his contentions with Jonson, and his literary and personal associations with more talented playwrights:

> He clubb'd with *Webster* in writing Three Plays; and with *Rowley* and *Ford* in another: and I think I may venture to say, that these Plays as far exceed those of his own Brain, as a platted Whip-cord exceeds a single Thread in strength. Of those which he wrote alone, I know none of much Esteem …[74]

Even the success of *Satiromastix*, Dekker's most 'esteemed' unaided play, came about through a kind of collaboration, although in this case one of subject matter, rather than

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[71] Cf. Lawrence E. Klein, '"Politeness" as Linguistic Ideology in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England', in *Towards a Standard English: 1600-1800*, ed. Dieter Stein and Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1994), 33.

[72] Klein, 'Sociability', 155.

[73] Langbaine, *Account*, 121.

[74] Langbaine, *Account*, 121. Langbaine's metaphor for collaboration—the 'platted Whip-cord'—is, of course, similar to Winstanley's description of Beaumont and Fletcher's partnership. See Winstanley, *Lives*, 130.

authorship. This play won its approval, Langbaine asserts, 'chiefly on account of the Subject of it, which was the Witty *Ben Johnson*'.[75]

Langbaine's most explicit description of this apparently parasitic mode of collaboration appears in his account of Thomas Middleton. Although he allows that Middleton was an 'Author of good Esteem' during his lifetime, Langbaine implies that that 'esteem' derived mainly from the assistance of his collaborators:

> He was Contemporary with those Famous Poets *Johnson*, *Fletcher*, *Massinger* and *Rowley*, in whose Friendship he had a large Share; and tho' he came short of the two former in parts, yet like the *Ivy* by the Assistance of the *Oak*, (being joyn'd with them in several Plays) he clim'd up to some considerable Height of Reputation…. certainly, most Men will allow, That he was thought fit to be receiv'd into a *Triumvirate*, by two such Great Men [Fletcher and Jonson], was no common Poet.[76]

While Middleton's apparent intimacy with his more famous contemporaries obliges Langbaine to conclude that he was 'no common Poet', the account is arranged to suggest that Middleton's apparent 'Height of Reputation' is an illusion. Any standing or prominence that Middleton appears to have is, in fact, borrowed from the more talented associates that he worked alongside. The evidence of Middleton's solely authored plays, Langbaine suggests, places him firmly in 'the Second Rank' of dramatists.[77]

The image that Langbaine uses to embody Middleton's relationship to his collaborative partners—the ivy supported by the oak—emphasizes Middleton's supposed weakness and inferiority as a playwright. Ultimately classical in origin, the image itself derives from the Roman viticultural practice of using elms as supports for growing vines.[78] In Latin agricultural texts, the union of elms and vines was described as a 'marriage', and the image became a common trope in Latin erotic poetry for describing

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[75] Langbaine, *Account*, 121–22.

[76] Langbaine, *Account*, 370. Cf. Jacob, *Poetical Register*, 181: 'tho' [Middleton] fell short of those celebrated Writers [Jonson and Fletcher], yet by their Assistance, he attain'd a pretty considerable Reputation'.

[77] Langbaine, *Account*, 371.

[78] J. C. McKeown, *Ovid: Amores, Text, Prolegomena and Commentary*, vol. 3 (Leeds: Francis Cairns, 1998), 359.

the embrace of male and female forms, with ivy being a frequent variant for the vine.[79] The image of oaks or elms and their accompanying vines was often employed by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English poets to describe intimate relations between unequal partners. While, as in Latin love poetry, the image could be tender and erotic, it was also capable of conveying less positive relationships—those between monarch and flatterers, patron or client, or victim and parasite—and the vine was frequently portrayed as being both weak and feminized.[80] In the dedication to the Earl of Clarendon in his *Poems on Several Occasions* (1730), for instance, George Woodward depicts his 'Muse' as weak, and unable to stand upright unless supported by the 'abler Hand' of patronage:

> Weak in herself, she dares no hope to stand
> Unless supported by an abler Hand:
> So creep the Ringlets of the tender Vine
> Round some tall Elm, and all their Curls entwine,
> Sweetly luxuriant by this Aid they rise,
> And shoot their swelling Clusters to the Skies![81]

Although Langbaine elaborates on the trope less than Woodward does, his choice of imagery hints that Langbaine regarded the 'Triumvirate' of Fletcher, Jonson, and Middleton as somewhat problematic. The conclusion that, despite the 'second Rank' nature of his unaided plays Middleton was 'no common poet', rests entirely on his association with more well-regarded playwrights.

While the genteel model of sociability that, as I have suggested, underlies Langbaine's descriptions of co-authorship could easily accommodate artistic equals working together, the language used to describe Dekker's and Middleton's careers is more ambiguous. Although the presence of co-authors raises their plays above the artistic level they would otherwise have occupied, both appear dependent upon external assistance for literary success. The plays of Dekker and Middleton fall flat, Langbaine implies, unless others are there to support them. The image of collaboration that emerges

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[79] Barbara Weiden Boyd, *Ovid's Literary Loves: Influence and Innovation in the Amores* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 61; McKeown, *Ovid's Amores*, 3:360.
[80] For this aspect of the image in the Latin tradition, see McKeown, *Ovid's Amores*, 3:361.
[81] George Woodward, *Poems on Several Occasions* (Oxford, 1730), a2–a2[V].

from the biobibliographical tradition, then, is a complex one. Co-authorship could be celebrated as a form of idealized literary conversation when it took place between Beaumont and Fletcher. But when other, more obscure, dramatists participated, critical judgement was often much more equivocal. As Kewes remarks, critics in the Restoration and early eighteenth century 'took collaboration to be a sign of creative insufficiency in those who engaged in it'.[82] Yet, as Langbaine's remarks on the Dekker and Middleton canons show, co-authorship was also thought to have the power to *improve* discourse. The plays in which Dekker shared with Webster, Rowley, and Ford were, Langbaine believed, manifestly *better* than those he wrote alone.

Participants in the late seventeenth-and early eighteenth-century English economy tended to perceive their interrelationships in social terms. Sociability and the mutual exchange of favours were, therefore, vital for forming and maintaining economic bonds.[83] It was, perhaps, unsurprising that contemporary biography and criticism would emphasize the social aspect of authorship, and read collaboration as an 'outward sign' of pre-existing friendship among dramatists. Yet these readings were oddly circular, the evidence for these friendship networks often being inferred from the fact of collaboration itself. Nevertheless, this friendship-based interpretation of early modern co-authorship continued to pervade theatre history throughout the eighteenth century. In the next chapter, I will discuss the impact of the 'friendship model' on eighteenth-century Shakespeare editing. While some recent accounts have suggested that Malonean document-based theatre history had utterly transformed authorship studies by the end of the eighteenth century, the belief that collaborating playwrights were also friends nevertheless endured.[84] As we shall see, this assumption would continue to shape the way in which textual critics understood collaboration until the very end of the eighteenth century.

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[82] Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation*, 178.

[83] See Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, 'Gifts and Favors: Informal Support in Early Modern England', *Journal of Modern History* 72, no. 2 (2000): 295–96, 328–31.

[84] For the assumption that Malone was essentially the starting point for 'modern' authorship studies in Shakespeare, see, for instance, Peter Stallybrass, 'Shakespeare, the Individual, and the Text', in *Cultural Studies*, ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paul A. Treichler (New York: Routledge, 1992), 595.

9.

SHAKESPEARE, CO-AUTHOR? EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY SHAKESPEARE EDITORS AND THE QUESTION OF COLLABORATION

The biobibliographic tradition, and with it, the image of dramatic collaboration as an outgrowth of friendship between authors, persisted well into the second half of the eighteenth century.[1] Indeed, in some ways, this social interpretation of early modern co-authorship seems to have intensified as the century passed. Such is the case, I want to suggest, in David Erskine Baker's influential *Companion to the Play-House* (1764), which was later edited and revised by Isaac Reed as the *Biographica Dramatica* (1782). Baker's account of English theatrical history retains many of the imaginative descriptions of authorial relationships set down by his biographical predecessors. While some degree of conservatism might be expected in a derivative work, what is remarkable about Baker's *Companion* is the extent to which it expands upon and develops these earlier materials. The result is an elaborate—even sentimental—picture of dramatic co-authorship as a series of literary exchanges among friends, in which co-authorship itself is read as 'a sign of male friendship'—evidence of personal intimacy between playwrights.[2]

Of John Ford, for instance, Baker records that he was 'a Friend and Acquaintance of most of the Poets of his Time, particularly of *Rowley* and *Decker*, with whom he joined in the Composition of some of their Pieces'.[3] Baker also preserves Langbaine's

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[1] See, for instance, the close paraphrases of Phillips's image of Beaumont and Fletcher as judgment and fancy combined in Theophilus Cibber, *The Lives of the Poets*, 5 vols. (London, 1753), 1:157, and David Erskine Baker, *The Companion to the Play-House*, 2 vols. (London, 1764), 2:[B]ʳ.

[2] See Alan Bray, 'Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship', *History Workshop Journal*, no. 29 (1990): 1–19.

[3] Baker, *Companion*, 2:[N4]ʳ.

portrait of a sociable Massinger, whose collaborations with other authors were akin to the exchange of honours among genteel acquaintances:

> he [Massinger] was … a Person of the most consummate Modesty, which render'd him extremely beloved by all his Cotemporary Poets, few of whom but what esteemed it as an Honour to join with him in the Composition of their Works.[4]

While complimenting those authors whom he believed had acted with due respect for other playwrights, Baker also, on occasion, delivers stern moral judgments against those whom tradition suggested had not. Of James Miller's play *The Mother-In-Law*, Baker notes that

> The Author received some Helps in the Composition from Mr. *Henry Parker*, and being at that Time in Orders, and somewhat apprehensive of the Effects that a known Application to theatrical Writing might have on his Promotion in the Church, he prevailed on that Gentleman to pass as the sole Author of the Piece …

However, rather than make an appropriate return on this favour, Baker records that Miller instead 'resumed his Claim to this Piece' after it was theatrically successful, and did so 'without so much as acknowledging the Assistance he had had from his Friend'.[5] Similarly, Baker joined in and elaborated upon his predecessors' anti-Jonsonian rhetoric, castigating Jonson for his 'natural Enviousness of Disposition and Haughtiness of Temper', and recording how it prevented him from living in amity with other playwrights for any length of time.[6] In his account of Chapman, for instance, Baker suggests that Jonson's pathological jealousy caused him to 'suppress as much as possible the rising Fame of this his Friend', while elsewhere he draws the moral from Jonson that 'even the most exalted Merit may degrade itself by too apparent a Self Consciousness'.[7]

One of the *Companion*'s most elaborate commentaries upon the ethics and social practice of co-authorship occurs in its account of Thomas Middleton. As we have seen,

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[4] Baker, *Companion*, 2:[X3]ᵛ.
[5] Baker, *Companion*, 1:[O6]ᵛ.
[6] Baker, *Companion*, 2:[E6]ʳ.
[7] Baker, *Companion*, 1:[P3]ʳ.

both Langbaine and Jacob expressed a certain unease over Middleton's (and Dekker's) collaborations with more well-reputed playwrights. The *Account* and the *Poetical Register* imply that both playwrights had exploited co-authorship, gaining by a dependence upon other writers a literary standing that neither deserved on his own merits. Baker agrees that Middleton did not appear to have been highly rated as a playwright during his own lifetime. However, the evidence that he had collaborated with Jonson and Fletcher appears to give him pause. Langbaine was willing to allow only that Middleton's apparent intimacy with his literary betters suggested that he was 'no common Poet'.[8] Baker, however, provides a much more detailed portrait of the literary friendship network that he believed these authors wrote within. While Middleton's poor critical reputation meant that no anecdotes about him had survived, Baker argues that,

> surely it is a Proof of Merit sufficient to establish him in a Rank far from the most contemptible among our dramatic Writers, that a Set of Men of such acknowledged Abilities consider'd him as deserving to be admitted a joint Labourer in the Fields of poetical Fame; and more especially by *Fletcher* and *Jonson*, the first of whom, like a Widow'd Muse, could not be supposed readily to admit another Partner after the Loss of his long and well-beloved Mate *Beaumont*; and the latter, who entertained so high an Opinion of his own Talents as scarcely to admit any Brother near the Throne, and would hardly have permitted the clear Waters of his own *Heliconian* Springs to have been muddied by the Mixture of any Streams, that … were not the genuine Produce of *Parnassus*.[9]

What is remarkable about this passage is its insistence on rendering the *physicality* of co-authorship. Baker's tropes not only emphasize the intimate nature of literary partnership, they also subsume collaboration within traditional discourses of friendship. So Middleton is not simply a 'joint Labourer' alongside the others—his role as co-author also renders him their kin.[10] Middleton's authorial presence next to Jonson

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[8] Gerard Langbaine, *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets* (Oxford, 1691), 370.

[9] Baker, *Companion*, 2:[X6]ᵛ.

[10] For the blurring of boundaries between friendship and kinship in Europe prior to the eighteenth century, see Alan Bray, 'A Traditional Rite for Blessing Friendship', in *Love, Sex, Intimacy and Friendship between Men, 1550–1800*, ed. Katherine O'Donnell and Michael O'Rourke (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 93–94; Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 83, 103–5.

makes him his 'Brother', while, in Fletcher's case, Middleton becomes a kind of surrogate partner following the death of Fletcher's 'well-beloved Mate *Beaumont*'. The idea, popularized by humanist advice literature, that 'true' or 'entire' friendship was a kind of marriage or spiritual union between men was widespread in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writing, and Jeffrey Masten has traced its influence on the prefatory poems attached to the Beaumont and Fletcher first Folio.[11] The survival of these kin- and friendship-based metaphors for co-authorship into the late eighteenth century both indicates the durability of the 'friendship paradigm', and problematizes Masten's historical schema, whereby 'post-Enlightenment' regimes 'of individuality, authorship, and textual property' progressively displace communal understandings of authorship from the middle of the seventeenth century onwards.[12]

Not surprisingly, perhaps, this sociable interpretation of co-authorship circulated beyond the narrow circuit of biographical dictionaries and antiquarian writings. The anonymous *Essay Against Too Much Reading* (1728) archly deploys that staple of eighteenth-century Shakespearean biography—the unsourced theatre anecdote—to support its contention that '*Shakespear* was no Scholar, no Grammarian, no Historian, and in all probability could not write *English*'.[13] In a tone of mock seriousness, the *Essay*'s author relates what 'one of his [Shakespeare's] intimate Acquaintance' had purportedly confided in him:

> [Shakespeare's] being imperfect in some Things, was owing to his not being a Scholar, which obliged him to have one of those chuckle-pated Historians for his particular Associate …. And when he wanted any thing in his Way, as his Plays were all Historical, he sent to him, and took down the Heads of what was for his Purpose in Characters …. Then with his natural flowing Wit, he work'd it into all Shapes and Forms, as his beautiful Thoughts directed. The other put it into

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[11] For the prevalence of the marriage metaphor for male friendship in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature, see Harriette Andreadis, 'Re-Configuring Early Modern Friendship: Katherine Philips and Homoerotic Desire', *Studies in English Literature* 46, no. 3 (2006): 525–26. For Masten's readings of these and related metaphors in the 1647 Beaumont and Fletcher Folio, see Jeffrey Masten, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 132–38.
[12] Masten, *Textual Intercourse*, 4.
[13] Anon., *An Essay Against Too Much Reading* (London, 1728), pt. 2, 12.

Grammar; and instead of Reading, he stuck close to Writing and Study without Book.[14]

While clearly parodic in tone, the *Essay* does anticipate one use for collaboration in later accounts of Shakespeare's writing practices—the ascription to nameless co-authors of those pieces of plays that critical assumptions about Shakespeare's educational attainments and linguistic knowledge would deny him.[15]

The prelude to the 'first Shakespearean forgery', the so-called Macklin Letter published in the *General Advertiser* on April 19, 1748, also draws extensively on the language of sociable collaboration.[16] Written to publicize a revival of John Ford's *Lover's Melancholy*, this letter asserts that Ford, as 'a young Man', had 'lived in strict Friendship' with Shakespeare in the last years of Shakespeare's life. The author goes on to suggest that Ford's commerce with 'that Great Man' imbued his work with some of Shakespeare's 'Dramatic Spirit':

> As *Ford* was an *Intimate* and a profess'd Admirer of *Shakespear*, it is not to be wondred that he often *thinks* and *expresses* like him—which is not his *Misfortune* but his *Happiness*.— For when he is most *like Shakespear*, he then is *most like Nature*. He does not put you in Mind of … a *Plagerie* or an *affected*, *mere* IMITATOR— But like a *true Genius* who had *studied* under that *Great Man*, and could not avoid *catching* some of his *Divine Excellence*.[17]

In this fanciful reimagining of literary history, Ford's plays are worth seeing because they are a kind of posthumous communication from Shakespeare. The alleged intimacy between Shakespeare and Ford renders them master and apprentice, improving the quality of Ford's poetry and making him a kind of vessel bearing the essence of Shakespeare's genius into the future. The second Macklin Letter contrasts this ideal relationship between authors with its opposite—the impolite and antisocial behaviour of

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[14] Anon., *Essay*, pt. 2, 14.

[15] See, for instance, Richard Farmer, *An Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1767), 84–85.

[16] The identification of the second Macklin Letter as the first Shakespeare forgery is made by Samuel Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 129.

[17] Quoted in Arthur Freeman, 'The Beginnings of Shakespearean (and Jonsonian) Forgery: Attribution and the Politics of Exposure, Part I', *Library* 7th ser., 5 (2004): 266–67.

Jonson. Quoting from a lost Caroline pamphlet the author claims to have seen, the letter asserts that the 'splenetic' Jonson, whose 'Share of Envy' was 'more than was warrantable in Society', disrupted the authorial community with 'ill-natured' and ungracious attacks on Shakespeare and his defenders. Drawing upon the anti-Jonsonian tradition that had developed since the late seventeenth century, the author of the piece depicts Jonson as 'by *Nature'* antisocial, and, 'By *Education* rather *critically* than *politely* learn'd; all which swell'd his Mind into an ostentatious Pride of *his own Works*, and an overbearing, *inexorable* Judgment of his *Cotemporaries*'.[18]

The continuities between the Macklin Letters and the 'social imaginary' of the biobibliographical tradition are clearly evident. Both present co-authorship (and, in this case, literary influence) as forms of sociability, indistinct from intimacy and conversation among friends, and both make authorial reputation contingent upon social behaviour. In this schema, Shakespeare and Jonson become type and antitype—one polite, sociable, and willing to commune with other authors, the other uncouth, solitary, and actively conspiring against the community of writers.

In the remainder of this chapter, I shall discuss the role that the 'friendship paradigm' of authorship played in editorial debates over the extent of the Shakespeare canon in the late eighteenth century. The languages of social authorship, I shall argue, continued to be spoken, and had a considerable influence over the ways in which late eighteenth-century editors understood their own scholarly networks. These languages, in turn, were used to explicate Shakespeare's authorial practices—in particular, the possibility that Shakespeare had collaborated with other dramatists. As in previous decades, the dominant metaphor for describing relationships between authors was that of the Republic of Letters. Through until the early years of the nineteenth century, scholars, critics, and periodicals such as the *Gentleman's Magazine* continued to invoke the Republic's ideals. The reputations of living authors depended upon their ability to

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[18] Quoted in Freeman, 'Beginnings, Part I', 269. Freeman makes a strong case that the author of the Macklin Letters was the bookseller, author, and theatre prompter William Chetwood. See Arthur Freeman, 'The Beginnings of Shakespearean (and Jonsonian) Forgery: Attribution and the Politics of Exposure, Part II', *Library* 7th ser., 5 (2004): 407–27.

observe the codes of genteel politeness in their exchanges with other writers.[19] Dead authors, likewise, would be judged according to the same criteria.

SOCIABLE SHAKESPEARE? CO-AUTHORSHIP IN THE EDITORIAL IMAGINATION

As we have seen, the survival into the eighteenth century of the anti-Jonsonian *poetomachia* tradition meant that Shakespeare, unlike Jonson, was unlikely to be accused of unsociability. Instead, Shakespeare had a long-standing reputation in eighteenth-century critical writing for good manners, polite conduct, and ease of conversation. When eighteenth-century critics came to debate the possibility that Shakespeare had co-written some of his plays, it is, therefore, unsurprising that they would do so using the discourses of conversation and friendship. Just as Langbaine and his contemporaries had done, late eighteenth-century editors of Shakespeare treated collaboration as an outgrowth of friendship, governed by the ethics of good behaviour.

Johnson, in 1765, had been the first to suggest that neither the prologue nor the epilogue to *Henry VIII* was Shakespeare's work. Although he admits that short pieces of writing are hard to attribute to particular writers, both the style and the 'officiousness' of *Henry VIII*'s paratexts remind him of Ben Jonson:

> Though it is very difficult to decide whether short pieces be genuine or spurious, yet I cannot refrain myself from expressing my suspicion that neither the prologue nor the epilogue to this play is the work of Shakespeare; *non vultus, non color*. It appears to me very likely that they were supplied by the friendship or officiousness of Jonson, whose manner they will be perhaps found exactly to resemble.[20]

Jonson, Johnson implies, had used the genteel convention of offering assistance to friends to deliver Shakespeare a set of veiled and backhanded insults. Rather than

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[19] For a discussion, see Robert Miles, 'Trouble in the Republic of Letters: The Reception of the Shakespeare Forgeries', *Studies in Romanticism* 44, no. 3 (2005): 323–24.

[20] Arthur Sherbo, ed., *Johnson on Shakespeare*, 2 vols., The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 8:657–58.

complimenting the play's author, the prologue makes 'subtle and covert censure' of Shakespeare's other plays, something that Shakespeare himself is unlikely to have done, but that accorded perfectly with Jonson's reputation for jealousy.[21]

In a note first published in the second appendix to the 1773 Johnson-Steevens *Shakspeare*, Richard Farmer extended and modified Johnson's observation.[22] While Capell had remarked upon Jonson's never reciprocating Shakespeare's supposed additions to *Sejanus*, and his apparent jealousy in excising them from the printed version of the play, Farmer suggested that the prologue and epilogue to *Henry VIII* were Jonson's return on Shakespeare's friendly gesture:

> I entirely agree in opinion with Dr. Johnson, that Ben Jonson wrote the *prologue and epilogue* to this play. Shakespeare had a little before assisted him in his *Sejanus*; and Ben was too proud to receive assistance without returning it.[23]

Farmer's note extends Jonson's presence in the play beyond the prologue and epilogue, seeing him drawing up the 'directions for the parade at the *christening*', which his court experience would have assisted in, and contributing 'now and then' to 'the dialogue'.[24] Jonson, in Farmer's rendition of the theory, is still 'proud', but now it is that very flaw in his character that impels him to obey the conventions of friendship and join with Shakespeare in writing the play.

In several of his other discussions about the extent of the Shakespearean canon, Farmer likewise conflates collaboration, theatrical revision, and friendship. Both *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Titus Andronicus*, Farmer argues, have been 'unjustly or ignorantly charged upon *Shakespeare*' because Shakespeare had, at some point, revised them as favours to friends. This assistance resulted in those plays being attributed to him *in toto*. In the case of *Shrew*, Farmer suggests, Shakespeare's role was to write the

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[21] Sherbo, ed., *Johnson on Shakespeare*, 8:658.

[22] For the date and provenance of Farmer's note, see Arthur Sherbo, *Richard Farmer, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge: A Forgotten Shakespearean* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992), 128.

[23] Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, eds., *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 10 vols. (London, 1778), 7:325.

[24] Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 7:325.

induction and revise some of the lines in Petruchio's part.[25] In the case of *Titus Andronicus*, however, he declined to speculate on which parts of the play had been added in revisal. In his obvious distaste for the play, Farmer was content to let the matter of Shakespeare's hand in the play pass generally as 'some assistance perhaps given to his Friend':

> from every internal mark, I have not the least doubt but this *horrible* Piece was originally written by the Author of the *Lines* thrown into the mouth of the *Player* in *Hamlet*, and of the *Tragedy of Locrine*: which likewise from some assistance perhaps given to his Friend, hath been unjustly and ignorantly charged upon *Shakespeare*.[26]

Farmer's rendering of theatrical revision and collaboration in terms of favour and friendship thus enabled him to reframe the question of Shakespeare's relationship to these works. Rather than reflecting poorly upon Shakespeare's authorial character, his occasional presence in these plays instead reveals his fealty to the interests and reputation of a less talented playwrighting colleague. Although he did not spell it out, Farmer implies that, in reviving *Titus Andronicus* for performance and overseeing the publication of *Locrine*, Shakespeare was carrying out the duties of friendship he owed to the plays' unnamed author. In a 1773 letter to Thomas Percy, Farmer suggested that dramatist and presumed friend whom Shakespeare had assisted was 'probably … *Kyd*'.[27] Farmer's manuscript notes on a 'loose scrap of paper', reproduced posthumously in Isaac Reed's 1803 edition of Steevens's *Shakspeare*, sketch out the authorship theory in schematic form: '*Kyd*—probably original author of *Andronicus*, *Locrine*, and play in *Hamlet*.—Marloe, of H. 6'.[28]

While Farmer's *Essay* made suggestive remarks about the authorship of some of Shakespeare's disputed works, it would be Malone and Steevens who would make the most sustained eighteenth-century attempts to grapple with the question of

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[25] Farmer, *Essay*, 66.

[26] Farmer, *Essay*, 69.

[27] Cleanth Brooks, ed., *The Percy Letters: The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and Richard Farmer*, vol. 2 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1946), 169.

[28] See Isaac Reed, ed., *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 21 vols. (London, 1803), 21:[6n].

Shakespearean canonicity. Malone's archival discoveries during the 1780s and 1790s added significantly to the number of documentary sources available for the study of Elizabethan dramatic authorship. In 1789, while conducting research for his edition of Shakespeare, Malone discovered the Office Book of Sir Henry Herbert. Later that year, the librarian at Dulwich College uncovered for him the theatrical papers of Philip Henslowe.[29] Malone delayed his edition to allow for the printing of large extracts from both of these sources in his 'Historical Account of the English Stage'.[30] The titles of his publications—*An Attempt to Ascertain the Order in which the Plays Attributed to Shakespeare Were Written* (1778) , *A Dissertation on the Three Parts of Henry VI* (1787)*, An Inquiry into the Authenticity of Certain Miscellaneous Papers … Attributed to Shakespeare* (1796)—similarly attest to the seriousness with which he treated questions of authenticity and authorial attribution.

Some recent critics have accordingly seen Malone's work on Shakespeare as forming a revolutionary 'break' in the way in which eighteenth-century scholarship understood authenticity. So, for instance, Margreta de Grazia has asserted that, with Malone, the criterion of authenticity in the case of disputed plays shifted decisively from connoisseurship to external proof.[31] Pope, she observes, dismissed the apocryphal plays because his own critical taste found them un-Shakespearean; Malone, however, did so 'only after careful examination of … "external evidence", namely, the information provided by the Stationers' Register and title-pages'.[32] De Grazia is certainly correct in noting Malone's new emphasis on external evidence in his textual and 'higher' criticism. However, I do want to suggest that his work signalled no immediate rupture in the way in which textual critics understood dramatic collaboration. Late eighteenth-century editors—Malone included—continued to invoke collaboration to account for stylistic features in the plays, and they persisted in interpreting co-authorship according to the ethical strictures prescribed by the Republic of Letters. Even when new documentary

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[29] See Peter Martin, *Edmond Malone, Shakespearean Scholar: A Literary Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 125–28.

[30] Martin, *Edmond Malone*, 126–27.

[31] Margreta de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim: The Reproduction of Authenticity and the 1790 Apparatus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 51–52, 109.

[32] de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim*, 52.

evidence about authorship emerged, as it did with the Henslowe papers, the 'friendship paradigm' would continue to influence the way in which that evidence was interpreted.

In late 1777 or early 1778, Steevens offered Malone the chance to make his editorial debut on Shakespeare—compiling a *Supplement* to the just-published second Johnson-Steevens edition.[33] (Malone had already contributed at least 270 textual notes to the edition itself.[34]) Initially, Steevens and Malone had envisaged that the *Supplement* would consist only of the apocryphal plays, which had not appeared in any major edition of the complete works since the 1728 second issue of Pope's *Shakespear*. (Malone would later choose to include the Sonnets, the narrative poems, and the pieces attributed to Shakespeare in the *Passionate Pilgrim*.[35]) Anxious to prove his critical acumen, Malone threw himself into the task. The *Supplement*, when it appeared in 1780, provided a kind of showcase of Malone's antiquarian skills, and he used it to display the variety of documentary and historical evidence that could be brought to bear on the authorship question. At the beginning of each work, Malone appended details of its entry in the Stationers' Register and subsequent publication history, noting where and how these affected Shakespeare's claim on them. Malone's Advertisement to the first volume summarizes the work he had carried out:

> it was thought that it would not be wholly without use or entertainment to trace the history of these dramas as far as … it can be traced; to collect all the internal and external evidence that might serve to point out the probable authors of them; to ascertain as nearly as possible the era when each of them was produced; to collate them with the original copies; to attempt to free them from the numerous corruptions with which they abound; and to present them to the publick in a more *questionable shape* than that in which they have hitherto been exhibited.[36]

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[33] Martin, *Edmond Malone*, 36.

[34] Arthur Sherbo, 'Edmond Malone and the Johnson-Steevens 1778 *Shakespeare*', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 101, no. 3 (2007): 314.

[35] For the genesis and timing of Malone's editorial decisions, see Martin, *Edmond Malone*, 36–37.

[36] Edmond Malone, ed., *Supplement to the Edition of Shakspeare's Plays Published in 1778*, 2 vols. (London, 1780), 1:vi.

The 'result of [these] inquiries' was to convince him that, 'of the *majority*' of the plays printed in the *Supplement*, 'not a single line was written by our great poet'.[37] While this admission risked making Malone's efforts look somewhat superfluous, and would occasion Ritson's later remark that Malone had nonsensically published 'a *Supplement to Shakspeare* of plays which he never wrote', Malone was anxious to signal the usefulness of what he had done.[38] By putting these plays before a readership, and emending them according to the same principles used for the canonical texts, Malone hoped to obtain a fair hearing for these 'neglected' pieces—not as 'spurious productions', but as plays in their own right.[39]

The most exhaustive discussion of authenticity and collaboration in the *Supplement* occurs at the end of *Pericles*, where Malone places his and Steevens's conjectures on the play's composition and authorship. These notes, printed in small type, occupy nearly twenty-seven pages of text—an extent with which Malone evidently felt uncomfortable. Briefly mentioning *Pericles* in the 'Advertisement' to the first volume of the *Supplement*, he writes, 'I fear I have already trespassed too much on the reader's patience in the notes on that play, and the observations annexed at the end of it'.[40] Malone introduces these 'observations' on co-authorship in *Pericles* as being in themselves a kind of collaboration. Although the notes appear consecutively, they are, he says, ideally read as a dialogue, each critic using the dissenting opinion of his opponent as a foil for sharpening his own response:

> That we might catch hints from the strictures of one another, and collect what we
> could mutually advance into a point, Mr. Steevens and I set forward with an
> agreement to maintain the propriety of our respective suppositions relative to this
> piece … to submit our remarks, as they gradually increased, alternately to each

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[37] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 1:v.

[38] Joseph Ritson, *Cursory Criticisms of the Edition of Shakspeare Published by Edmond Malone* (London, 1792; reprint, London: Frank Cass, 1970), [vii]. Malone's *Letter to the Rev. Richard Farmer*, published later the same year, contains a long footnote defending himself against Ritson's apparent insinuation that the *Supplement* was either superfluous, or an attempt to foist inauthentic works on an unsuspecting public. See Edmond Malone, *A Letter to the Rev. Richard Farmer, D.D.* (London, 1792; reprint, London: Frank Cass, 1970), 5n.

[39] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 1:vii.

[40] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 1:viii.

other, and to dispute the opposite hypothesis, till one of us should acquiesce in the opinion of his opponent, or remain confirmed in his own.[41]

In his *Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare*, Farmer had argued against the title-page ascription of *Pericles* to Shakespeare by making an analogy with classical editing. Just as 'some Plays are ascribed absolutely to *Plautus*, which he only *retouched* and *polished*', Farmer writes, so have plays that Shakespeare only 'revived' come to be wholly attributed to him. *Pericles*, he asserts, is one of these pieces, Shakespeare's work in retouching it for a stage revival constituting his first work as a dramatist.[42] Farmer later revised his position, allowing that Shakespeare's presence in the play was more extensive than he had first thought, but nevertheless still confined to the last act. It is this question—whether *Pericles* was 'absolutely' by Shakespeare, or written by him only in part—that would form the crux of Steevens's and Malone's disagreement. Steevens took Farmer's position, arguing that the play's 'inequalities' of style could only be explained by co-authorship. Malone countered that the play was solely Shakespeare's, but had been corrupted during the course of a long run on the stage. Both critics were grappling with the same issue: how did Shakespeare's position within social networks—both as a theatre professional and as a friend to other dramatists—affect the integrity of the plays attributed to him?

STEEVENS ON CO-AUTHORSHIP IN *PERICLES* AND *THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN*

After Malone's brief introductory note, the exchange began with a dissertation by Steevens of just over nineteen pages. Steevens's argument works by anatomizing *Pericles*—he breaks the play down into its constituent parts and rejects those that he finds inferior to their counterparts in Shakespeare's other works. Firstly, Steevens detaches the Gower prologue, epilogue, and choruses from Shakespeare's portion of the play. These, he suggests, show a stylistic deficiency—they contain none of the 'many …

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[41] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:159–60.
[42] Farmer, *Essay*, 25.

marked expressions as are discoverable in Shakspeare's other dramas'.[43] Furthermore, he argues, they are incompetent as literature. Whoever composed them has tried—and failed—to accurately reproduce the style and metre of fifteenth-century poetry. One of the choruses is written in hexameters, and another in 'alternate rhymes'—neither of these metrical schemes, Steevens observes, can be found in the surviving work of Gower. Having demonstrated what he sees as the Gower choruses' failure as literary-historical pastiche, Steevens concludes that, '[W]e may surely suppose that … [Shakspeare] would not have failed so egregiously in his imitation of antiquated style or numbers'.[44]

Indeed, while Steevens alludes to other characters in the canon whose accents and idioms attest to 'Shakspeare's uncommon powers of imitation', he suggests that the sustained attempt to mimic the diction of another age that Gower represents was wholly uncharacteristic of Shakespeare. Such a task, Steevens argues, could only be a kind of 'servile' pedantry—the very opposite of Shakespeare's 'exalted genius':

> I am by no means sure he would have proved successful in a cold attempt to copy the peculiarities of language more ancient than his own. His exalted genius would have taught him to despise so servile an undertaking; and his good sense would have restrained him from engaging in a task which he had neither leisure nor patience to perform.[45]

That the author of the Gower monologues had attempted to do so only exposed his lack of ability and 'prudence'.[46] In Steevens's account, the very *existence* of the Gower material argues against its being genuinely Shakespearean.

Steevens extends this argument from incompetence to other parts of *Pericles*. The story's lack of unity, and the abruptness with which characters are introduced and then discarded, for instance, indicate to him that Shakespeare cannot have been 'the original fabricator of the plot' from which the play was subsequently drawn:

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[43] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:160.
[44] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:160.
[45] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:160n–61n.
[46] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:161n.

> *Pericles*, in short, is little more than a string of adventures so numerous, so inartificially crowded together, and so far removed from probability, that in my private judgment, I must acquit even the irregular and lawless Shakspeare of having constructed the fabrick of the drama, though he has certainly bestowed some decoration on its parts.[47]

The critical strategy that Steevens employs here is clear—he means to 'acquit' Shakespeare of having devised the play. In a rhetorical move reminiscent of Erasmus' work on the writings of Saint Jerome, Steevens not only criticizes those parts of the play that he believes are un-Shakespearean, he *anathematizes* them. Whoever originally designed the plot, the characters' parts, and the Gower choruses was, Steevens asserts, 'foolish', almost devoid of 'original thought', and 'evidently destitute of that intelligence and useful knowledge that pervades even the meanest of Shakspeare's undisputed performances'.[48] Steevens's own performance thus goes beyond demonstrating what he calls the play's stylistic and theatrical 'inequalities'. By means of abuse and humiliation, Steevens aims to question the basic *competence* of Shakespeare's co-adjutor.

Alfred Hiatt has recently observed that the castigatory rhetoric of diplomatics, meant to expose the forgery and 'proclaim its ignorance', moved from the realm of forged texts to apocryphal works in the early Italian Renaissance. By the mid-fifteenth century, Hiatt writes, one of the roles of the textual critic had become that of demonstrating the *contemptibility* of the inauthentic work.[49] Steevens's castigation of the non-Shakespearean parts of *Pericles* provides a vivid demonstration of how this worked in practice. Shakespeare's collaborator becomes, as John Dover Wilson once observed of this mode of argument, a kind of 'whipping boy', 'who obligingly did the bad work and left Shakespeare to put in the good'.[50] Steevens's 'character-centred' approach to editing—his commitment to protecting Shakespeare from the imputation of having written poorly—is evident from his critical comment on the 'inequality' of the play's two authors:

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[47] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:164.

[48] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:163–64.

[49] See Alfred Hiatt, *The Making of Medieval Forgeries: False Documents in Fifteenth-Century England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 156–74.

[50] John Dover Wilson, ed., *The Taming of the Shrew* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928), ix.

> That the plays of Shakspeare have their inequalities likewise, is sufficiently
> understood; but they are still the inequalities of Shakspeare. He may occasionally
> be absurd, but is seldom foolish; he may be censured, but can rarely be
> despised.[51]

For Steevens, the proper editorial response to the un-Shakespearean parts of *Pericles* seems to be castigation, and his vilification of their author combines literary with moral and social judgement. As in the early eighteenth-century literary criticism of Pope and Shaftesbury, aesthetic and social hierarchies are superimposed. The 'lowness' of the 'unequal' portions of the play translates into literal 'foolishness', and Steevens implies that they and their author are worthy only of contempt.

How does Steevens account for the presence of two such 'unequal' dramatists in *Pericles*? First of all, he adopts the familiar strategy of correlating aesthetic quality with order of composition. Dryden had singled out *Pericles* as Shakespeare's first play, and Malone had dated it 1592, placing it in the second year of Shakespeare's dramatic career.[52] If *Pericles* were indeed among Shakespeare's first plays, Steevens allows, it would seem plausible that he would look for a literary 'partner' to support and augment his own work:

> In one light, indeed, I am ready to allow *Pericles* was our poet's first attempt.
> Before he was satisfied with his own strength, and trusted himself to the publick,
> he might have tried his hand with a partner, and entered the theatre in disguise.
> Before he ventured to face an audience on the stage, it was natural that he should
> peep at them through the curtain.[53]

A few pages later, however, Steevens alters the balance of this presumed relationship. Rather than having sought a collaborator to compensate for his weaknesses as a neophyte dramatist, Steevens hypothesizes that the young Shakespeare had acted as a literary benefactor. *Pericles*, he concludes, was originally 'the composition of some friend whose

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[51] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:164.
[52] Johnson and Steevens, eds., *Plays 1778*, 1:283–84.
[53] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:167.

interest the "gentle Shakspeare" was industrious to promote'.[54] This, of course, is a variation on Farmer's theory that Shakespeare had 'corrected' the plays of Thomas Kyd as a gesture of friendship. The additions to *Pericles*, Steevens suggests, can be decorously explained as a favour that Shakespeare felt obliged to bestow upon a less fortunate colleague. However, since Shakespeare was only the play's 'mender', his role was solely ornamental, and Steevens implies that the literary inequality of the play's two writers paradoxically served to undercut Shakespeare's generosity, further denigrating the original. Shakespeare's additions, Steevens writes, amount to little more than mere stylistic 'decoration', which, 'like embroidery on a blanket, only serves to expose the meanness of the original materials'.[55]

Steevens's account of the authorship in *Pericles* shows how durable the links were between collaboration and contemporary friendship discourses, even in the work of late eighteenth-century textual critics. Yet Steevens ultimately regards *Pericles* as an artistic failure, and he clearly attributes some of the blame for this to the obtrusiveness of the 'joins' between Shakespeare's style and that of his presumed co-author. Did Steevens, therefore, think that collaboration *necessarily* created insoluble aesthetic and structural problems? Might these remarks on *Pericles* indicate that negative aesthetic responses to collaboration had already begun to predominate in this period, as some recent critical writing would suggest? Steevens certainly seems to imply that Shakespeare's markedly individual style might prevent him from co-authoring a satisfyingly unified play. The eighteenth century's elevation of Shakespeare to the head of the dramatic pantheon meant that no contemporary critic was likely to suggest that he and a collaborator could stand on even ground *artistically*. Any resulting drama would be marked by the kinds of 'inequalities' that both Steevens and Malone detect in *Pericles*. Yet Steevens's response to co-authorship was not one of simple denigration. As we shall see, he was willing to endorse other, quite different, takes on collaboration when his argument demanded. This is most evident in Steevens's long, footnoted digression on the authorship of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.

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[54] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:176.

[55] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:164.

As Langbaine and his contemporaries had, Steevens presupposes that collaboration had its origins in personal intimacy. Yet, he observes, there is no evidence that Shakespeare had ever had a close personal relationship with either Beaumont or Fletcher. There had been no exchange of verses among them, nor did Beaumont and Fletcher ever associate with the public-theatre playwrights in the 'literary *symposia*' held at the Devil Tavern. From this, Steevens concludes that Shakespeare's 'imputed intimacy with one of them [Fletcher], is therefore unaccountable'.[56] Indeed, Steevens seems to imply that Shakespeare was socially excluded from the genteel, conversation-based mode of co-authorship that Beaumont and Fletcher practised. Although he had earlier styled Shakespeare 'gentle', when suggesting that he may have assisted his anonymous friend by 'correcting' *Pericles*, Steevens now calls Shakespeare's social status into question. Beaumont, Fletcher, and Shakespeare, he suggests, moved in entirely different social orbits:

> That Shakspeare had the slighte[st] connection with B. and Fletcher, has not been proved by evidence of any kind…. As they were gentlemen of family and fortune, it is probable that they aspired to company of a higher rank than that of needy poets, or mercenary players. Their dialogue bears abundant testimony to this supposition; while Shakspeare's attempts to exhibit such sprightly conversations as pass between young men of elegance and fashion, are very rare …. Our author could not easily copy what he had few opportunities of observing.—So much for the unlikeliness of Fletcher's having united with Shakspeare in the same composition.[57]

If, as contemporary politeness theory dictated, true friendship depended on equality in social rank, it followed that Shakespeare and Fletcher could not have been intimates and that there could therefore have been no collaboration between them.[58] Shakespeare—a 'needy poet' and 'mercenary player'—would have been cut off from the circles of gentlemanly acquaintance from which the plays of his higher-born contemporaries emerged.

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[56] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:169n.

[57] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:169n.

[58] For the dependence of true 'familiarity' upon equality in social rank in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century conduct theory, see Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 133, 137.

Steevens's depiction of the social arrangements underlying co-authorship indicates the extent to which the 'friendship paradigm' of collaboration continued to influence late eighteenth-century ideas about dramatic authorship. In trying to demonstrate that Shakespeare and Fletcher could never have 'united … in the same composition', Steevens ultimately endorses an older, idealized view of collaboration, in which co-authorship and humanist discourses of 'entire' friendship converged. In doing so, he produces an account of early modern collaboration highly reminiscent of the prefatory poems to the 1647 Beaumont and Fletcher Folio. His aesthetic response to *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is predicated upon the same genteel fictions of authorial melding and stylistic union that had characterized late seventeenth-century responses to Beaumont and Fletcher's plays.

The main hurdle that Steevens faced in proving that Shakespeare had had no part in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was the extent to which its style and phraseology resembled that of other Shakespearean plays. Steevens freely admits that the play contains many Shakespearean echoes, and indeed he prints over three pages of them—forty-three paired parallel passages in total. However, rather than suggesting that the number of these echoes demonstrated that Shakespeare had been involved in the play's composition, Steevens arrives at the opposite conclusion. Shakespeare, he asserts, 'would … not have written as *if he had been at a great feast of* tragedies, *and stolen the scraps*'.[59] In Steevens's rather playful inversion of the way in which parallel passages are usually adduced as evidence, the likelihood of Shakespeare's authorship of the piece *decreases* in inverse proportion to the number of verbal links it has with Shakespeare's canonical plays.

Steevens's reasoning here is two-fold. If the play were Shakespeare's alone, he would have had no need to borrow so heavily from himself. Would Shakespeare, he asks, 'have been so poor in language as well as ideas, that he was constrained to borrow in the compass of *half* the *Noble Kinsmen* from above a dozen plays of his own composition'?[60]

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[59] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:170n. Italics in original.
[60] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:174n.

However, had Shakespeare been writing with a partner, drawing such stylistic 'lines of separation' between his own work and that of his collaborator would have been a violation of the rules of good company:

> It was natural that [Shakspeare] should more studiously have abstained from the use of marked expressions in this than in any other of his pieces written without assistance. He cannot be suspected of so pitiful an ambition as that of setting his seal on the portions he wrote, to distinguish them from those of his colleague. It was his business to coalesce with Fletcher, and not to withdraw from him.[61]

This depiction of co-authors at work recalls the rhetoric of 'entire friendship' posited by the classical-humanist ideal of *amicitia*. Just as the property belonging to each partner within an entire friendship was understood to be held in common, so the words making up a collaborative play were, ideally, authorially indistinct. Had Shakespeare, according to this line of reasoning, attempted to distinguish what he had written stylistically—or, as Steevens puts it, place 'land-marks to ascertain [his] property'—he would be in breach of the ethics underlying this authorial commons.[62] Shakespeare, Steevens implies, invoking the *poetomachia* tradition that placed Jonson and Shakespeare at opposite poles of sociability, could hardly be 'convicted of this jealous artifice'.[63]

If collaboration were to be imagined as an entire friendship uniting two partners in a kind of literary marriage, it followed that co-authoring a play with one outside that union could amount to infidelity. It seems clear from Steevens's discussion of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* that he conceived of Beaumont and Fletcher's relationship in this way. 'During the life of Beaumont, which concluded in 1615', Steevens argues, 'it cannot well be supposed that Fletcher would have deserted him, to write in concert with any other dramatist'.[64] Noting that Shakespeare had lived only one year longer than Beaumont, and had, by that time, retired to Stratford, Steevens suggested that Shakespeare and Fletcher had had neither the time nor space to write together. By 1615,

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[61] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:170n.
[62] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:170n.
[63] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:170n.
[64] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:175n.

> Shakspeare … is known to have lived in Warwickshire, beyond the reach of Fletcher, who continued to reside in London … so that there was no opportunity for them to have joined in a personal conference relative to *The Two Noble Kinsmen*; and without frequent interviews between confederate writers, a consistent tragedy can hardly be produced.[65]

Without geographical intimacy, therefore, there was no way for the two dramatists to engage in the personal intimacy that collaboration required. Steevens's descriptive terms are revealing. He assumes that collaboration occupied a social space—in the interaction between two frequent conversation partners—and that such 'personal conference' allowed each partner to accommodate to the other's authorial voice.[66] As a result, Steevens implies, each author's dialogue would meld together into an unbroken whole.

Throughout his notes on *Pericles* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Steevens maintains a curious balance between observing—and endorsing—the classical-humanist ideals of 'entire friendship', and his equally 'humanist' impulses to look for divisions between authors. The extent to which Steevens derives his assumptions about co-authorship from the *amicitia* tradition is apparent in his explanation for *why* the 1634 title-page had ascribed *The Two Noble Kinsmen* to Shakespeare and Fletcher jointly. The misattribution, Steevens supposes, came from the King's Men, who had imagined a collaboration between Shakespeare and Fletcher for nostalgic and sentimental reasons. These actors, he suggests, had been 'like staunch match-makers … desirous that the widow'd muse of Fletcher should not long remain without a bed-fellow'.[67]

Yet, at the same time, Steevens seems obsessed with locating the dividing lines between authors. He castigates the actors whom he believed had informed the printers that *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was a collaboration. 'These very incompetent judges', as Steevens calls them, had, in his judgement, lacked the connoisseurship necessary to discern that the play 'bore no marks of a divided hand'.[68] Indeed, the key-word in Steevens's aesthetic vocabulary for denoting the hazards of collaboration seems to be

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[65] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:175n.

[66] Cf. MacDonald P. Jackson, *Defining Shakespeare: Pericles as Test Case* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 9.

[67] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:174–75n.

[68] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:174n.

'inequality'—a word he returns to again and again. *Pericles*, he argues, fails artistically because of the obvious stylistic inequalities between its two authors. Despite Shakespeare's generosity in attempting to 'promote' the interests of his 'friend', the play falls apart because Shakespeare 'was not writing in conjunction with a Fletcher'.[69]

However, Steevens's genteel rendering of collaboration suggests that a 'conjunction' between Shakespeare and Fletcher was ultimately impossible. His understanding of why this was so seems grounded in his sense of the *social* inequalities between the 'gentlemen' Beaumont and Fletcher and the 'player' Shakespeare. An acute sense of social hierarchy is implicit in Steevens's denial that Shakespeare and Fletcher might have 'corrected' each other's work while composing *The Two Noble Kinsmen*:

> I hope no one will be found who supposes our duumvirate sat down to correct what each other wrote. To such an indignity Fletcher could not well have submitted; and such a drudgery Shakspeare would as hardly have endured.[70]

Steevens elsewhere implies that Shakespeare was neither a careful nor 'studious' writer.[71] Nevertheless, here he suggests that Fletcher would have found it an *indignity* to be corrected by Shakespeare. In this account, Shakespeare's social status essentially excluded him from the modes of collaboration and mutual correction available to more genteel authors. If and when Shakespeare collaborated, Steevens seems to suggest, it would have been with authors of his own social standing. Shakespeare might be able to introduce some improvements to the work of his 'friends', but, since these playwrights were *artistically* beneath him, they would be unable to provide him with any in return. The result would have been a play like *Pericles*—a work of 'some merit', but one in which Shakespeare's additions stood out as stylistic 'patchwork' on the original material, rather than coalescing with it into an even and unified whole.[72]

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[69] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:176.

[70] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:170n.

[71] See, e.g., Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:175n.

[72] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:160, 167.

MALONE'S 1790 *SHAKSPEARE*:
THE DEATH OF THE CO-AUTHOR?

Malone's response to Steevens's remarks on *Pericles* was, initially, one of resistance. The argument that the play's stylistic unevenness was due to collaboration was, he thought, a circular one: 'that this play was the work of another, which Shakspeare from his friendship for the author revised and corrected, is the very point in question, and therefore cannot be adduced as a medium to prove that point'.[73] However, by the time Malone came to produce his own edition of the Complete Works, in 1790, his opinions had shifted. Steevens's theory, he now acknowledged, 'was right':

> To alter, new-model, and improve the unsuccessful dramas of preceding writers, was, I believe, much more common in the time of Shakspeare than is generally supposed. This piece having been thus new-modelled by our poet, and enriched with many happy strokes from his pen, is unquestionably entitled to that place among his works, which it has now obtained.[74]

Malone makes similar comments elsewhere, especially when discussing the implications of the newly discovered Henslowe material. In the Preface to the first volume, he notes that the 'curious papers lately discovered in Dulwich College … shew, that it was then very common for a dramatick poet to revise and amend the work of a preceding writer'.[75] In the footnotes to his extracts from the Henslowe manuscripts, Malone draws out their significance for the authorship of Shakespeare's disputed works. Making a direct analogy with the authorial practices that Henslowe documents, he proposes that the *Henry VI* plays and *Titus Andronicus* were pieces that Shakespeare had 'mended':

> We have seen in the list of plays performed in 1593–4 by the servants of the Earl of Sussex, the old play of *Titus Andronicus*, in which on its revival by the king's servants, our author was induced, for the advantage of his own theatre, to make

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[73] Malone, ed., *Supplement*, 2:181.

[74] Edmond Malone, ed., *The Plays and Poems of William Shakspeare*, 10 vols. (London, 1790), 3:636n.

[75] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 1, pt. 1:lix.

some alterations, and add a few lines. The old play of *K. Henry VI* … he without doubt touched in the same manner.[76]

The new evidence provided by the Henslowe papers enabled Malone to settle conclusively the authorship of some of Shakespeare's apocryphal works. Henslowe recorded the authors' payments for *Sir John Oldcastle* and *Thomas Lord Cromwell*, and, as Malone concluded, this provided 'an indisputable proof' that Shakespeare had not been involved in their writing.[77] Most of Malone's editorial predecessors had already reached this conclusion on aesthetic grounds, but now, for the first time, these 'stylistic observations' could be accompanied by 'verifiable evidence' drawn from documentary sources.[78] In other cases, however, Malone's use of the external evidence provided by the Henslowe documents was less conclusive and more questionable. He straightforwardly identified the *titus and andronicus* played by the Sussex's Men as the original version of the Folio play, ascribing the anomalous title to a mistake by the supposedly illiterate Henslowe.[79] Having made this identification, he then used it as evidence to support his belief that the *Henry VI* plays had had a similar origin.[80] Malone's comments on the plays in his Preface reveal the inherent conservatism of this approach. The Dulwich College manuscripts, he writes, 'prove … what I have long suspected' about the plays' authorship.[81] Malone, in other words, interpreted the documentary evidence in accordance with pre-existing expectations. In 1787, he had argued that Shakespeare had revised the *Henry VI* plays rather than originally composing them. In 1790, the presence of a *henery vi* play in the Henslowe papers is presented as indisputable evidence that he had been right. Ravenscroft and the bulk of eighteenth-century critical opinion had weighed against Shakespeare's authorship of *Titus Andronicus*. Malone now suggested that the existence of an earlier *titus* play meant that these presuppositions were correct.

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[76] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 1, pt. 2:320n.

[77] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 1, pt. 2:318n.

[78] de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim*, 109.

[79] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 1, pt. 2:293n.

[80] See S. Schoenbaum, *Internal Evidence and Elizabethan Dramatic Authorship: An Essay in Literary History and Method* (London: Edward Arnold, 1966), 22–23.

[81] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 1, pt. 1:lix.

In one respect, however, Malone's discussions of multiple authorship in Shakespeare might appear to diverge from those of his predecessors. Even while professing to agree with Steevens over the authorship of *Pericles*, he silently elides the suggestion that Shakespeare might have altered the play as a favour to a friend. In Malone's version of the narrative, Shakespeare had simply 'new modelled' the 'unsuccessful drama' of some (anonymous) former author. There is a temporal—and, implicitly, social—distance that separates the play's authors from one another. Indeed, Malone suggests that Shakespeare's habit of remodelling pre-existing plays was itself an unsociable practice. In his *Dissertation* upon the *Henry VI* plays, Malone interpreted Robert Greene's infamous warning about the 'upstart crow' as evidence of how disruptive Shakespeare's early revising practices had been to the community of playwrights. By making *2* and *3 Henry VI* out of pre-existing plays, *The First Part of the Contention* and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York*, Shakespeare, Malone suggests, had insulted the reputations of Greene and his co-author(s):

> Greene could not conceal the mortification that he felt at his own fame and that of his associate, both of them old and admired play-wrights, being eclipsed by a new *upstart* writer … who had … first attracted the notice of the publick by exhibiting two plays, formed upon old dramas written by them …. Wishing to depretiate our author, he very naturally quotes a line from one of the pieces, which Shakspeare had thus *re-written*; a proceeding which the authors of the original plays considered as an invasion both of their literary property and character.[82]

In a later version of the theory, Malone allowed that Shakespeare may have acted with more propriety. Shakespeare, he proposed, might have waited until the authors whose plays he had 'thus *re-written*' were dead before commencing his revisions.[83] Notwithstanding this slight change in emphasis, the image of Shakespeare at work that the *Dissertation* presents is still one of solitary composition. Even when writing alongside the work of other dramatists, Malone implies, Shakespeare kept his distance.

Yet, even in Malone's criticism, the older view of collaboration as a kind of congress among friends did not entirely disappear. In the process of rejecting

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[82] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 6:398.
[83] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 1, pt. 1:282.

Shakespeare's claim to *Titus Andronicus*, Malone returned to the language of sociable collaboration to explain how the attribution came about:

> On what principle the editors of the first complete edition of our poet's plays admitted this into their volume, cannot now be ascertained. The most probable reason that can be assigned, is, that he wrote a few lines in it, or gave some assistance to the authour, in revising it, or in some other way aided him in bringing it forward on the stage.[84]

Malone's words here clearly echo the argument in Farmer's *Essay*, where the inclusion of *Titus* in the Folio was attributed to Shakespeare having given 'some assistance perhaps … to his friend', the play's supposed author, Kyd.[85] Ultimately, as Malone himself admits, his (and Farmer's) speculations about the authorship of *Titus Andronicus* rest on an otherwise unsupported anecdote. 'The tradition mentioned by Ravenscroft' in 1687, he writes, 'warrants us in making … these suppositions. "I have been told" (says he …) "by some anciently conversant with the stage, that it was not originally his, but brought by a private author to be acted, and [Shakspeare] only gave some master touches to one or two of the principal parts or characters'.[86]

According to de Grazia, Malone's editorial practice marks that point at which a 'post-Enlightenment' textual criticism 'definitively broke' with that of the past. In Malone's editions, she argues, 'factual accounts discredited traditional anecdotes', while the grounds for crediting materials' in Shakespeare studies 'shifted from what authorities judged acceptable to what could be externally verified'.[87] Yet, as Malone's discussion of the authorship of *Titus Andronicus* and the *Henry VI* plays indicates, the boundaries between 'internal' and 'external' evidence in his textual criticism are not always well-defined.[88] As we have seen, Malone's interpretations of the Dulwich College manuscripts

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[84] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 10:[375n].
[85] Farmer, *Essay*, 69.
[86] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 10:[375n].
[87] de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim*, 6, 52.
[88] On Malone's use of anecdotal evidence, see Thomas Postlethwait, 'The Criteria for Evidence: Anecdotes in Shakespearean Biography, 1709–2000', in *Theorizing Practice: Redefining Theatre History*, ed. William B. Worthen and Peter Holland (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 64.

were shaped by his earlier assumptions about Shakespearean authorship. In the case of *Titus Andronicus*, pre-existing discourses of sociable collaboration also seem to have influenced Malone's thinking. Ravenscroft described Shakespeare polishing and revising another author's play to ready it for the professional stage. In Malone's account, the anecdote is deployed to substantiate the 'dissimilitude in style' that he and others had perceived between *Titus* and the rest of the Shakespearean canon.[89]

Malone's *Dissertation on the Three Parts of Henry VI* owed a similar debt to the past. To a considerable extent, this had originally been Farmer's project, and Malone had repeatedly urged him to write up his ideas. (Farmer himself had probably derived his theories from the notes on the plays' authorship in Theobald's and Warburton's editions.[90]) In 1780, Malone wrote that he soon expected 'to see [Farmer's] dissertation on the three parts of King Henry VI, which he thinks he can prove not to have been originally written, but only revised and improved by Shakespeare'.[91] Writing to Percy six years later, Malone described another attempt to put Farmer's promises into action:

> I am at present very busy in arranging an Essay … the object of which is to prove that the *Henries* were not written originally by Shakspeare, but were a *rifacimento*. As this is our friend Dr Farmer's own ground, I shall be a little mortified if he should not give me some support, and mean to run down to Cambridge for a few days to press him into the service; but he is so lazy that I doubt whether he will do anything, though he has half promised me.[92]

Malone did not secure Farmer's assistance in 1786, but in the published version of the *Dissertation* he nevertheless acknowledged the precedence of Farmer's ideas.[93] The two continued to exchange letters on the topic, and after Farmer outlined his theory that Marlowe had been the original author, Malone incorporated it into the revised version of

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[89] See Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 10:376–77n.

[90] See Steevens's brief remarks on the genealogy of the theory in Reed, ed., *Plays 1803*, 14:263n.

[91] Quoted in Sherbo, *Richard Farmer*, 141.

[92] Arthur Tillotson, ed., *The Percy Letters: The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and Edmond Malone*, vol. 1 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1944), 34–35.

[93] See Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 6:429; and Martin, *Edmond Malone*, 119.

his 'Attempt to Ascertain the Order' of Shakespeare's plays.[94] Under his entry for the *Henry VI* plays, Malone wrote:

> A passage in the historical drama of *King Edward II*, which Dr. Farmer has pointed out to me since the Dissertation was printed … inclines me to believe, with him, that Marlowe was the authour of one, if not both, of the old dramas on which Shakspeare formed the two plays which in the first folio … are distinguished by the titles of *The* Second *and* Third *Parts of King Henry VI*.[95]

In his *Essay*, and on the 'loose scrap of paper' that Steevens salvaged, Farmer laid out a theory of collaboration in which Shakespeare had assisted his friend Kyd, seeing *Locrine* through the press, and incorporating some of his own lines into *Titus Andronicus*.[96] Malone would do something similar for Farmer, developing his arguments about the composition of *Titus*, and incorporating his remarks about the Marlovian origins of the *Henry VI* plays into the 1790 version of the Essay on the chronology of Shakespeare's plays. As we have seen, Farmer's ideas also influenced the way in which Malone and Steevens would interpret collaboration in *Pericles*. By accepting and extending these pre-existing theories about Shakespeare as co-author, Malone did not so much break with the critical assumptions of the past as affirm them.

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[94] Sherbo, *Richard Farmer*, 145.
[95] Malone, ed., *Plays 1790*, 1, pt. 1:280.
[96] Farmer, *Essay*, 69; Reed, ed., *Plays 1803*, 21:[6n].

Conclusion

In 1998, two monographs with very similar titles appeared from university presses. Jonathan Brody Kramnick's *Making the English Canon: Print-Capitalism and the Cultural Past, 1700–1770* and Trevor Ross's *Making of the English Literary Canon: From the Middle Ages to the Late Eighteenth Century* both dealt with canon formation, and both placed the canon of Shakespeare's works at the centre of that process.[1] However, neither book addresses the making of Shakespeare's canon *itself* in any detail. According to Kramnick, in the middle of the eighteenth century, critics abandoned the earlier, Augustan project of modernization and refinement. Instead, their disgust at the emerging consumer culture led to:

> a shrinking away from the market of cultural goods, a disavowal of "modern" politeness …. The project of surmounting the difficulty and vulgarity of England's past gives way to one of appreciating the linguistic distance and aesthetic difficulty of Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton.[2]

If, in the first half of the eighteenth century, Shakespeare was seen as 'rather uncouth', in the second, he was canonized 'on the very terms of [his] former rejection'.[3] Ross's account of Shakespeare's canonicity is similar. For him, Shakespeare editors from Johnson onwards 'explicitly rejected adhering to any prevailing moral or aesthetic criterion for literary production'.[4] By the end of the century, Ross writes, 'Shakespeare's canonicity would be all but absolute, sanctified by a chorus of Bardolatry whose principal theme was the author's preternatural inexhaustibility of meaning'.[5]

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[1] Jonathan Brody Kramnick, *Making the English Canon: Print-Capitalism and the Cultural Past, 1700–1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Trevor Ross, *The Making of the English Literary Canon: From the Middle Ages to the Late Eighteenth Century* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998).

[2] Kramnick, *Making*, 43–44.

[3] Kramnick, *Making*, 2–3.

[4] Ross, *Making*, 242.

[5] Ross, *Making*, 244.

As Howard D. Weinbrot observed in his review of the two books, both Kramnick and Ross make Shakespeare's eighteenth-century canonicity seem much more monolithic than it actually was.[6] Pope and Johnson may have had radically different ideas of how far editors were entitled to go in shaping their authors' canons. However, while Malone might have agreed with Johnson, the positions that Steevens and Ritson took with respect to the Shakespearean canon show clear continuities with Pope.[7] As the eighteenth-century critical reception of *Pericles* and *Titus Andronicus* indicates, aesthetic and moral criteria continued to play a part in determining what was worthy of canonical inclusion.

The normative force of the Bentleyan-style editorial format after Johnson's 1765 edition meant that it was afterwards no longer feasible for editors to inscribe their canonical judgements directly onto Shakespeare's text, as Pope had.[8] Likewise, proprietors may have balked at the possibility of plays whose rights they owned being discarded from collected editions. However, the textual format of the scholarly edition provided other ways of communicating opinion on canonical matters. Plays could be undermined from below by notes that questioned their authenticity, or relegated to an appendix. As we have seen in the case of *Titus Andronicus*, the deliberate withholding of editorial effort was another way of stating an opinion about canonicity. 'We shall always do little where we desire but little should be done', Steevens observed of the play's relative paucity of notes and emendations.[9] In some cases, such as Steevens's call for the *Sonnets* to be suppressed, editorial commentators saw themselves as protectors of Shakespeare's posthumous reputation. Like eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century literary biographers, they advised discretion in order to preserve the dignity of their author.[10]

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[6] Howard D. Weinbrot, 'Twentieth-Century Scholarship and the Eighteenth-Century Canon', *Modern Language Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (2000): 398.

[7] For Johnson's views on an editor's rights versus those of an author, see James M. Osborn, 'Johnson on the Sanctity of an Author's Text', *PMLA* 50, no. 3 (1935): 928–29.

[8] Cf. A. R. Braunmuller, 'Shakespeares Various', in *In Arden: Editing Shakespeare: Essays in Honour of Richard Proudfoot*, ed. Ann Thompson and Gordon McMullan (London: Thomson Learning, 2003), 9–10.

[9] Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, eds., *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 10 vols. (London, 1778), 8:462n.

[10] Cf. Joseph W. Reed, Jr., *English Biography in the Early Nineteenth Century: 1801–1838* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 38–65.

In attempting to determine Shakespeare's genuine canon, critics brought to bear a varied and sometimes contradictory set of scholarly and cultural discourses. Pope tried, in his edition, to recreate an ancient mode of editing. Through a combination of stars, obelisks, and 'degradations', he imposed on Shakespeare a reimagined version of the ancient sigla that the Alexandrian editors had devised for use on Homer. While Pope's style of textual presentation had few later adherents, other commentators would share his preoccupation with isolating Shakespeare's individual stylistic imprint. Editors from Gildon to Malone drew upon classical-humanist rhetorics of personal style in order to locate Shakespeare's presence in disputed plays. Other critics imported to Shakespeare editing the language of connoisseurship that had been popularized by Jonathan Richardson's art-historical writings.

Concurrent with these efforts to locate Shakespeare's individual style were others that sought to uncover the social contexts of Shakespearean authorship. Editors drew upon contemporary friendship discourses to explain why Shakespeare's hand appeared next to those of other writers in certain plays. The result of these inquiries was a reimagining of the early modern stage as a kind of authorial credit network. According to these accounts, Shakespeare and his contemporaries lent their talents to other playwrights in the expectation of a return on their own plays. Although some recent critics have seen eighteenth-century stylistics as reflecting purely 'an aesthetic ideology of individualist sensibility', critics like Malone and Steevens could switch back and forth between these discourses.[11] Their speculations about Shakespearean co-authorship alternate between individuating Shakespeare stylistically, and seeking to place him within a communal network of friends and collaborators.

What these examples show is that concepts of Shakespearean authorship in the eighteenth century were more varied and complex than any progressive narrative would suggest. As we saw in Chapter Seven, editors could combine anti-histrionic rhetoric with a detailed understanding of contemporary stage practices. Theobald could disagree with Pope's 'cashiering' of lines from Shakespeare, yet still alter his own text, against all witnesses, to protect Shakespeare from inconsistency or historical error. Steevens could

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[11] For the quote, see Ross, *Making*, 162.

seek to separate out Shakespeare's contributions to *Pericles* while simultaneously upholding the humanist ideal that friends—and therefore collaborators—should be bodily indistinct. These paradoxes reveal something of the historical locatedness of eighteenth-century ideas about Shakespearean authorship. Neither modern attribution scholarship *in utero* nor simply the product of post-Enlightenment discourses of individuality, these arguments were shaped by older, humanist conceptions of style and authorial voice. Yet, at the same time, contemporary cultural concerns—sociability, friendship, propriety—also influenced the way in which Shakespeare's career was interpreted. By focussing on the languages in which these opinions were expressed, I have tried to recover some of the intellectual contexts from which the 'higher criticism' in Shakespeare emerged. Conceptions of Shakespearean authorship and canonicity in the period were—like authorship in the Shakespeare canon itself—not singular, but manifold and multivocal.

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