'*Enter Will Kemp*':

The Role of the Stage Clown in the Composition and Revision of Shakespeare's Plays, 1592-1599

ELIZABETH FORD

A Thesis Submitted in Candidature for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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For my mother.

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SUMMARY

This thesis examines the actor-clown Will Kemp and his working relationship with Shakespeare. In particular, the thesis explores the theatrical and literary influence Kemp had on his roles for Shakespeare. In the chapters which follow, I investigate the traces of Kemp in some of the early editions of the plays in which he first appeared, before looking at more solid evidence of his continuing rapport with Shakespeare in the two plays which name Kemp in a role. In each case the focus is on the first entry of his clown figure in the plays examined and the interplay of performance and authorial script. The study reveals Kemp not only as an agent of performance for Shakespeare, but also as a catalyst of textual and eventually thematic change in the composition of his plays. Their professional association thus maps the cultural shift identified by a number of critics from a players' to an authors' theatre in the late sixteenth century.

Over the last three decades, there have been two major revisionist theories about how Shakespeare wrote and disseminated his dramatic works and which acknowledge the dynamic and pragmatic processes leading to the eventual posthumous publication of the *First Folio* in 1623. One is the hypothesis, embedded most tangibly in *The Oxford Shakespeare* (1986), that the dramatist revised and reworked his plays primarily for performance. In the second, related but distinct theory laid out in *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (2003), Lukas Erne argued that Shakespeare also reworked certain plays specifically for publication. Both theories uphold the notion of authorial revision and both raise questions about how we are to understand the creative and commercial processes which lie behind the surface of Shakespeare's printed plays.

Neither of these overarching theories, however, perhaps pays sufficient attention to the daily realities of the Elizabethan stage, or to the relationship between the plays and the actors who performed them. In the thesis, I contend that Shakespeare's plays emerged from a vibrant and collaborative theatrical context, articulated in the extant early printed editions, captured in their myriad textual variances and proved in a multitude of details. By scrutinizing these details, I argue, it is possible to see how the conditions of performance made for a dispersal of authorship in playwriting. Actors were not merely the vehicles for the play-texts they performed, but also a root source of written variation. Kemp's presence undermines the simple binary view of Shakespeare as a theatrical or literary author around which most revisionary scholarship still tends to revolve and points, rather, to far more fluid processes of composition and adaptation in the plays on which he worked with Shakespeare. Indeed, in the stage direction '*Enter Will Kemp*', where writing meets performance, a whole world of possible change to Shakespeare's protean art is thus opened up.

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PART ONE

PART TWO

PART THREE

INTRODUCTION

I.   Kemp and Shakespeare

Will Kemp was more famous than Will Shakespeare – at least, in the late sixteenth

century. By the early 1590s, Kemp was a star of the London stage and had enjoyed a

successful theatrical career for several years. On the death of Richard (Dick) Tarlton in

1588, 'the most famous Jester to Queen Elizabeth',[1] and leading light of the Queen's

Men,[2] Kemp inherited his comic legacy as the capital's new master of 'mad jigs and

merry jests'.[3] He would become, according to Edwin Nungezer, 'one of the most

famous of Elizabethan clowns',[4] with a broad appeal which matched that of the great

tragedians of the age and spanned the marked social and gender divisions of playgoers

in late-Elizabethan London.[5] As Andrew Gurr notes, 'the idle artisan's [theatre]

admission fee was a minimal penny. For this, he had equally the choice of Shakespeare

or the baiting of bulls and bears, the same choice as the Queen'.[6] By 1598, at least

according to the writers of the anonymous play *The Return from Parnassus*, 'he's not

counted a Gentleman that knows not Dick Burbage & Wil Kempe', and 'there's not a

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[1] Thomas Fuller, *History of the Worthies of England. First Printed in 1662*, ed. John Nichols, 2 vols (London: Thomas Tegg, 1840), II, 311. I will return to the subject of Tarlton as Kemp's comic predecessor in Chapter One.

[2] Edwin Nungezer, *A Dictionary of Actors: and Other Persons Associated with the Public Representation of Plays in England before 1642* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 347.

[3] William Kemp, 'Dedication' to *Kemps Nine Daies Wonder: Performed in a Daunce from London to Norwich*, ed. Alexander Dyce (London: The Camden Society, 1840), p. 2. In his 'Dedication' 'to the true Ennobled Lady, and his most bountifull Mistris, Mistris Anne Fitton', Kemp describes himself as 'one […] that hath spent his life in mad jigges and merry jestes'. See also *Kemps Nine Daies Wonder*, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com, [accessed 26 March 2013]. The title-page of Kemp's *Nine Daies* shows him 'dauncing' to Norwich and is reproduced on Plate 1.

[4] Nungezer, *Dictionary of Actors*, p. 216. The fullest account of Kemp's life and career is given in David Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown: Actor and Text in the Elizabethan Playhouse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, repr. 2005).

[5] Cf. Alfred Harbage, *Shakespeare's Audience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941). According to Harbage's statistics, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, approximately 21,000 Londoners attended the theatre every week, representing 13% of the population of the city.

[6] Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642*, 3rd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 11.

country wench that can dance Sellengers Round but can talke of Dick Burbage and Wil

Kempe'.[7]

In 1592, Kemp's name appeared on the title-page of the anonymous play *A*

Knack to Know a Knave, confirming his popularity as a comic actor, and promising

playgoers 'A most pleasant and/merie new Comedie', '*With KEMPS applauded*

Merrimentes'.[8] In comparison at this time, Shakespeare was still virtually unknown

both as a poet and dramatist.[9] Later, in 1599 and 1600 respectively, Kemp's name

appeared in the stage directions in two of Shakespeare's plays. Revealingly, the second

quarto of *Romeo and Juliet* (Q2), published by Cuthbert Burby in 1599, does not name

Shakespeare as its author. (Shakespeare is not named as the author of *Romeo and Juliet*

until the publication of the play in the so-called 'First Folio' of Shakespeare's works,[10]

produced seven years after his death in 1623 by fellow-actors Henry Condell and John

Hemminge.) However, the following 'famous' stage direction appears for the role of

the Capulet servant Peter:[11] '*Enter Will Kemp*' at the top of K3ᵛ (4.5.102 in modern

editions), immediately after the sequence of action known as the Capulet 'lamentations'

scene, which not only records the actor in the role of Peter, but also reveals the

extension of the scene for him, as I will show in Chapter Five.[12] In 1600, Valentine

Simmes' first quarto edition of *Much Ado About Nothing* (Q1), which proudly

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[7] William Dunn Macray, ed., *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus: with the two parts of The Return from Parnassus; three comedies performed in St. John's College Cambridge,1597-1601* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886), *The Return from Pernassus*, 4.3.1832-5.

[8] The title-page is reproduced in G. R. Proudfoot, ed., *A Knack to Know a Knave*, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), A1ʳ. See also Plate 2.

[9] Richard Dutton describes Shakespeare as 'an author of mixed authority', a 'hybrid poet-playwright'. See Richard Dutton, 'The Birth of the Author', in *Texts and Cultural Change in Early Modern England*, eds. Cedric C. Brown and Arthur F. Marotti (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), pp. 153-78 (pp. 172, 175). I will give a brief overview of the careers of both Kemp and Shakespeare in Chapter One.

[10] See, for example, Charlton Hinman, ed., *The First Folio of Shakespeare*, 2ⁿᵈ edn, intr. Peter Blayney (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Co., 1996).

[11] Georgio Melchiori, 'Peter, Bathasar, and Shakespeare's Art of Doubling', *Modern Language Review*, 78 (1983), 776-92 (p. 778).

[12] William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* (London, 1599), K3ᵛ, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 15 April, 2013]. See also Plate 3.

advertises itself as '*Written by William Shakespeare*', also contains at least eleven instances of Kemp's name in speech prefixes for the role of Dogberry on G3^v-G4^v.[13]

We know, then, that by 1600 Kemp and Shakespeare had worked together professionally over a number of years and on several plays. For Robert Bell, Kemp's celebrity 'fuelled Shakespeare's curiosity about clowns and fools'.[14] He certainly played a number of them, and Kemp's roles for the playwright identified by David Wiles include the brief clown part in *Titus Andronicus* (c. 1592), Launce in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (c. 1593); Costard in *Love's Labour's Lost* (1594-5); Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595-6); and Lancelot Gobbo in *The Merchant of Venice* (1596-7). Wiles also claims that Kemp played the part of Falstaff in *1&2 Henry IV* (1597-8).[15] In the mid-1940s, Oscar Campbell added the Bastard in *King John* to Kemp's Shakespearean repertoire.[16] More recently two more roles have been added to the list: first, Richard Helgerson and Peter Thomson both argue that Kemp played Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI* (1591);[17] and second, Juliet Dusinbere has discovered a possible performance of *As You Like It* on Shrove Tuesday, 1599. As a result of the latter, it is now generally accepted that Touchstone may also have been a part originally written for

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[13] William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing* (London, 1600), G3^v-G4^v, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyick.com [accessed 15 April, 2013]. See also Plate 4.

[14] Robert H. Bell, *Shakespeare's Great Stage of Fools* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 11.

[15] Kemp's non-Shakespearean roles include the following: Jeffrey in the anonymous play *A Knack to Know a Knave* (c. 1592), which I discuss in Chapter Two; Cob in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour* (1598); Hodge in the anonymous play *Thomas Lord Cromwell* (published in 1602 by William Cotton and attributed on its title-page to 'W.S.'); Cock in Thomas Heywood's *The Royal King and the Loyal Subject* (published 1637); Pipkin in Heywood's *How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from Bad* (1602); and the Clown in Thomas Dekker and John Webster's *Sir Thomas Wyatt* (c. 1602). For further details on these roles, see Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 73-82. I have not addressed the subject of Kemp as Falstaff in this thesis as I believe it merits more in-depth study and I intend to pursue the idea in a future project on Kemp.

[16] Oscar James Campbell, *Shakespeare's Satire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1943; repr. 1963).

[17] See Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 215-6. See also Peter Thomson's characterisation of Tarlton 'resurrected' as Cade in his 'Clowns, Fools and Knaves: Stages in the Evolution of Acting', in *The Cambridge History of British Theatre Volume I: Origins to 1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 409.

Kemp, as opposed to his clown successor, Robert Armin.[18] There is good reason to

believe, therefore, that Kemp was indeed 'Shakespeare's Clown', as Wiles contends,

throughout the first half of the dramatist's largely anonymous career.

      Romeo and *Much Ado* provide yet more empirical proof of Kemp in

Shakespeare's work,[19] and appear at the end - or just after - the actor's time with the

Lord Chamberlain's Men, the company established in 1594 with both Kemp and

Shakespeare in the list of co-founders.[20] Though having signed the lease for a share in

The Globe in February of 1599, Kemp had left the company by the autumn of that year.

On the first day of Lent in 1600 (11 February), Kemp set off on his antic Morris

'daunce' to Norwich, which is recorded in his *Nine Daies Wonder*, his only published

writing and the only surviving document which attests to the actor's voice and

character. According to Stanley Wells, by this time Kemp was a 'national celebrity',

attracting a huge public following for his 110-mile journey.[21]

      As Kemp's name on the title-page of *A Knack* implies, plays were enhanced by

the crowd-pulling presence of well-known actors.[22] *Romeo*'s Peter, for example, is not

a star role, despite the fact that Kemp was a leading member of Shakespeare's company

at the time of the play's probable composition in 1594-5. As I will show in more detail

in Chapter Five, Peter's part in Q2 does seem to have been considerably augmented for

Kemp. Peter reveals, in this way, that playwrights moulded roles for certain players.

He also raises questions, as Wells argues, about the extent to which comedians, or

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[18] Juliet Dusinbere, ed., *As You Like It* (London: Thomson, 2006), pp. 365-67.

[19] Once a play title has been given in full, I will abbreviate subsequent citations.

[20] Towards the end of 1593, Kemp acted as payee alongside Richard Burbage and Shakespeare, for a performance at court, a fact which indicates that the three were the pivotal members of the new Chamberlain's Men's company. Cf. Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 34.

[21] Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare and Co.* (London: Penguin, 2006), p. 34.

[22] See Peter Thomson, 'Rogues and Rhetoricians', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, eds. John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 321-335 (pp. 334-5).

clowns, in plays of the period might have been in the habit of 'fattening' their own parts

with improvisation.[23]

Richard Brome's play, *The Antipodes* (1638), suggests some evidence of this,

when Lord Letoy berates a player as follows:

> Letoy. But you, sir, are incorrigible, and
>   Take licence to yourself to add unto
>   Your parts your own free fancy, and sometimes
>   To alter or diminish what the writer
>   With care and skill compos'd; and when you are
>   To speak to your coactors in the scene,
>   You hold interlocutions with the audients.
>
> Play.   That is a way, my lord, has been allow'd
>   On elder stages to move mirth and laughter.
>
> Letoy. Yes, in the days of Tarlton and Kemp,
>   Before the stage was purg'd from barbarism
>   And brought to the perfection it now shines with.
>   The fools and jesters spent their wits, because
>   The poets were wise enough to save their own
>   For profitabler uses.
>
>   (2.2.39-53) [24]

Although this evidence is late, Brome had been in the theatre all his life.[25] He would

have been familiar, then, with comic traditions 'in the days of Tarlton and Kemp', when

an actor's 'free fancy' could 'move mirth and laughter'.

The working relationship between Kemp and Shakespeare, as I will show in this

thesis, raises similar implicit questions about the interactive nature of dramatic

authorship, and about whether plays were composed and revised in order to

accommodate specific actors. As Wiles argues,

> it is all too easy to assume, in retrospect, that the actor was the servant or
> interpreter of the writer […] to forget that the writer was, in no less real a sense,
> the servant or interpreter of the actor.[26]

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[23] Wells, *Shakespeare and Co.*, p. 36.
[24] Richard Brome, *Antipodes* (1640), ed. Ann Haaker (London: Arnold, 1967).
[25] Cf. Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 35.
[26] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. vii.

How the plays came to be written among the 'hurly-burly' (*Macbeth*, 1.1.3) demands of performance and personality is, in my view, a long neglected facet of Shakespeare scholarship. My intention in this thesis is to explore the idea of a creative symbiosis between Kemp and Shakespeare in the production of the plays on which they both worked. In order to do this, I will build on Nora Johnson's ideas in *The Actor as Playwright in Early Modern Drama*, and her overall contention that actors such as Tarlton and Kemp were star performers who emobodied 'an extraordinary form of performance authority that fully rival[ed] that of the playwright'.[27]

In the following chapters, my study of Kemp's roles for Shakespeare will suggest how performance interacted with and changed Shakespeare's written play-texts as the 'page' came to accommodate and absorb the requirements of the 'stage'. My argument is grounded firmly in two broad premises: the first is that the concept of autonomous authorship, as we understand it today, largely did not exist during Shakespeare's working career;[28] the second is that Kemp, steeped in what Robert Weimann describes as the 'popular tradition',[29] largely performed within the context of festive and extemporal comic traditions which had the advantage of being substantially free from a plot or play-script, and, as a result, 'easily withdrawn from the control of the playwright'.[30] Kemp's particular influence as a celebrity actor-clown thus had, I

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[27] Nora Johnson, *The Actor as Playwright in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 31. Overall, Johnson's monograph 'traces models of theatrical authorship that owe their power to theatrical practice itself', examining the actor/playwrights who transformed successfully their theatrical accomplishments into print culture, including Robert Armin, Nathan Field, Ben Jonson, Anthony Munday and Thomas Heywood.

[28] Less than one in three of the plays published during the 1590s, for example, bears the playwright's (or playwrights') name on the title page. Cf. Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), Appendix A, pp. 247-54.

[29] Robert Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theatre: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974; repr. 1987).

[30] Enid Welsford, *The Fool: His Social and Literary History* (London: Faber and Faber, 1935; repr. 1968), p. 286.

contend, considerable agency in the writing and production of the plays in which he appeared, both for Shakespeare and for other playwrights.

As John Russell Brown argues, on Shakespeare's stage 'the actors were in charge of what happened', [31] a fact which appears to be confirmed by Phillip Henslowe's 'Diary' where one of his entries from 1598 records that he gave to the Lord Admiral's Men the sum of 'V^s', or five shillings, 'for to spend at the Readinge of that boocke at the sunne in new fyshstreate'.[32] A play-script, it seems, would be submitted orally to the players for their approval and acceptance. This theatrical dynamic is also articulated most forcefully by 'Bully' Bottom in his relationship with his director/playwright, Peter Quince, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. When the mechanicals first meet to rehearse their play in Act Two, Bottom shows that he has the upper hand: 'First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on; then read the names of the actors; and so grow to a point'. This is followed shortly by 'Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll. Masters, spread yourselves'. Later in the scene, Bottom boastfully demands more parts than that of Pyramus: 'let me play Thisbe too. I'll speak in a monstrous little voice', then:

> let me play the lion too. I will roar that I will do any man's heart good to hear me. I will roar that I will make the Duke say 'Let him roar again; let him roar again'. (2.1.7-13; 43-60)

The lines above give some indication of the extent to which several agencies were at work in the creation of a play. If Kemp played Bottom, as Wiles argues, the lines also suggest something of the considerable sway of Kemp as clown in the composition and revision of the plays examined in this thesis and recorded in the telling editions.

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[31] John Russell Brown, *William Shakespeare: Writing for Performance* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), p. 8.

[32] R. A. Foakes and R. T. Rickert, eds., *Henslowe's Diary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 88.

Finally, with their suggestion of Bottom's interpolation, the lines raise a number of

questions about what we mean by 'authorship' in late-Elizabethan drama.

II.   Authorship

In 1986, Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor first published the ground-breaking *Oxford*

Shakespeare.[33] The editors of the volume based their revisionist stand-point on the fact

that Shakespeare was primarily a working dramatist, addressing his play-scripts to a

body of theatrical professionals and dramatically astute contemporary audiences. The

production of his plays thus depended on an 'invisible life-support system of stage

directions' supplied as a result of theatrical first readings or performances.[34] Following

Wells and Taylor, in 2003 Lukas Erne published *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* in

which he argued that Shakespeare also revised his plays specifically for publication.

Both theories uphold the notion of authorial revision, and both raise questions about its

processes.[35]

Since the publication of Erne's monograph, criticism has witnessed what Patrick

Cheney describes as a remarkably uncontroversial '"return of the author" in

Shakespeare studies'.[36] Claims about Shakespeare's literary authorship (also contained

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[33] Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, with John Jowett and William Montgomery, eds., *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986; repr. 2005).

[34] See *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion*, eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 2.

[35] In 1975, the direction of traditional bibliographical study surrounding Shakespeare's authorship changed when Michael Warren claimed that Shakespeare had revised *King Lear*. Instead of the traditional practice of combining and conflating the Q1 (1608) and Folio (F1, 1623) texts, Warren called instead for the two early printed texts to be represented separately in the light of the possibility of Shakespeare's own revision of his original manuscript. Warren's theories were compounded in the 1980s with publications by Steven Urkowitz, *Shakespeare's Revision of King Lear* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), and others including: Gary Taylor and Michael Warren, eds., *The Division of the Kingdoms: Shakespeare's Two Versions of King Lear* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); and Peter W. M. Blayney, *The Texts of King Lear and their Origins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). This work culminated in the establishment of the revisionist position with the publication of *The Oxford Shakespeare* in 1986, the editors of which broke new ground by including all three versions of the play, Q1 and F1and the conflated text, in their one-volume edition on the basis that the *Tragedie* in F1 represents an authorial revision of the earlier *Historie* in Q1, an assumption sufficiently radical to justify classifying it as a separate play.

[36] Patrick Cheney, Foreword to 'Return of the Author Forum', *Shakespeare Studies*, 36 (2008), 19-25 (p. 19).

in Cheney's work[37]) have, as David Scott Kastan observes, 'remarkably changed our sense of Shakespeare almost overnight'.[38] Weimann and Douglas Bruster also note the 'swing of the critical pendulum' toward a 'renewed stress on the page',[39] and Richard Dutton groups Kastan's *Shakespeare and the Book*[40] alongside the literary theories of Erne and Cheney as part of a 'concerted backlash against the long-standing certainty that Shakespeare is primarily defined by his role in the theatre'.[41]

Propounding the thesis that Shakespeare was 'a self-conscious, literary author',[42] Erne's central argument is that the dramatist fashioned his dramatic works for readers as well as spectators. Furthermore, noting the frequency with which Shakespeare's plays were published and republished during the first decade of his career and the increasing prominence of his name on various editions from 1598, Erne also suggests - more contentiously again - that Shakespeare not only wanted his plays published, but also printed as expertly as possible. Perhaps this explains why Shakespeare's friend Richard Field printed the early poems: it would certainly have provided him with a degree of control over the dissemination of his poetry.

Overall, Erne produces what William B. Worthen describes as an 'ingenious' argument for the essentially 'literary' nature of many of Shakespeare's plays,[43] some of which were apparently too long for performance and, as a result, record Shakespeare's self-conscious appeal to a reading public and desire for literary longevity.[44] Charlotte

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[37] Patrick Cheney, *Shakespeare, National Poet-Playwright* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), and *Shakespeare's Literary Authorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[38] David Scott Kastan, '"To think these trifles some-thing": Shakespearean Playbooks and the Claims of Authorship', *Shakespeare Studies*, 36 (2008), 37-48 (p. 46).

[39] Weimann and Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance*, pp. 13-15.

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

[41] Richard Dutton, review of *Shakespeare, National Poet-Playwright* by Patrick Cheney (2004), *Shakespeare Quarterly* 56 (2005), 371-74 (p. 374).

[42] Lukas Erne, 'Reconsidering Shakespearean Authorship', *Shakespeare Studies* 36 (2008), 26-36 (p. 26).

[43] William B. Worthen, 'Intoxicating Rhythms: Or, Shakespeare, Literary Drama, and Performance (Studies)', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62:3 (2011), 309-39 (p. 310).

[44] The plays Erne identifies specifically as too long for performance include Q1 *Richard III*, Q2 *Romeo*, Q2 *Hamlet* (1604-5), Q1 *Troilus and Cressida* (1609) and Q1 *Othello* (1622). See Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, pp. 140-43.

Scott similarly contends that Shakespeare 'wrote differently for the stage and the page, including in the text to be read things that would normally be performed (mannerisms, entrances, exits, physical behaviour, expressions)'.[45]

However, it is in Q2 *Romeo and Juliet*, one of the long 'literary' texts which Erne considers unsuitable for performance in that it exceeds its own 'two-hours traffic of the stage' by some twenty per cent,[46] that Kemp makes his first documented appearance as Shakespeare's clown with the direction 'Enter Will Kemp', from which I take the title of this thesis. As Weimann argues, stage directions, along with other paratextual features such as speech prefixes, represent spaces in the play-script where 'the authorial meets the theatrical, where the writing meets the performer, where the poetics of drama meet with the conventions of the stage' in order to produce and perform a play.[47] It is here, then, that the stage meets the page in Kemp's first material encounter with a Shakespearean play, revealing an intersection in the vital dramatic boundary symptomatic of the traditions of writing and acting coming together.

Kemp's appearance in the literary *Romeo* raises, I believe, an interesting textual conundrum, particularly in the light of the critical fall-out surrounding the 'return of the author' in Shakespeare studies. As John Jowett argues, 'print culture also has its voice, a voice able to range between design, in both its technical and rhetorical aspects, paratextual presentation, and the text itself'.[48] It is this interchangeable aspect of the dialogues between writing and performance, I believe, preserved in print form in Q2

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[45] Charlotte Scott, *Shakespeare and the Idea of the Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 192.
[46] In the 1930s, Alfred Hart carried out detailed research on the length of plays either printed or known to have been acted between 1590 and 1616. Shakespeare's *Romeo*, according to Hart's figures, contains approximately 2,215 lines in Q1, and 2,989 lines in Q2. See Hart, 'The Number of Lines in Shakespeare's Plays', *Review of English Studies*, 8 (1932), 19-28.
[47] Weimann, *Author's Pen*, p. 220. I take the term 'paratextual' as meaning bibliographic material not crafted by the author of a book, such as title-page, dedication, foreword, footnotes etc. See Gérard Genette, *Seuils* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1987), translated as *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
[48] John Jowett, 'Henry Chettle and the First Quarto of *Romeo and Juliet*', *PBSA* 92:1 (March 1998), 53-74.

Romeo's 'Kemp' direction, which deconstructs the critical binary between literary and theatrical writing and points to the diverse nature of Shakespeare's dramatic art.

In a seminal essay on the nature of early modern playwriting, Stephen Orgel discusses the interactive relationship between page and stage. Orgel contends that 'the text in flux, the text as process, was precisely what Renaissance printing practices […] preserved'.[49] As the main creative force behind his plays, Shakespeare, of course, is a major source of textual meaning. However, in the case of plays which are printed in multiple editions, their origins can also be viewed within changing theatrical or other socio-economic factors. It is the very multiplicity of Shakespeare's dramatic texts, therefore, which render impossible attempts to draw a closed circle of subjectivity around his plays. R. B. McKerrow understood this complexity back in 1939: 'it is very doubtful', he contended, 'whether, especially in the case of the earlier plays, there ever existed any written "final form" […] We must not expect to find a definitive text'.[50]

Over the last few decades, this kind of insight has altered the direction of textual studies, including editions of Shakespeare's plays. It informs, for example, D. F. McKenzie's ideal of creative editing, which remains true to the intention of the work as opposed to the author:

> In this sense, the work may be the form traditionally imputed to an archetype; it may be a form seen as immanent in each of the versions but not fully realised in any one of them; or it may be conceived of as always potential, like that of a play, where the text is open and generates new meanings according to new needs in a perpetual deferral of closure.[51]

The theoretical approach I take to dramatic authorship overall in this thesis is based on the work of editorial practitioners and textual theorists such as McKenzie and, more

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[49] Stephen Orgel, 'What is an Editor?', in Stephen Orgel, *The Authentic Shakespeare: and Other Problems of the Early Modern Stage* (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 15-20 (p. 15).
[50] R. B. McKerrow, *Prolegomena for the Oxford Shakespeare: A Study in Editorial Method* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), p. 6.
[51] D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986; repr. 1999), p. 29.

particularly, Jerome J. McGann, whose concept of the 'socialisation' of texts disregards any fixity of meaning in preference for a recognition of shifting authorities. Textual, or literary, 'authority' for McGann is a 'social nexus, not a personal possession'.[52] A 'text', in this light, is not 'a "material thing" but a material event or set of events, a point in time (or a moment in space) where certain communicative interchanges are being practised'.[53] Positing the production of every text within its own particular socio-historical conditions, McGann's theories shift intentionality away from the author and towards social and cultural agency. The 'textual condition' is consequently a 'scene of complex dialogue and interchange'.[54] Viewed through this critical lens, I believe, variant texts such as those which record Shakespeare's *Romeo* provide examples of 'occasional meaning' which is the result of the complex network of influences which both enable and threaten the conditions of writing for performance.[55] Due to the ambivalent and unfixable state of plays such as *Romeo*, therefore, what McGann describes as a text's 'social nexus' becomes the actual authority from which variant texts such as the *Romeo* quartos derive. As a result, neither a purely verbal nor an exclusively textual parameter for the differences between them is often sufficient.

Julie Stone Peters has argued that early modern 'drama was understood to play itself out in two arenas – on the stage and on the page'.[56] More recently, Worthen notes that Shakespeare 'bestrides the book and the stage' in scholarship, arguing that critics and editors now view the composition of 'literary' drama, designed and printed to be read, at a time when the theatre of the period was intricately connected with a

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[52] Jerome J. McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 48.

[53] Jerome J. McGann, *The Textual Condition* (Princeton, MS.: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 21.

[54] McGann, *Textual Condition*, p. 5.

[55] I take the term 'occasional meaning' from Terence Hawkes, *Meaning by Shakespeare* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 6.

[56] Julie Stone Peters, *Theatre of the Book, 480-1880: Print, Text and Performance in Europe* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 8.

burgeoning readership and growing literary culture.[57] We can, therefore, legitimately consider Shakespeare's dramatic works from two concurrent perspectives: one as a literary oeuvre, written by a dramatic author, and intended for a burgeoning readership; and the other, to quote Raymond Williams on the subject of drama more broadly, as works 'intended for performance',[58] or before a theatre audience – a point which Kemp's entry into Q2 *Romeo* appears to confirm.

As a result of the return of the dramatic 'author' outlined above, the vital connections between text and performance – a relationship which, for the Marxist Williams, lies at the heart of dramatic theory – are now more important than ever in sustaining an impression of the appropriate function of writing in and for theatre. One question, however, still dominates critical thinking: whether the plays were conceived and produced by an individual conceptualising himself as an 'author', as Erne and others contend, or whether they emerged collaboratively from the busy hive of the early modern playhouse.[59]

III.   Collaboration

Writing on the idea of 'authorship' in Shakespeare's time, the influential critic Michel Foucault observed that to impose unity on early modern texts is to presuppose the text's origin in a single authorial consciousness.[60] Most of the extant early texts we have contain evidence that they were corrected, revised, abridged and changed, either by the dramatist himself, or, more likely, by the hands of others. As Roger Chartier and Peter Stallybrass have argued recently, reading the early printed texts reminds us that the

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[57] Worthen, 'Intoxicating Rhythms', p. 310. On the development of early modern reading, see Heidi Brayman Hackel, 'The "Great Variety" of Readers and Early Modern Reading Practices', in *A Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. David Scott Kastan (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), pp. 139-57 (p. 141).

[58] Raymond Williams, *Drama in Performance* (London: C. A. Watts, 1968), p. 172.

[59] This question sustains the opening chapters of Jeffrey Knapp's *Shakespeare Only* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

[60] Michel Foucault, 'What is an Author?', trans. Catherine Porter, in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), pp. 101-20.

'"Shakespeare" that we now treat in the singular has been composed by multiple historical agents (theatre companies, actors, publishers, compositors, editors) who have produced the plural Shakespeares that continue to multiply'.[61]

In the early 1970s, Gerald Eades Bentley argued that 'the production of plays, in whatever era, is always a cooperative art'. More specifically, Bentley claimed that 'every performance in the commercial theatres from 1590-1642 was itself essentially a collaboration'.[62] If, as Philip Gaskell argues, actors are a playwright's 'chief collaborators', [63] they were also, on the late-Elizabethan stage, the main practitioners within a performance medium saturated with competing forms of authority.

Orgel's theories have placed Shakespeare within a long-standing tradition of theatrical collaboration, a critical standpoint which counteracts Erne's hypothesis on the *untheatricality* of Shakespeare's long, literary plays. Orgel argues, for example, that textual evidence implies that Shakespeare habitually began writing a play with more material than he needed; that his scripts offered the company a range of possibilities; and that the process of production was a collaborative one of selection.[64] The playwright, in other words, was by no means solely at the centre of the dramatic collaboration required in writing and performing a play. Orgel contends elsewhere that 'the acting of a play',

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[61] Roger Chartier and Peter Stallybrass, 'Reading and Authorship: The Circulation of Shakespeare 1590-1619', in Andrew Murphy, ed., *A Concise Companion to Shakespeare and the Text* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), pp. 35-56 (pp. 36-7).

[62] Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time, 1590-1642* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 8, 198. Collaboration on plays throughout the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods now seems indisputable. There are numerous examples of the co-authorship of plays, beginning in 1562 with *The Tragedy of Gorboduc*, the first English play written in blank verse by Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville. Theories of collaboration on Shakespeare's plays also remain firmly within the domain of working with other dramatists. Those named so far include Thomas Nashe, George Peele, Anthony Munday, George Wilkins, Thomas Middleton, and John Fletcher. The most recent work on collaboration can be found in Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith, 'Many Hands - A New Shakespeare Collaboration?', *Times Literary Supplement* (19 April 2012), pp. 13-15.

[63] Philip Gaskell, *From Writer to Reader: Studies in Editorial Method* (Delaware: Oak Knoll Press, 1999), p. 9.

[64] Orgel, 'What is a Text', in *The Authentic Shakespeare*, pp. 1-13.

> always was different from the written text […] This means not simply that it was different from the printed text, though it certainly means that, but that it was different from the *script*, what the author wrote. It also means that this was the situation obtaining in Shakespeare's own company, of which he was a part owner and director – it was a situation he understood, expected, and helped to perpetuate.[65]

In this light, actors' performances that leave traces in the texts such as those left by Kemp, rather than being dismissed as print contamination, can more valuably be considered as part of the collaborative context of playwriting, or the 'collaborations of the theatre' to quote Kastan, [66] which allow us to see some of the dynamic transformations a Shakespeare play underwent during the first years of its existence.[67] Kastan has since argued elsewhere that, while as a writer Shakespeare may have been 'active, thoughtful, and wilful', his work was also continually compromised within the collaborative environment of the theatre where the conditions of performance continually change.[68] As Orgel similarly notes,

> the history of performance is largely a history of the subversion of the text. Actors are the original poststructuralists, assuming, throughout the history of theatre, that the author does not control the play, the interpreter does; and that indeed, there is, for the purposes of performance – which are, after all, the purposes of drama – no author, only an infinitely mutable script.[69]

At every point of the reproduction or reinterpretation of Shakespeare's plays, whether on stage or in print, his art solicits intentions other than his own and these interact with each dramatic work to produce the various meanings embedded in the printed texts. In this light, certain variant play-texts such as Q2 *Romeo* can be viewed as shaped and moulded around performance as well as writing, and this reflects the dominant culture of collaboration behind the composition of the works.

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[65] Orgel, 'The Authentic Shakespeare', in *The Authentic Shakespeare*, pp.231-56 (pp. 237-8).
[66] David Scott Kastan, *Shakespeare After Theory* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 16.
[67] For an account of such traces left in early Shakespearean texts, see Allison Gaw, 'Actor's Names in Basic Shakespearean Texts, with Special Reference to *Romeo and Juliet* and *Much Ado*', *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, 40:3 (1925), 530-50.
[68] Kastan, '"To think these trifles some-thing"', p. 37.
[69] Orgel, 'What is a Character?', in *The Authentic Shakespeare*, pp. 7-13 (p. 10).

More often than not, as I will show, Kemp's clowns are associated with textual instability, where the printed versions of Shakespeare's working play-scripts are fractured by Kemp's performances. Positioned constantly at points of textual or thematic variance, Kemp is thus at the apex of the creation and recreation of the plays in which he took part, revealing the compositional process as one of constant interaction between writer and actor. To quote McGann again:

> The 'author's intentions' rarely control the state or the transmission of the text. In this sense, literary texts and their meanings are collaborative events. Some writers enter these collaborations actively and positively […]. In other cases the collaborations are unsought for, or perhaps even resisted.[70]

There are shifting implications to McGann's statement. First, I would argue quite unequivocally that the textual fluidity of the *Romeo* quartos lends the lie to any notion of a single authorial autonomy in early printed texts. However, as Jill Levenson remarks, 'some bibliographers [still] persist in seeking authority for fluid theatrical texts in static concepts'.[71] In other words, they continue to pay homage to what McGann would describe as 'the autonomy of the isolated author'.[72]

The second point to note, therefore, is that for most critics the figure of the early modern 'author' is first seen in the publication of *The Workes of Benjamin Jonson* in 1616.[73] As I will show in Chapter One, however, the construction of the author figure was already well underway.[74] A fuller concept was certainly finalised very soon after Jonson's *Works* were available: first by the term 'playwright', which was first used, according to Tiffany Stern, in 1617;[75] and second, more emphatically, by the publication in 1623 of *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies*, the

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[70] McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism*, p. 100.
[71] Jill L. Levenson, ed., *Romeo and Juliet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000; repr. 2008), p. 105.
[72] McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism*, p. 8.
[73] Benjamin Jonson, *The Workes of Benjamin Jonson* (London, 1616), in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 22 April 2013].
[74] See below, pp. 35-9.
[75] Tiffany Stern, 'Re-patching the Play', in *From Script to Stage in Early Modern England*, eds. Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 151-77 (p. 154).

first bound collection of Shakespeare's dramatic output. It is undoubtedly down to the ideals of writing contained in the latter that the idea of the sovereign writer continues to captivate critics and scholars, as recent reinterpretations of 'Shakespeare's Book' suggest.[76] As Catherine Belsey has recently argued, our 'empiricist culture […] longs to find the source of the text in the life of the author'.[77] It still supplants, in other words, material and cultural intertextuality with authorial experience and individual genius.

The idea that a performer's art could shape Shakespeare's writing has long run against the grain of the critical tradition in Shakespeare studies.[78] But whichever side of the authorship debate critics choose to back, it must be acknowledged that during the 1590s, the period with which this thesis is most concerned, the status of authors - and particularly playwrights - was not only unstable, but also low. Peter Thomson argues, moreover, that it was Shakespeare's duty to supply a part for the professional clown of his company in every play where possible.[79] It should also not be forgotten that Shakespeare was an actor himself and would thus have understood the demands of the working stage. His name is listed, along with Kemp's, as one of the principal actors in Jonson's *Every Man In His Humour* in 1598,[80] suggesting that he continued acting for at least the first half of his playwriting career.

Perhaps, then, it is also clear that Shakespeare's sources for his plays are as likely to have been the traditions of dramatic practice as much as his literary knowledge and experiences. Seen in this light, if, as Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Leaser suggest, the figure we now think of as Shakespeare the 'dramatic author' was constructed within and not in opposition to the theatre, he is one for whom the machinations of page and

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[76] See, for example, Richard Meek, Jane Rickard and Richard Wilson, eds., *Shakespeare's Book: Essays in Reading, Writing and Reception* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008).

[77] Catherine Belsey, 'Death of the Reader', *Textual Practice*, 23:2 (2009), 201-14 (p. 201).

[78] Cf. Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 136.

[79] Thomson, 'Rogues and Rhetoricians', pp. 334-5.

[80] Shakespeare's name is is contained in the list of actors prefixed to the comedy in the Folio of Jonson's 1616 '*Workes*'.

stage were continuous and complementary.[81] As a result, we might interpret the

working relationship between Shakespeare and Kemp as a less quarrelsome and more

collaborative one than that between Bottom and Peter Quince, and than is usually

assumed between the dramatist and his clown who parted ways so abruptly in 1599.

There are other changes of thinking in Shakespeare studies that have brought

about some major shifts in critical opinion in recent years. Freed of grand

bibliographical narratives of sovereign authorship, for example, early modern dramatic

texts now look different. As a result of the work of critics such as Janette Dillon and

Laurie Maguire plays such as the first quarto of *Romeo*, or Q1 published in 1597, along

with the other 'bad' Shakespearean quartos identified by Alfred Pollard in 1909, are no

longer perceived as inferior texts. [82] Rather, they are seen as individual play-texts, or

plays in their own right which reflect what Dillon describes as a more 'unitary

conception of performance' than has traditionally been acknowledged in scholarship.[83]

Now, too, thanks to the work of editors, textual scholars and critics, including

Orgel, Kastan, McMillin, Maguire, Taylor and Paul Werstine, the refusal to take for

granted the author as the sole authority behind a play has paved the way for a cautious

alignment between textual scholarship and theatre history in Shakespeare studies.

Recent scholarship on theatre history also appears to be under the influence of Foucault

in its calls to reject author-centric study in favour of multiple perspectives and

influences, particularly those of 'audiences, actors, theatre companies, patrons,

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[81] Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Leaser, 'Vile Arts: The marketing of English Printed Drama, 1512-1660', *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama*, XXXIX (2000), 77-165.
[82] Janette Dillon, 'Is There a Performance in this Text?', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 45 (1994), 74-86 (77); Laurie E. Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts: the 'Bad' Quartos and their Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Along with *Romeo* Q1, the other texts Pollard identified as 'bad' were Q1 *Hamlet* (1603), Q1 *King Henry V* (1600), Q1 *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1602), and Q1 *Pericles* (1609). See Alfred W. Pollard, *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos: A Study in the Bibliography of Shakespeare's Plays 1594-1685* (London: Methuen, 1909), pp. 64-80. For detailed accounts of the bibliographical study of Shakespeare's texts which has been influenced by Pollard's categorization of the 'good' and 'bad' quartos, see Paul Werstine, 'A Century of "Bad" Quartos', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 50 (1999), 310-33. I will return to the 'good'/'bad' text debate in more detail in Chapter Five.
[83] Dillon, ibid. p. 77.

architects and designers'.[84] In order to establish a new perspective on Elizabethan relations between writing and performance, what is needed, as Kastan suggests, therefore, is 'to uncover the full network of agency involved in the production of the text, restoring the literary work to the collaborative economies necessary for its realization'.[85]

Critics are now well advised, as Weimann observes, 'to look for a wider and different framework of reference in which to revitalize a workable conception of the links and gaps between "pen" and "voice"'.[86] It is in those very 'links' and 'gaps', as I seek to show, that we can glimpse scraps of theatrical history captured in the texts of Shakespeare's plays. It is also within this more vital and animated context of Shakespeare's work that I want to explore a new kind of textual analysis, one which looks beyond the author and the literary print form of a play to the theatrical world behind it, and, in particular, to a player who worked alongside Shakespeare for nearly ten years – Will Kemp, Shakespeare's clown.

IV.   Kemp's clown roles

From 1594, Kemp was the principal clown for Shakespeare's company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, and one of the great comic actors of the late-Elizabethan stage for whom many of Shakespeare's clown parts were written during the 1590s. Kemp's popularity with audiences ensured a continuing presence on the London stage throughout the 1590s, both for Shakespeare's and other leading theatrical companies. Current and precedent scholarship acknowledges Kemp as a leading figure of early

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[84] Orgel, Introduction, *From Script to Stage in Early Modern England*, pp. 1-8 (p. 1).

[85] David Scott Kastan, 'The Mechanics of Culture: Editing Shakespeare Today', *Shakespeare Studies* 24 (1996), 30-37 (p. 34).

[86] Weimann, *Author's Pen*, p. 38. Weimann takes the synechdoches of 'pen' and 'voice' from the 'Prologue' to *Troilus and Cressida* (1602): 'And hither am I come,/A Prologue armed – but not in onfidence/Of author's pen or actor's voice, but suited/In like conditions as our argument' (ll. 22-5).

modern theatre. [87]   My interest in him in this thesis, however, does not revolve around the iconic stage figure - the jesting parasite of Lancelot Gobbo, or the unruly pranks of Falstaff. Rather, I am interested in the more marginal clowns Kemp played, those who haunted the liminal parameters of the plays in which they appeared: the pigeon-bearing scapegoat in *Titus*; the satirical and independent Launce in *Two Gentlemen*; the marginalised servant Peter in *Romeo*; and Dogberry in *Much Ado* who reveals, more than any of Kemp's earlier parts, the collaborative craft of playwriting on Shakespeare's stage.

In order to demonstrate what I see as Kemp's working relationship with Shakespeare and its influence on the plays' composition, I have divided the main body of the thesis into three parts. The first part contains two chapters which illustrate the early theatrical power of the clown figure, inherited from what Weimann describes as the 'popular' stage. Chapter One investigates Kemp's clowning inheritance in two ways: first, through a brief look at the successful career of Tarlton; and second through the growing divide between the residual forms of festivity promoted by Tarlton and the humanist aesthetic inscribed in Sir Philip Sidney's *Apologie for Poetrie*, a considerable influence on playwrights in the decade under discussion. Chapter Two offers an

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[87] The most recent additions are Bart van Es, *Shakespeare in Company* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), Bell, *Shakespeare's Great Stage of Fools*, and Robert Hornback, *The English Clown Tradition: From the Middle Ages to Shakespeare* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2009) which contains a study of the impact of the clown figure on late-Elizabethan social and political culture. Welsford's seminal account of *The Fool: His Social and Literary History* still gives the most wide-ranging account of what she describes as the 'fool' heritage out of which the late-Elizabethan clown emerged. See also William Willeford, *The Fool and His Sceptre: A Study in Clowns and Jesters and their Audiences* (London: Arnold, 1969). Willeford discusses a variety of instances of fools and folly in sources which include records of folk festivals and court jesters, the fool literature of the Middle Ages and early Renaissance, and plays from Shakespeare's time to the present day. Wiles, as noted, focuses closely on Kemp in *Shakespeare's Clown*. Weimann has also written extensively on the clown/fool tradition in *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition* , *Author's Pen*, and, with Douglas Bruster, in *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance* and *Prologues to Shakespeare's Theatre: Performance and Liminality in Early Modern Drama* (London: Routledge, 2004). On Shakespeare's use of themes of seasonal festivity, see C. L Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy: A Study of Dramatic Form in Relation to its Social Custom* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1959; repr. 1990) and, more recently, François Laroque, *Shakespeare's Festive World: Elizabethan Seasonal Entertainment and the Professional Stage*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

examination of the power of the celebrity Kemp inherited from Tarlton in *A Knack to Know a Knave*, the play in which his 'merrimentes' record him as a formative force on both page and stage.

The second part of the thesis looks at Kemp and Shakespeare more closely in two plays produced in the middle years of their professional association, focusing on Kemp's entrance in each play. In Chapter Three, I examine the brief appearance of the clown in *Titus*, arguing that the textual fluidity around his initial entrance into the play reveals that the part was taken by Kemp in early performances. In Chapter Four, I offer a study of the role of Launce in *Two Gentlemen* in order to suggest that Kemp's working stage can still be glimpsed behind the literary Folio text of the play which is the only extant edition we have, despite the fact that it was printed at least thirty years after the play's initial performances involving the actor.

The third and final section of the thesis investigates the two plays in which Kemp is documented as Peter and Dogberry respectively, both of which, ironically enough, also articulate the contention of Richard Helgerson and others, that the 1590s saw a gradual consolidation of authorial power at the expense of players' freedom to improvise - a freedom most notoriously located in the clown.[88] As with previous chapters, I focus on Kemp's first entry. Chapter Five examines *Romeo*'s Peter in some detail, arguing that there are moments in the play, earlier than Q2's 'lamentations' scene with its 'Enter Will Kemp', in which Kemp is visible as a partly extemporal performer. Chapter Six offers a re-evaluation of Dogberry as a major comic figure, suggesting that Kemp's interpolative force is by now distilled within this more scripted part.

Throughout the thesis, my aim is to present a textually inscribed, interpretative account of the relationship between Kemp, Shakespeare and the clown parts they

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[88] See Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, esp. pp. 199-213.

created. My study thus straddles both performance and bibliographical issues, investigating what happened to a play between its composition, revision, performances on stage, and printing. This draws attention to the specific circumstances around the writing of the plays, and to their production in print. Taking a historicist perspective to the plays in this way, places both their production and dissemination as part of a complex cultural milieu. Thus, while joining scholarly discourses which acknowledge the author-centred nature of revision, I offer a concurrent study of one of the variant creative forces which influenced the processes of composition within the quotidian rough and tumble of late-Elizabethan theatre examined in Part One. As Bart van Es has recently argued in uniting the influences of theatre and literature on Shakespeare's work, the dramatist's early work in particular 'was a changeful and unpredictable affair'.[89] I similarly posit both Shakespeare and Kemp in a working environment where 'author's pen' and 'actor's voice' intersected on a daily basis as a working continuum, with each necessary to, and dependent upon, the other. As a result, Kemp becomes part of the collaborative and interactive world of the stage which fashioned the Shakespearean canon on what Erne describes as the 'intersection of theatricality and literariness'.[90]

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[89] Van Es, *Shakespeare in Company*, p. 54.
[90] Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist*, p. 220.

CHAPTER ONE

THE STAGE VERSUS THE PAGE IN THE EARLY 1590s

The final decade of the sixteenth century was witness to a complex milieu in the writing and performing of plays. Wiles cites the anonymous play *A Knack to Know a Knave* (c. 1592) as one of the works written and performed during the early to mid-1590s which went some way in resolving the tensions between the residual, festive licence of the popular stage and an emergent humanist literary culture.[1] The title-page of the only printed quarto of *A Knack* (reproduced in Plate 2), published in 1594, articulates the distinctive fusion of stage and page in explicitly promoting '*KEMPS* applauded Merrimentes' - an obvious marketing ploy used to attract both spectators of the play and readers of the text. Yet the clown's, or Kemp's, only comic sequence is surprisingly brief and does not take place until relatively late on in the action between lines 1363 and 1411 (E4^v-F^v). The play suggests, in this way, something of what Barbara Mowat describes as the 'increasingly porous' relationship between theatrical and print culture at the time of its publication 1594:[2] while confining the clown to one short sequence in the printed book, the text, at the same time, also validates Kemp's vital stage appeal on its title-page.

The brevity of Kemp's 'merrimentes' in *A Knack* might be explained by the fact that, as the decade moved on, the stage came under the increasing authority of playwrights. Many of the plays produced after *A Knack* continued to give their clown or clowns considerably smaller proportions of stage time than the earlier theatrical

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[1] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 73. Writing on *Love's Labour's Lost's* 'little academe' (1.1.13), Nuttall discusses how Renaissance humanism was committed to the idea of neo-classicism in its study of Greek and Latin texts. See A. D. Nuttall, *Shakespeare the Thinker* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 82.

[2] Barbara A. Mowat, 'The Theatre and Literary Culture', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, pp. 213-230 (p. 217).

gamesters of medieval and early Tudor stage 'play' had been used to receiving.[3]
Rebellious actors such as *A Midummer Night's Dream*'s 'bully Bottom' (4.2.18), for
example, while still allowed to indulge themselves on stage, were no longer allowed to
steal the show as their characters became more integrated within the narrative action of
the plays in which they appeared.

There are, however, a number of divergent theatrical and literary threads which
continued, and still continue, to promote a problematic dichotomy between the concerns
of stage and page in Shakespeare's dramatic works. All of the plays examined in this
thesis reveal similar artistic tensions between what might be described as the vying
theatrical and authorial values outlined above. My aim in this opening chapter is to
examine the evolving figures of clown and author within the cultural and social
developments which led to some of the artistic ambiguities already briefly touched on. I
will begin by outlining the development of the stage clown figure before examining
briefly the career of Dick Tarlton, Kemp's celebrated clown-predecessor, whose
extemporal and anarchic presence on stage dominated London's theatrical scene until
his death in 1588. I will then show how moves towards verisimilitude and
professionalism in playwriting, already in place by the time of Tarlton's death, saw
intellectual efforts to ban, or at least restrict, extra-dramatic or extemporal comedy from
plays. In order to focus more closely on the working relationship between Kemp and
Shakespeare, the final section of this opening chapter will offer an overview of their

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[3] I take the term 'play' in this context from Anne Barton who notes that, 'English drama of the fifteenth
and sixteenth centuries is filled with characters who play or enjoin others to play the fool'. In order to
illustrate this point, Barton cites Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens, A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*
(London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1949). Huizinga argues that the English word 'play' comes from
the Anglo-Saxon 'plega' or 'plegan', meaning primarily 'play' or 'to play' in the sense of a game.
Applying this notion of a gamester to theatrical play, Huizinga cites Shakespeare's *Richard III*, where the
recently crowned King Richard muses as follows: 'Ah, Buckingham, now do I play the touch,/To try if
thou be current gold indeed' (4.2.9-10). See Barton, *Shakespeare and the Idea of the Play* (Westport,
Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1962; repr. 1977), pp. 69-70.

relative positions as clown and playwright in the early years of the decade under discussion.

I.   From a Vice to a clown

In the context of the late-Elizabethan stage, the term 'clown' encompasses several meanings in early modern usage, all of which are relevant to this chapter. The first come from Arthur Golding's translation of the 'fyrst fower bks' of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* (1565), where the expressions 'foole, 'countrie cloyne' and 'lout' are found. The second, more familiar sense of 'clown' in relation to Shakespeare's plays is noted in *The Oxford English Dictionary (OED Online)*, as 'a fool or jester, as a stage character'.[4] In his *Nine Daies Wonder*, Kemp refers to himself as a 'fool' and not a 'clown' since the ancient, less specialised sense of the former was then dominant in everyday use.[5] However, for my purposes in this thesis, the term 'clown' relates more specifically to the sense in which Wiles uses it in relation to both Tarlton and Kemp's career as the 'principal comedian' at a playhouse.[6]

As the above definitions suggest, it is from the traditional fool's role that the Elizabethan clown descended. The distinction between the two, however, is important. Welsford's account of fifteenth-and sixteenth-century European 'fool-literature' has shown how the term 'fool' derives from Old French via Middle English sources. The term 'clown' is a late-sixteenth century adaptation of the fool figure, with more rustic and boorish, as well as comic, stage connotations. For Welsford, then, the fool is the

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[4] Both definitions are taken from *The Oxford English Dictionary (OED Online)*, http://www.oed.com/ [accessed 23 April 2013].
[5] Cf. Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 68, 69.
[6] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 12.

'professional buffoon' and essentially the medieval figure from which the later clown emerged.[7]

A more recent ancestor of the clown, as Welsford's work also shows, was the Vice. The Vice was a later theatrical figure than the fool, and can be linked directly to what Welsford describes as the 'phenomenon' of secular drama and the rise of the professional actor. For example, in the fifteenth-century morality play *Mankind* (c. 1461), one of the earliest plays of its kind to survive in print, the character of Mischief is an improvising marauder who dominates the play both on stage and off by juggling with the layers of reality at work.[8] At the very outset of the action, Mischief interrupts Mercy's sermon by stating his disruptive function quite candidly: 'I come hither to make you game'.[9] Mischief's actions throughout the performed play would have been governed by this opening statement, where he addressed both audience and players at once as part of a dual dramatic function in which he operates both inside and outside the play-world. At the time of the play's original performances, this duality would have been corroborated in a number of ways: first, by the performance space which was open as opposed to on a raised stage;[10] and second, by the resulting normative lack of distinction between audience and actors. Spatially and figuratively, then, reality and illusion were further mixed as there was no official line of demarcation separating the fictive world of the play from the world of the audience.

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[7] Welsford, *The Fool*, pp. 273-86. In the early Tudor period, he is part of the growth of dramatic professionalism as an amateur or semi-professional actor who assumes the dress and ways of official court jesters.

[8] For a discussion of Medieval and early Tudor morality plays, see Robert A. Potter, *The English Morality Play: Origins, History and Influence of a Dramatic Tradition* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975).

[9] Douglas Bruster and Eric Rasmussen, eds., *Everyman and Mankind* (Methuen: London, 2009), l. 69, p. 95. In their gloss to Mischief's line, Bruster and Rasmussen note that his words cite Chaucer's Sir Thopas in *The Canterbury Tales*: 'His myrie men commanded he/To make hym bothe game and glee', ll. 839-40.

[10] On the development of early modern performance space, see Glynne Wickham, *A History of the Theatre*, 2nd edn (London: Phaidon, 1985; repr. 1992), pp. 121-7.

But while Mischief embodied the vice the audience should shun, he was also, at one and the same time, welcome as the comic, and therefore entertaining, force of the play. This second seemingly double role, therefore, also 'made the play possible', as Wiles contends. Mischief was thus a central part of the dramatist's conception of the work, both 'game-maker and master of ceremonies',[11] and was an essential element of the play itself as a dramatic 'Lord of Misrule'.[12] On stage, therefore, he would have undermined the entire didactic thrust of the morality genre by offering a representation of 'life in play' as opposed to 'life in earnest'.[13]

Mischief is just one example of the early multifaceted fool/Vice figure as an 'amphibian' on stage, 'equally at home in the word of reality and the world of the imagination'.[14] He demonstrates, moreover, that from its earliest manifestations, the Vice's anarchic comic impulse was to create mayhem as the 'jovial ring-leader and mischief-maker' of folk theatre's socially subversive realms.[15] Mischief both signified and practised, therefore, what Mikhail Bakhtin describes as a particular form of the 'folk culture of humour', located in the 'carnivalesque' festive aesthetic, which both subverted and liberated dominant ideology through humour and chaos:

> The scope and the importance of this culture were immense in the Renaissance and the Middle Ages. A boundless world of humorous forms and manifestations opposed the official and serious tone of medieval ecclesiastical and feudal culture. In spite of their variety, folk festivities of the carnival type, the comic rites and cults, the clowns and fools, giants, dwarfs, and jugglers, the vast and manifold literature of parody – all these forms have one style in common: they belong to one culture of folk carnival humour.[16]

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[11] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 2.

[12] For details on the 'Lord of Misrule' figure, see Welsford, *The Fool*, pp. 197-217. Wiles outlines the 'utopian' element of the misrule tradition, in that it refers back to a 'golden age of equality'. See *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 44. In Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*, one of the followers of the play's subversive clown-figure, Jack Cade, declares the following: 'Will, I say it was never merry world in England since gentlemen came up' (4.2.6-7).

[13] Bernard Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil: the History of a Metaphor in Relation to his Major Villains* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), pp. 176-7.

[14] Welsford, *The Fool*, p. xii.

[15] Ibid., p. 197.

[16] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. by Hélène Iswolsky (Cambridge, M. S.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1965; repr. 1968), p. 4. For Bakhtin the carnival aesthetic

Carnival was deeply engrained within the imagination of Elizabethan England as a cultural space for licence and riot.[17] As the Vice figure matured, however, the 'jesters' of the late-Tudor era were drawn from real life, as opposed to the more allegorical sources of the morality tradition.

Bernard Spivack illustrates this development in arguing that the term 'Vice' was first used in a modern theatrical sense by the Tudor dramatist John Heywood (c. 1497-1580), 'interlude-maker' to Henry VIII.[18] In his experimental courtly interludes, *The Play of the Wether, a new and merry interlude of all manner of Wethers* and *The Play of Love* (both 1533), the characters of 'Neither-lover-nor loved' and 'Merry-report' respectively are labelled as the 'Vices' of their particular plays, but they are no longer personifications of one particular vice. While they continue to fulfil the same dramatic function as *Mankind's* Mischief in their liminal position between the actors and audience, their mediation between fiction and reality includes the perspective of the audience as part of the represented world of the play.[19] According to Anne Barton, Heywood's plays 'attempted to subdue the intractable medieval relationship of actors and audience', where the perspective of spectators was part of the represented world of the play and apparent through the Vice in plays like *Mankind*, to the service of secular drama and mimesis.[20]

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found its 'greatest literary expression' in François Rabelais' best-known work, *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (c. 1532-4). See also Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1981). In the chapter entitled 'From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse', Bakhtin also cites the work of Rabelais in order to describe the incorporation of the carnival aesthetic into everyday life and its accumulative effect upon the literature and language of Renaissance writers.

[17] Cf. Steven Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage: Licence, Play and Power in Renaissance England* (Chicago: University of Michigan Press, 1995), p. 81.

[18] Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*, pp. 135-7.

[19] This 'role' of the audience is more apparent in Heywood's earlier play, *Pardoner and Friar* (c. 1521), where the audience is included in the work's fictional presentation from the outset, as a group of people who have collected inside a church. As bystanders at Golgotha or the subjects of Herod receiving their lord's commands, Heywood's audiences thus became part of the play itself, as in the case of the earlier Mystery works of Christian street theatre. Cf. Barton, *Shakespeare and the Idea of the Play*, pp. 38-9.

[20] Ibid.

Heywood, it seems, was keen to put in place the initial building blocks of what we now term the 'fourth wall' in theatre, where there is far less interaction between the characters on stage and their audience. By 1570, however, Thomas Preston's *King Cambyses* still contained such characters as the dramatically dextrous 'Ambidexter', who continued to promote the liminal space between stage and yard occupied by the earlier Vice, by addressing the audience directly:

> Mary Sir I tolde him a notable lye:
> If it were to doo again man, I durst doo it I.[21]

In the context of Bakhtin's carnival festivity, this type of dramatic liminality is compounded: 'carnival', Bakhtin claims, 'does not know footlights, in the sense that it does not acknowledge any distinction between actors and spectators'.[22]

To sum up, although linked, the fool, Vice and clown remained quite separate theatrical figures, each with its own distinctive dramatic context. Through them, however, we can see how late-Elizabethan theatre sat at a point of transition between a medieval, pre-urban concept of festive 'play', and a more modern understanding of theatre as part of the capital's growing leisure industry. As Weimann argues, one of the fool's rebirths, through the Vice, was as the English stage clown,[23] a figure who, according to the contemporary playwright Thomas Lodge (1558-1625), continued to indulge his inherent festivity in 'all the feats of a Lord of Misrule in the countrie'.[24] This clearly appealed to London's playgoers who flocked to the playhouse in droves,[25] from members of the aristocracy to the burgeoning bourgeoisie and working classes, for

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[21] Thomas Preston, *Cambises King of Percia* (London, 1570), D2ᵛ, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 16 April, 2013]. According to Wiles, the earliest scripted part for a fully-fledged clown, as opposed to Vice, was first seen in the figure of 'John A-droynes' in George Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra* (1578). See *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 62.

[22] Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, p. 7.

[23] Weimann, *Popular Tradition*, pp. 47-8.

[24] Thomas Lodge, quoted in E. W. Talbert, *Elizabethan Drama and Shakespeare's Early* Plays (Chapel Hill, 1963), p. 10, cited in Weimann, *Popular Tradition*, p. 24.

[25] William Ingram, 'The Economics of Playing', in *A Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. David Scott Kastan (London: Blackwell, 1999), pp. 313-327 (pp, 315-6).

unlicensed pleasure - bouts of 'saturnalian release' in the 'spirit of "Merry England"', as described by C. L. Barber.[26] In this glut of unchecked festivity on London's stages, and as part of a lost 'golden age', Dick Tarlton would reign supreme as theatre's ultimate Lord of Misrule.

II   Tarlton's extemporal stage

A glance at the career of Tarlton gives some idea of the power and popularity of the comic tradition which Kemp had inherited and made his own by the beginning of the 1590s. Tarlton, 'the wonder of his time', was a pioneer of Elizabethan professional comedy.[27] He was also, according to Nungezer, 'the most popular Elizabethan comedian', a view confirmed more recently by Robert Hornback who describes Tarlton as 'the most famous comic actor of his day'.[28] As a member of the Queen's Men, Tarlton rose to fame on London's early stages, performing regularly at The Bell and The Bull, the two 'tavern theatres' north of the Thames where his company was licensed to perform, and also at court.[29]

Both the 'stinkards'' adored clown,[30] and 'jester' to Elizabeth I,[31] Tarlton commanded a broad spectrum of appeal with the capital's growing and increasingly stratified audiences. As Weimann argues, professional drama was beginning to attract audiences from a number of social backgrounds, which

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[26] Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy*, p. 10.
[27] This quotation is taken from Stowe's *Annales* (1615), cited in E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), II, 104-5.
[28] Hornback, *The English Clown Tradition*, p. 106; Nungezer, *A Dictionary of Actors*, p. 347.
[29] The date of the building of the first public theatre in London is 1576, a year which Margreta de Grazia singles out in the annals of early English theatre as the 'beginning of commercial theatre.' Margreta de Grazia, 'World Pictures, Modern Periods, and the Early Stage', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, pp. 7-21 (p. 13).
[30] Thomas Dekker, *Strange Horse Race* (London, 1613), C4v-D, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 15 April, 2013].
[31] Nungezer, *Dictionary of Actors*, p. 347

mirrored a transitional society in terms of social, economic and ideological discourses between the feudal background of the monarchy, the nobility and gentry, and the aspiring new gentry, the London bourgeoisie.[32]

In order to understand the growth and popularity of Tarlton's style of comedy, and later Kemp's, it is therefore vital to acknowledge their links with atavistic figures of theatrical festivity described above. Wiles' account of Tarlton's life and career shows how the actor developed his own rustic style of stage extemporary in an act which included jigging, dancing, drum-beating, and jest-telling, all of which were inherited from the strolling players and folk-entertainers of earlier times. More importantly, however, Tarlton's deceptive 'countryman' figure was also infused with the anarchic characteristics of the Vice, which gave his clown persona a unique comic edge. Under Tarlton, as Wiles argues, 'the Vice and rustic are fused'.[33]

As the son of a Shropshire pig farmer, and as London's most successful comic actor, Tarlton literally and physically embodied what François Laroque describes as the synthesis of rural and urban characteristics which 'lay at the heart of the whole phenomenon of festivity'.[34] Typically masquerading in idiosyncratic peasant garb, as the illustration in Plate 5 shows, Tarlton transposed the rustic stereotype to an urban setting, where his sophisticated stage repartee ensured a lucrative amalgam of agrarian and bourgeois values in his act. This distinctive stage persona is apparent in Tarlton's portrayal of Derick in *The Famous Victories of Henry V* (performed towards the end of his life in approximately 1587) in which Derick abandons his Kentish employer and becomes a London cobbler's apprentice. Wiles argues that Tarlton's Derick would

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[32] Weimann, *Popular Tradition*, p. xii. In de Grazia's marxist analysis, the social and cultural transition from feudalism to capitalism at the end of the sixteenth century, from the 'constraints of dependency to the opportunities of capital, investment, and profit', is mirrored in the move from patronage to profit in dramatic writing. De Grazia, 'World Pictures', pp. 13-14.

[33] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 12.

[34] François Laroque, 'Popular Festivity', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Comedy*, ed. Alexander Leggatt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 64-78 (p. 67).

prove the inspiration for later Shakespearean clown roles, such as Lancelot Gobbo in

The Merchant of Venice (c. 1596-97).[35]

At once both 'rogue and peasant' (*Hamlet*, 2.2.528), Tarlton also embodied

Hamlet's self-conscious hendiadys, as John Davies' epitaph published in *Wits Bedlam*

(1617) suggests:

> Here within this sullen earth
> Lies Dick Tarlton, lord of mirth
> Who in his grave – still laughing – gapes,
> Sith all clowns since have been his apes.
> Erst he of clowns to learn still sought,
> But now they learn of him they taught.
> By art far past the principal
> The counterfeit is now worth all.[36]

Apparently, Tarlton studied real rustic simpletons to create his own clown character and

Wiles argues that there is a quibble here on 'clowns' as both earthy rustics and stage

entertainers.[37] There is also more than an echo of *Hamlet*'s Yorick in this passage,

whose exhumed skull, as Richard Preiss argues, causes the Prince a moment of both

'nostalgia and repudiation': 'My gorge rises at it' (*Hamlet*, 5.1.174).[38] Whether

Hamlet's sickness is caused by Yorick's skull, or by memories of institutional clowning

in general, it is difficult to tell. Yorick's repertoire of 'gibes', 'gambols', 'songs' and

'flashes of merriment' (5.1.175-6), however, does give some idea both of the range of

the traditional clown, and of his ability to disrupt a play.

Evidence suggests that Tarlton's own stage presence posed a similar comic

threat to the plays in which he appeared with his own 'flashes' of wit. Despite

protesting to be a 'plain clown',[39] Tarlton was able to cause chaos during performances,

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[35] Cf. Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 12.
[36] Reproduced in Nungezer, *Dictionary of Actors*, p. 362.
[37] See Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 12.
[38] Richard Preiss, 'Robert Armin Do the Police in Different Voices', in *From Performance to Print in Shakespeare's England*, eds. Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 208-227 (p. 208).
[39] *The Famous Victories of Henry V…as it was played by the Queen's Majesty's players*, cited in Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 12.

particularly when he used his deceptively bucolic appearance to mask a keen and cutting intellect. Although first published in 1613 many years after his death, *Tarltons Jests* helps to reconstruct the comedian's technique where he was given to, and was expected to, indulge in smatterings of comic interpolation during performances in displays of his 'wondrous plentifull […] extemporal wit'.[40] The *Jests* describes, for example, how after one performance in Worcester a member of the audience sang out a witty couplet which hinted at Tarlton's failure to rule his wife:

> Methinks it is a thing unfit
> To see a gridiron turn the spit.

The people laughed at this, thinking his wit knew no answer thereunto, which angered Tarlton exceedingly – and presently, with a smile looking about, when they expected wonders, he put if off thus:

> Methinks it is a thing unfit
> To see an ass have any wit.

The people hooted for joy to see the theme-giver dashed, who like a dog with his tail between his legs left the place.[41]

On another occasion, recounted by Thomson, an outraged female member of the audience threatened to cuff Tarlton, who agreed on the condition that she reverse the consonants. As Thomson suggests, 'the intervention of a heckler was [Tarlton's] feed-line'.[42]

Tarlton's act still relied, then, on familiar spaces of complex and contradictory freedom of the Vice figure, through the banter with audiences described above. One wonders, however, how much these exchanges, and others like them, were retrospectively, and imaginatively, penned by Tarlton himself. Tarlton's improvisations were of suspect legality as the Mayor and common Council of London had attempted to make improvisation illegal. In 1574, they forbade innkeepers to,

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[40] Stow's *Annales*, p. 698, cited in Nungezer, *Dictionary of Actors*, p. 349.

[41] See Richard Tarlton, *Tarltons iests Drawne into these three parts. 1 His court-wittie iests 2 His sound cittie iests. 3 His country prettie iests* (London, 1613), C4ᵛ, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 12 February, 2012]. Further references to the *Jests* will be given parenthetically in the text. The title-page of the *Jests* printed contains an image of Tarlton with the traditional drum and tabor, reproduced on Plate 5.

[42] Thomson, 'Rogues and Rhetoricians', p. 334.

suffer to be interlaced, added, mingled or uttered in any such play, interlude, comedy, tragedy or show any other matter than such as shall be first perused and allowed.[43]

This attempt at artistic constraint anticipates the more strenuous censorship of the latter years of Elizabeth's reign.[44] By the late 1570s, however, Tarlton's disruptive performances would have been completed by the jig at the end of the play - more often than not, as Gurr maintains, the main audience draw.[45]

Merely a glimpse of Tarlton's ugly face could cause a lawless response amongst both the 'stinkards' in the yard and the more exalted occupants of the galleries, in the potent atmosphere and social melting pot of London's growing theatrical scene. The following anecdotal recollection of Tarlton by Henry Peacham in 1620 although, like *Tarltons Jests*, was published many years after the actor's death, also gives some idea of the riotous effect Tarlton had on the capital's playgoers, still apparently eager for the type of Vice-like disorder he continued to promote:

> As Tarlton when his head was onely seene,
> The Tire-house doore and Tapistrie betweene,
> Set all the multitude in such a laughter,
> That could not hold for scarse an houre after.[46]

Tarlton was easily recognizable with his flat nose and squint. Nungezer's entry on Tarlton in his *Dictionary of Actors* cites works which recollect him as a 'swine-faced' clown.[47] Thomson also claims that 'Tarlton's ugliness defied decorum, and he rode with it'.[48] Tarlton's bawdy, quibbling clown, then, would have met with immediate recognition from the audience, and his own governing impulse was to create chaos

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[43] Cited in Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, IV, 274.

[44] On the subject of Elizabethan censorship, see Annabel Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989). See also Richard Dutton, *Mastering the Revels: The Regulation and Censorship of English Renaissance Drama* (London: Macmillan, 1991).

[45] Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, p. 175. I will return to this point in Chapter Two.

[46] Henry Peacham, *Thalia's Banquest* (London,1620), Epigram 94, ll. 1-4, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 16 April, 2013].

[47] See, for example, *Return from Parnassus*, and Nashe's *Pierce Pennilesse* (1592), both cited in Nungezer, pp. 357-8.

[48] Thomson, 'Rogues and Rhetoricians', p. 334.

amongst actors and audiences alike in the 'mischievous' vein of *Mankind's* double-dealing Vice. In this way, Tarlton's clown persona was imbued with a similar peculiarly anti-symbolic device. What mattered primarily for audiences, as Thomson argues, was Tarlton performing as himself in the capacity of a proto-celebrity:

> Cast in a play, he remained Richard Tarlton and was loved for it. He was all the more dangerous because he was popular.[49]

Rather than the pranks of an amateur actor playing the Vice, Londoners clearly now expected to see similar 'wonders' from Tarlton himself.

Constantly appearing as himself allowed Tarlton to step outside the fictional boundaries of representation at any point. In this way, he occupied a nominally ungoverned zone of performance on stage in a way which mirrored the position of the early theatres themselves in the marginal London Liberties. As Steven Mullaney argues, drama is a 'territorial art', and 'an art of space as well as words'.[50] Moreover, London's theatres were built 'in close proximity to graveyards for the nameless dead [displaced persons drawn to the anonymity of the liberties]'. The result was that,

> there came to reside a growing population of the living, who escaped civic classification and control by being neither here nor there – by taking up a place that was – properly speaking, no place at all, but betwixt and between proper places and the properties that adhered to them.[51]

It is perhaps no coincidence, in this light, that the exhumation of Yorick takes place in a graveyard – a symbolic space between the living and the dead clowns on stage – while Hamlet himself is physically displaced outside the court of Elsinore.

There is a recognizable teleology, then, in Tarlton's taking up of his 'topsy-turvy' festive inheritance in drawing on the traditions of both fool and Vice. His stage

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[49] Ibid. On this point, see also Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 125.
[50] Mullaney, *Place of the Stage*, pp. 6-7.
[51] Ibid., p. 44.

persona is summed up in the following description by Weimann, where the fool-Vice figure shares a number of characteristics with the later clown:

> He retains the capacity both to enchant and disenchant. He can neutralize myth and ritual through the unmasking and debunking potential of *mimesis*, through his parody, criticism or cynicism.[52]

The ancient liminal quality of precedent comic performers continued to allow Tarlton to undermine any emergent objectives of illusory mimesis simply by appearing before an audience. It also permitted him to dominate a play without the support of a script in what might be termed as the disparity between extra-theatrical activity and printed text, or what Preiss describes as an 'authorless theatre' at the height of the great clown's fame.[53] In other words, as a leading clown, Tarlton could please himself on stage: he had no binding allegiance to a play-script in his promotion of improvisation and song. Rather, for Tarlton, a script existed to be disrupted; and the show existed to be stolen.

Tarlton, and later Kemp in turn, were able to mould the residual traits of festive theatre into a new and forceful comic presence, one which, above all, could influence the shape and delivery of a play. Writing in 1589, a year after Tarlton's death, Lodge still attributed the hedonistic pull of the playhouse to the 'immoderate and disordinate Joye' of the late-Tudor stage clowns.[54] Indeed, both Tarlton's own, and his successors', commandeering of the unruly antics of festivity promulgated a legacy of boisterous stage comedy which would survive for over a century,[55] as audiences continued to demand to be entertained in the riotous and insubordinate fashion of the Vice-clown's 'antic disposition' (*Hamlet*, 1.5.173).

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[52] Weimann, *Popular Tradition*, p. 11.
[53] Preiss, 'Robert Armin', p. 209.
[54] Lodge, cited in Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition*, p. 24.
[55] Cf. Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, p. 85.

III.   Enter the author

i.   Sidney's 'Apologie'

At the time of Tarlton's death in 1588, however, there were some conflicts afoot

between writing and performing plays. The popular demand for 'clownage' was

countered to an extent by a move towards a new kind of dramatic authorship. In the

context of what Erne describes as the 'legitimation' of playwriting at the end of the

sixteenth century, ambitious dramatists were becoming aware of their work as literary

property in the establishment of a genre of printed texts in their own right, as opposed to

'a pale reflection' of staged performances.[56] Early objections to 'clownage' were

fuelled in the main by Sir Philip Sidney's *An Apologie for Poetrie* (also known as *The

Defence of Poesie*). Sidney described his work, in which he appealed to the virtues of

literature over the stage, as 'a pittiful defence of poore poetry', while at the same time

conceding the inadequacies of much contemporary writing.[57] Written in approximately

1579, it is highly likely that Sidney's *Apologie* was responding to Stephen Gosson's

puritan, anti-theatrical tract, *The School of Abuse*, published the same year, which

promised to deliver an invective against 'poets, pipers, players', and 'such like

caterpillars of the commonwealth'.[58] Sidney's response, however, was not published

until 1595, nine years after his death in 1586, by which time his own condemnation of

both 'Comick' and 'naughtie Play-makers' must have helped the intellectual promotion

of authorship.[59]

The title-page of Sidney's *Apologie* describes its author as 'the right noble,

vertuous, and learned, Sir Phillip Sidney, Knight'. Sidney was speaking, then, not only

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[56] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p. 33.
[57] Philip Sidney, *An Apologie for Poetrie* (London, 1595), B^v, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 4 February, 2012]. Sidney's *Apologie* was published in 1595 by two separate printers, who allotted it two distinct titles.
[58] Stephen Gosson, *The School of Abuse* (London, 1597), in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 4 February, 2012]. On the antagonistic relationship between Sidney and Gosson, see Catherine Belsey, *A Future for Criticism* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), p. 22.
[59] Sidney, *Apologie for Poetrie*, F3^r.

'from the position of conscious high art', as Dillon argues,[60] but also from the promotion of his own nobility. It is from the elevated social position of both poet and aristocrat that he objects most vociferously to the 'grosse absurdities' of the stage:

> All theyr Playes be neither right Tragedies, nor right Comedies: mingling Kings & Clownes, not because the matter so carrieth it: but thrust in Clownes by head & shoulders, to play a part in maiesticall matters, with neither decencie, nor discretion.

Sidney, it seems from this passage, was attempting to raise the profession of playwriting out of the squalid theatrical quagmire, promoted and muddied further by entertainers like Tarlton. 'Comedy' in particular was 'an imitation of the common errors of our life', and represented 'in the most ridiculous & scornefull sort that may be'.[61] This is a pointed criticism, perhaps, of Tarlton's lawless effects on audiences of the time. But it also reveals what Wiles describes as the 'nice paradox' that Sidney in fact liked Tarlton well enough to stand godfather to his son.[62]

By the late 1580s, a new generation of educated poet-dramatists, known as 'university wits', came to the dramatic fore. These playwrights, in the main Christopher Marlowe, Robert Greene, Nashe, Thomas Marston and George Peele, were engaged and recognised solely as writers.[63] Styling themselves as 'gentlemen', and following the example of Sidney, the 'wits' continued to criticise the disruptive effects of clowning in plays. Marlowe, Greene and Nashe, in particular, made the clown a 'scape-goat' for the popular tradition and, as Preiss contends, such an 'authorial' stance reveals a self-conscious desire on the part of playwrights for theatrical writing to be perceived as 'work' as opposed to 'play'.[64]

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[60] Janette Dillon, 'Elizabethan Comedy', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Comedy*, ed. Alexander Leggatt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 47-63 (p. 47).
[61] Sidney, *An Apologie for Poetrie*, F3[r].
[62] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 62. On this point, see also Nungezer, *Dictionary of Actors*, p. 352.
[63] Cf. Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, p. 200.
[64] Preiss, 'Robert Armin Do the Police', p. 210.

In order to achieve this, clowns had to be restrained and the play returned to the writer. Sidney and the 'wits' thus also built on Heywood's earlier attempts to call for more didactic forms of mimesis, promoting the realist aesthetic of verisimilitude in order to reflect the 'real' moral and social world of audiences. Moreover, a synchronic perspective on early modern acting identifies a drift towards characterisation based on imitative representation, as opposed to older forms of presentation, in what Belsey has described as the move towards an 'emergent illusionism' on the late-Elizabethan stage.[65] Gurr's work, for example, shows how acting techniques were key to concepts of the development of early modern authorship, where the underlying history of Elizabethan theatre sees a move towards characterisation and acting based on notions of mimesis which promoted dramatic realism on the late-Elizabethan stage.[66] Eventually, Robert Armin's fool would replace the more plebeian clown figures promoted by the likes of Tarlton and Kemp. As Johnson contends, Armin's success can also be seen as part of the move towards a new type of dramatic entertainment, in which playgoers demanded the depiction on stage of a more coherent social milieu.[67] But as plays gave more scope to the type of internal subjectivity apparent in *Hamlet*, tragedians such as Edward Alleyn, and later Richard Burbage, began to replace the clowns 'on the pinnacle of theatrical fame'.[68]

Sidney and the 'wits'' objections to the practices of clowns, then, were timely. Indeed, Helgerson argues that the 1590s saw the establishment of the playwright largely at the expense of the traditional clown role. According to Helgerson, Shakespeare's playwriting career coincided with a marked 'shift' in dramatic culture: from a 'players' theatre', with its primary spokesperson of 'the clown', to an 'author's theatre' where the

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[65] Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London: Methuen, 1985), p. 26.
[66] Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, pp. 95-103 (p. 100).
[67] Johnson, *The Actor as Playwright*, p. 21.
[68] See Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. x.

primary voice belonged to the playwright.[69] Helgerson goes on to identify the death of

Falstaff in *Henry V* (1598-99), the departure of Kemp from Shakespeare's company,

and the apparent relegation of the jig to the less prestigious theatres north of the Thames

(the latter two also taking place in approximately 1599) as important events in the

gradual process of controlling players in the broader move away from the unruly

elements of festive theatre.[70]

      In order to illustrate Helgerson's 'shift', it is useful to compare extracts from

two contemporary plays which span the decade or so under discussion in this chapter.

First, the voice of what might be termed the nascent author appears in the following

extract from Marlowe's 'Prologue' to *Tamburlaine the Great* (c. 1587-8):

> From jigging veins of rhyming mother-wits,
> And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay,
> We'll lead you to the stately tent of war,
> Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine
> Threatening the world with high astounding terms.[71]

Here, Marlowe makes clear his intention to 'lead' the audience away from 'clownage to

'high' drama. I will return to the subject of *Tamburlaine* in due course. However, by

the time that Shakespeare had written *Hamlet*, in approximately 1600-01, the Prince's

Act Two soliloquy is critical of the type of unrealistic and overblown mimesis

articulated above, especially in the imitation of grief presented by one of the Elsinore

players:

>   What would he do
> Had he the motive and the cue for passion
> That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
> And cleave the general ear with horrid speech.
>   (2.2.537-9)

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[69] See Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, p. 223.

[70] Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, pp. 199-223. For more on the decline of the clown, see Colin MacCabe, 'Abusing Self and Others: Puritan Accounts of the Shakespearean Stage', *Critical Quarterly*, 30:3 (1988), 3-17, and Daryl W. Palmer, 'William Kemp's *Nine Daies Wonder* and the Transmission of Performance Culture', *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, 5.:2 (1991), 33-47.

[71] Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great*, ed. J. S. Cunningham (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), 'Prologue', l. 2. All further references to this edition will be given parenthetically in the text.

As Hamlet's speech reveals, as well as attempting to control 'clownage', plays also eventually began to offer less scope for rhetorical bombast, and more for internal, and therefore more 'real', subjectivity.

Helgerson's 'shift', then, was not wholly linear, as the above quotations suggest. Moreover, in comparison to the full-scale diatribes of Gosson a decade earlier and later those of William Prynne,[72] the anti-'clownage' rumblings of 'wits' such as Nashe and Greene seem weak and uncertain. Greene, as we know from his famous attack on Shakespeare as 'an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers', could be vicious towards fellow playwrights as well as actors.[73] As for Nashe, foolish and bombastic players were the object of scorn in his 1589 Preface to Greene's *Menaphon*.[74] Just one year later, however, Nashe would dedicate his anti-puritan tract, *An Almond for a Parrat* (1590), to 'Brother Kempe', 'THAT MOST Comicall and conceited Caualeire Monsieur du Kempe, Iestmonger and Vice-gerent generall to the Ghost of Dicke Tarlton'.[75] Moreover, in 1592 in *Pierce Pennilesse his Supplication to the Devil*, a comic piece of social satire, Nashe went on to mount a strong defence, not only of

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[72] Gurr describes Prynne's 1633 *Histrio-mastix* as 'one of the more trenchant Puritan blasts against plays and players'. See Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, p. 83.

[73] Robert Greene, *Greenes Groats-worth of Wit, bought with a million of Repentaunce* (London, 1592), reproduced in *The Norton Shakespeare*, gen. ed. Stephen Greenblatt, with eds. Walter Cohen, Jean Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), pp. 3321-2.

[74] Robert Greene, *Greene's Arcadia, or Menaphon* (London, 1589), A2ʳ, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 21 February, 2012].

[75] Thomas Nashe, *An Almond for a Parrat, or Cuthbert Curry-knaves almes* (1589), A2ʳ, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 21 February, 2012]. Nashe's anti-Puritan tract imbues Kemp's stage persona with a decidedly satirical edge in connecting him, as an actor, to the Marprelate controversy. Hornback argues that Kemp's on-stage comic persona is one which often figured in anti-puritan theatrical discourses during the 1590s, where clown roles became the conduit for satirical humour ridiculing puritan anti-intellectuals during the fall-out from the Marprelate 'war'. Hornback, *English Clown Tradition*, in particular Chapter 3, entitled '"Verie Devout Asses": Ignorant Puritan Clowns', pp. 102-42 (pp. 132-5). For further information on Kemp's association with the Marprelate controversy, see David Bevington, *Tudor Drama and Politics: A Critical Approach to Topical Meaning* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968).

commercial theatre in general, but also its lynch-pin clowns, promising that he would spread the fame of Tarlton and his successors throughout Europe.[76]

ii.   *Tamburlaine* and *Sir Thomas More*

Two plays composed, revised and published around the time with which I am concerned, exemplify the type of cultural and social paradox relating to 'clownage' which is contained in Nashe's work. The first is Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, which seeks both in its paratext, and in the play itself as I have shown, to ban 'clownage' from the play-script for the purposes of both performance and print. The second is the manuscript of the collaboratively written *Book of Sir Thomas More*, where the additions of the clown's part are attached to a previously authored script. Both plays serve to illustrate two main points: the first is that most of the traditional divisions between performance and writing, or 'voice and pen' to use Weimann and Bruster's synechdocal terms, [77] remained in a state of flux; the second, more pertinently for this thesis, reveals the complex issues at work between the centrality and side-lining, or even banishment, of the clown from plays, as authors staked their own claims for recognition.

Beginning with *Tamburlaine*, what we find is that the figure of the dramatic author who, as Foucault argues, was not born into but made by Renaissance print culture, was actually in the making considerably earlier than is often presumed. The traditional critical stance, as noted above, is that what Erne terms 'dramatic authorship'[78] emerged in the early-seventeenth century with the arrival in print of Jonson. The 1616 Folio of Jonson's *Works* is a volume of more than a thousand pages,

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[76] R. B. McKerrow, ed., *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, 5 vols (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958), III, pp. 323-24. Nashe commonly took an anti-authoritarian stance in his work, most obvious in *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem*, which Stanley Wells describes as a 'bizarre, surreal indictment' of late-Elizabethan society. Wells, *Shakespeare and Co.*, p. 71.
[77] Weimann and Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance*, p. 85.
[78] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p. 31.

printed in double columns, and with an elaborately designed title page aimed at 'readers'.[79] The volume claims, therefore, to contain 'literature' in its collection of dramatic and non-dramatic writing.[80] Jonson clearly aroused derision amongst some of his peers for such pretensions.[81] But as Robert Shaughnessy argues, Jonson's 'handsome Folio volume […] created the precedent for the posthumous publication of Shakespeare's dramatic works seven years later'.[82]

However, Erne's work on Shakespeare's literary aesthetic suggests that we do not have to 'wait until the advent of Jonson to witness the first printed playbooks that present themselves as readerly rather than as theatrical'. Rather, one of the earliest publications to vindicate itself in print, 'and as a book',[83] is the 1590 octavo edition of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*. As noted, Marlowe's 'Prologue' to the play is perhaps the most forceful articulation of the Elizabethan dramatist's sense of authority. In his sneering dismissal of older verse forms – those 'jigging veins of rhyming mother wits' quoted above - Marlowe celebrates, in the opening lines of the play, the emerging dramatic author in rhetorical blank verse:

> We'll lead you to the stately tent of war,
> Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine
> Threatening the world with high astounding terms
>
> ('Prologue', ll. 3-5)

Weimann argues that the aim of Marlowe's 'project' was to create a 'self-contained verbal picture of an imaginary world', in a move from 'pre-symbolic locations of entertainment to a highly eloquent mode of representation':[84] to 'view but his picture in this tragic glass', perhaps, as the 'Prologue' declares (l. 7). In this way, as Weimann

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[79] Cf. Wells, *Shakespeare and Co.*, p. 157.
[80] Cf. John W. Velz, 'From Authorization to Authorship, Orality to Literature: The Case of Medieval and Renanssance Drama', *Text: Transactions of the Society for Textual Scholarship*, 6 (1994), 197-211 (p. 204).
[81] Cf. Wells, *Shakespeare and Co.*, p. 158.
[82] Robert Shaughnessy, *The Routledge Guide to William Shakespeare* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2011), p. 26.
[83] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p. 47.
[84] Robert Weimann, *Author's Pen*, pp. 56-7.

argues further, Marlowe's play fashioned 'a new writerly authority' which 'celebrat[ed] itself in the act of ousting the cultural commerce of unlearned hacks and wayward players'.[85]

What we also find, is that, as Erne contends further, the first people to have a 'vested interest in the rise of dramatic authorship' were not necessarily the playwrights themselves, but the London publishers, printers and booksellers who were 'eager to render respectable and commercially profitable what was initially an enterprise with little or no prestige'.[86] The paratext of Richard Jones' 1590 octavo edition of *Tamburlaine* goes some way in illustrating this point. The title-pages of most plays from the period typically describe their contents in the following ways: 'as it hath sundry times been played'; 'as it hath been lately acted'; or, more simply, 'as it was played', by the companies of actors who performed them.[87] Jones' title-page of *Tamburlaine* similarly acknowledges performance of both parts of the play 'as they were sundrie times shewed upon Stages in the Citie of London'.[88] This is immediately undercut, however, by Jones' own address to his 'Gentlemen and courteous readers', where he attempts to wipe away the 'stain'[89] of the stage from his print:

> I have (purposely) omitted and left out some fond and frivolous Jestures, digressing (and in my poore opinion) far unmeet for the matter, which I thought, might seeme more tedious unto the wise, than any way else to be regarded, though (happly) they have bene of some vaine conceited fondlings greatly gaped at, what times they were shewed upon the stage in their graced deformities.[90]

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[85] Ibid.

[86] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p. 33. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, more than a century after William Caxton had established the first printing press in England, print had become widespread. Citing H. S. Bennett's *English Books & Readers, 1558 to 1603* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), Erne describes Elizabethan England as 'in many ways "a printing age" in which "reading was no longer the prerogative of a few"'. Erne, *Literary Drama*, p. 6.

[87] Cf. James P. Saeger and Christopher J. Fassler, 'The London Professional Theatre, 1576-1642: A Catalogue and Analysis of Extant Printed Plays', *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama*, 34 (1995), 63-109 (p. 108).

[88] Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great* (London, 1590), title-page, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com.

[89] John Davies, *The Scourge of Folly* (London: 1611), cited in Knapp, *Shakespeare Only*, p. 43.

[90] Marlowe, *Tamburlaine*, A2^r.

Jones' aim for the play, then, is two-fold: first, he attempts to raise *Tamburlaine* out of the melée of what Sir Thomas Bodley would describe in 1598 as 'riff raff Books' of plays,[91] and into the more socially nourishing realm of printed 'Histories'; and second, as a result, to transform the play 'from the ephemera of an emerging entertainment industry to [an] artefact of high culture'.[92]

In removing anything from his text which might be associated with what the playwright describes as 'clownage', Jones is participating in the growing interest of publishers in advertising plays as literature rather than as popular entertainment. In what Erne describes as a weighty 'authorizing conglomerate',[93] therefore, and comparable as I will show with that of *A Knack*, the playwright and publisher join forces in order to corroborate the growing hostility to the popular stage. Thus, in order to infuse his text of *Tamburlaine* with deserved literary appeal, Jones explicitly commends the 'eloquence of the author that writ' the play. Ironically enough, however, Marlowe's name is not once mentioned amongst the overwhelming amount of detail contained on *Tamburlaine's* title-page. (It is difficult, in fact, to prove Marlowe's authorship of any of the plays attributed to him.[94]) Admittedly, at this time, roughly equivalent to the start of Shakespeare's own professional career, play texts 'did not demand an author', as Scott Kastan has shown.[95] Jeffrey Masten argues similarly that the majority of play-texts printed in the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries generally did not record the presence of an author or authors.[96] Erne illustrates how the

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[91] *Reliquiae Bodleianæ; Or Some Genuine Remains of Sir Thomas Bodley* (London, 1703), cited in Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p. 11.
[92] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p. 48.
[93] Ibid., p. 42.
[94] J. A. Downie and J. T. Parnell, eds., *Constructing Christopher Marlowe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000; repr. 2001).
[95] Kastan, *Shakespeare and the Book*, p. 48.
[96] Cf. Jeffrey Masten, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). See also Masten, 'Playwriting: Authorship and Collaboration', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, pp. 357-82.

majority of plays written for the public stage and printed before the turn of the seventeenth century were published anonymously: less than one in three of the plays published during the 1590s, for example, bears the playwright's (or playwrights') name on the title page.[97] As G. K. Hunter argues, the concept of 'authorship' as we understand it today is anachronistic in terms of Elizabethan playwriting. Hunter demonstrates that playwrights, culturally speaking, were confined to the 'bottom' of the artistic pile as opposed to actors who were at the top.[98] Most playwrights working for the commercial theatre in the early 1590s, therefore, continued to have limited status as authors.[99]

One of the most popular plays of the late-sixteenth century, Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (1592), went through many editions without naming its author.[100] More significantly, as Erne shows, sixteen of the plays performed on the commercial stage between 1584 and 1593 were published in a total of twenty-three editions. Only one of these plays indicates the playwright's full name - not on the title page, but at the end of the text - in the so-called 'explicit' which draws attention to the author's intellectual standing: *Edward I*, by 'George Peele Maister of Artes in Oxenford', published in 1593.[101] In 1597, John Lyly was similarly acknowledged on the title-page of the quarto edition of *The Woman in the Moon*, which claims to be 'By Iohn Lyllie maister of Artes', and to have been 'presented before her Highnesse'.[102] Peele's and Lyly's plays go some way towards illustrating Richard Wilson's argument that printing

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[97] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, Appendix A, pp. 247-254.

[98] G. K. Hunter, 'The Making of a Popular Repertory: Hollywood and the Elizabethans', in *Shakespearean Continuities: Essays in Honour of E. A. J. Honigmann*, eds. John Batchelor, Tom Cain and Claire Lamont (London: Macmillan, 1997), pp. 247-258 (p. 249). On the inferior social status of early modern playwrights and the anonymity of drama, see also Bentley, *Profession of Dramatist*, pp. 59-76.

[99] Cf. John Jowett, *Shakespeare and Text* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 7.

[100] For a list of the play's editions, see Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, III, 395.

[101] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, pp. 45-6.

[102] John Lyly, *The Woman in the Moone* (1597), in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 26 September, 2012].

consecrated the literary worth of plays. In buying and reading plays, Wilson argues, the general public were allowed to think they were competing with the aristocracy.[103] They were also, it seems, not only on an intellectual par with educated authors, but also with the monarch herself.

Despite this, Wendy Wall shows that play texts continued to be associated with a 'socially suspect cultural domain', and thus lacked any tangible intellectual or literary authority.[104] Returning to the example of *Tamburlaine*, the figure who serves to authorise Marlowe's play, alongside Tamburlaine himself, is Jones. Jones' prominent printer's device takes up a quarter of the title-page, and is printed in a type-face which is larger and clearer than the majority of the rest of the information on offer. In this light, and also taking into account the centrality of performance, attempts to instil texts with literary worth such as those outlined above seem rather over-blown. Reading between the lines of Jones' address in particular, his words may well have been aimed at a fictional literati in order to imbue his text with intellectual prowess and stimulate interest amongst a nascent readership.[105] Jones published two further editions of the play in 1592 and 1597. The latter, possibly, is a result of the play's successful revivals on stage which are recorded in Henslowe's diary between 1594 and 1596.[106] In both editions, Jones essentially reprinted the text of the first octavo containing his address. When *Parts I* and *II* of *Tamburlaine* were published separately in quarto by Edward White in 1605 and 1606 respectively, White reprinted the entire 1597 text, including Jones' original address.[107] As Weimann argues, Jones' Preface reveals the smooth

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[103] See Wilson, Introduction, *Shakespeare's Book*, pp. 1-26 (p. 13).

[104] Wendy Wall, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 89.

[105] Despite the seeming lack of demand for playbooks identified by Peter Blayney, rates of literacy were climbing during the 1590s. See Peter Blayney, 'The Publication of Playbooks', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, pp. 383-422 (p. 385).

[106] Foakes and Rickert, *Henslowe's Diary*, pp. 24-37.

[107] Cf. Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, III, 421.

transition of Marlowe's play 'from stage to page'.[108] Its subsequent shift from the page

back to the stage was aided further, no doubt, by the opportunity of cashing in on a

highly successful run of performances, and even perhaps Marlowe's death in a Deptford

tavern in 1593.[109]

In the same year as Jones published his literary *Tamburlaine*, he also published a

quarto edition of Robert Wilson's comedy *The Three Lords and Three Ladies*.[110]

Wilson was a clown-contemporary of Tarlton, and also famous for his 'quicke, delicate,

refined, extemporal wit'.[111] In addition, he was what Knapp describes as an 'actor-

author', and a celebrated playwright in his own right.[112] Jones, as we know, would go

on to publish *A Knack* in 1594, with its title-page promotion of Kemp himself. In this

light, we might conclude that Jones' literary ambitions for *Tamburlaine* were driven in

the main by commercial as opposed to artistic concerns.

It is also worth noting, at this point, the differences between the so-called 'A'

and 'B' texts of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*. The 1604 quarto (A1), printed by

Valentine Simmes, is known as the 'A' text and contains a short version of the play at

approximately 1517 lines. The 1616 quarto (B1) published by John Wright, and known

as the 'B' text, is an enlarged and significantly altered version of the play running at

2121 lines, and amending 'imperfect matter'. Despite the fact that A1 is an abbreviated

version of B1, and thus a later version of the play as most editors now agree, the text

contains an allusion to Rodrigo Lopez which is unlikely to have been made before

1594.[113] John Jump argues, moreover, that 'those scenes of clownage which it

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[108] Weimann, *Author's Pen*, p. 59.
[109] On the death of Marlowe, see Charles Nicholls, *The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe* (London: Vintage Books, 2002).
[110] See Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean, *The Queen's Men and their Plays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
[111] Stowe's *Annales* (1615), cited in Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, II, 104-5.
[112] Knapp, *Shakespeare Only*, p. 66.
[113] W. W. Greg, ed., *Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, 1604-1616: Parallel Texts* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), p. 60 (xv.41). Lopez was the queen's physician, hanged on 7 June 1594, for treason.

preserves tend to be elaborated in a manner that would strengthen their appeal to unsophisticated audiences'. 'There can be little doubt', Jump concludes, 'that A is a version designed for production in more primitive circumstances than those envisaged in the case of B'. [114]

The subject matter of plays was often thought questionable. At the opposite end of the scale to Jones' attempts to promote high-brow literature, *The Book of Sir Thomas More*, originally written by Anthony Munday, was rejected by the Master of the Revels for sedition. In the surviving manuscript fragment of this play (*Harley* 7368 in the British Library), which perhaps records Shakespeare's own hand,[115] the 'impure' art of the stage itself is recorded in the speeches of Clown Betts as additions or supplements to an existing script.[116]

The rejected play is thought to have been revised by five separate playwrights in the 'Hands' listed. Most made their emendations in the manuscript itself, but some wrote revisions on separate pieces of paper which were pasted into the play-text.[117] As a result, the date of the original play, and its additions, is a matter of some debate. In the original text written out by Munday, no clown part is included. In the revision, a hand identified as that of Thomas Heywood picks out the name 'Ralph Betts' from Munday's script and uses it for a character labelled in all stage directions as clown. Dialogue for a character with the speech prefix 'Clo.' is also inserted into the

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[114] Cf. John D. Jump, ed., *Doctor Faustus*, Christopher Marlowe (London: Methuen, 1968; repr. 1972), p. xxvi.

[115] Stern notes that 'Hand D' was originally identified as Shakespeare's in a *Notes and Queries* article by Richard Simpson in 1871, and is now commonly accepted to be so. The one piece of continuous handwriting believed to be by Shakespeare is full of crossed-out words, rewriting and over-writing. There are six individual 'Hands' in all in the manuscript, none of whose names are provided, who scholars designate as A, B, C, D, E and S. 'Hand D' is thought to be that of Shakespeare, and 'Hand S' that of Anthony Munday. Cf. Tiffany Stern, *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 35. For a counter argument which claims that Hand D is not Shakespeare, see Paul Ramsey, 'The Literary Evidence for Shakespeare as Hand D in the Manuscript Play *Sir Thomas More*: A Re-consideration', *The Upstart Crow*, 11 (1991), 131-55.

[116] Gurr states that playhouses were considered places of 'impure' art. See *Elizabethan Stage*, p. 7.

[117] Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, p. 35.

manuscript. Wiles argues that when part of the play was given to 'Hand D' to draft, a playhouse scribe seems afterwards to have reallocated some of the anonymous crowd speeches to 'Clown. Betts'.[118] Traditionally, therefore, critics have assumed that the play was revised by Thomas Heywood for Worcester's Men in approximately 1603, and that the part of the clown was written into the manuscript for the benefit of a specific actor.[119]

Eric Rasmussen's ground-breaking research on the manuscript's 'Hand B', however, has challenged these theories. Rasmussen argues that 'Hand B''s additional passages, which add more than a dozen lines for the play's 'Clown', reveal that the reviser recorded the lines that an actor-clown had improvised during a performance or performances of the play in early 1590s. Where previous critics had ascribed the additions to Heywood, Rasmussen builds his counter argument on their performative origin by noting the speeches' 'improvised rather than […] scripted quality'. As well as their resemblance to 'the sort of improvisations in verse for which Elizabethan clowns were famous', formal elements include the repetition of brief phrases, gags, and 'short interjections, heavily laden with double rhymes'. However, admitting that 'there is no way of distinguishing what may be an actor's improvisations from what might be merely the work of an inferior playwright', Rasmussen notes that several of the clown's lines appear to be misplaced in the manuscript. This suggests, he argues, that 'Hand B' was not creating the role of the clown, but simply writing down in the promptbook 'lines that an actor had improvised on stage'.[120]

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[118] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 67.

[119] Scott McMillin, 'The Book of Sir Thomas More: a theatrical view', *Modern Philology*, 68 (1970-71), 10-24 (p. 14). See also Carol A. Chillington, 'Playwrights at work: Henslowe's, not Shakespeare's, *Book of Sir Thomas More*', *English Literary Renaissance*, 10 (1980), 439-79.

[120] Eric Rasmussen, 'Setting down what the clown spoke: improvisation, Hand B, and *The Book of Sir Thomas More*', *The Library*, 13:2 (1991), 126-36 (pp. 128-30).

At the same time that the clown was removed from *Tamburlaine*, then, he was put back in, or at least his part was extended, in *Sir Thomas More*. Audiences of the time may well have thrilled to Tamburlaine's 'conquering sword', but the addition of Clown Betts suggests that spectators also continued to 'greatly gap[e] at' an altogether different type of show. While 'clownage' was associated with what Jones describes as 'fond and frivolous jestures', it was simultaneously shored up by performance practices which continued to ignore, or at least resist, an authorial rhetoric of literary appropriation. Moreover, Rasmussen's theories of revision posit the actor playing the clown as an authorial voice, not only in the play-script, but as part of the construction and revision of the narrative. 'Unmixed', as it were, with the 'baser matter' of the stage (*Hamlet*, 1.5.104), *Tamburlaine* promotes the authority of its ironically absent author; whereas *Sir Thomas More* provides a telling example of interpolative 'clownage' itself as an authorial force.

In the light of the two examples outlined above, it seems that despite efforts to banish, or at the very least side-line the clown in order to heighten the literary worth of plays, the clown continued to be a key part of the capital's theatrical scene, both as an essential component in printed drama, and 'an inevitable part of virtually every public theatre performance'.[121] The clown's anarchic playing for which he was so loved ensured, therefore, not only his popularity but also the success or failure of a play. To this extent, the audience itself came to underpin the clown as a type of force in plays in a way which is later articulated so clearly by Hamlet's remarks to the Elsinore players:

> I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never
> acted, or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember,
> pleased not the million.
>
> (2.2.416-8).

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[121] Cf. Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, p. 216.

Tensions, it seems, could be provoked, not only between authors and clowns, but also between audience expectation and authorial desire.

IV.   Tarlton's legacy

i.   Re-enter the clown

Tarlton enjoyed a career before what might be termed the embryonic 'divorce' between clown and playwright and, in a broader sense, between theatrical and literary culture. Within this cultural 'mingle mangle', the positions of both clown and author remain unclear as the dramatic arena in the early 1590s was not entirely the domain of either.[122] What does seem apparent, though, is that by the beginning of the decade under discussion in this thesis, the relations between the page and stage remained 'porous' in Mowat's sense, and certainly fluid. This would remain the case well into the 1590s, as I will show in Chapter Two, where my analysis of Kemp's 'merrimentes' in *A Knack* reveal how the actor authorised and authenticated the play in terms of both performance and print.

Tarlton, then, bequeathed a complex cultural space, one on which both Kemp and Shakespeare capitalised in a host of ways. With this in mind, I now want to turn to my main protagonists - Kemp and his jigs, and, more briefly, Shakespeare himself - in order to summarise their careers up until 1594, the year which would see the publication of *A Knack to Know a Knave*, the first play examined in this thesis.

On Tarlton's death, Kemp took up the reins of comedy with his own form of 'clownage', further distilled from elements of the comic tradition so important to his predecessor's success. Following in the footsteps of Tarlton, then, Kemp's clown figure

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[122] John Lyly, Prologue, *Midas* (London, 1590), A1ᵛ, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 4 February, 2012].

remained intimately related to an 'older understanding of drama' through the conventional facets of his comic stage persona.[123]

Kemp's career is documented in some detail by Wiles. My own account of him at this point, therefore, is relatively brief, as I will refer chronologically to his work as the thesis progresses. Nungezer shows that the earliest notice of Kemp occurs in a letter from Thomas Doyley to Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, dated at Calais 12 November, 1585, in which he states: 'There remayneth in Dunkerk […] also Mr Kemp, called Don Gulihelmo'. Kemp, it seems, was 'Leicester's comedian' and, we might say, a 'jester' figure at his 'court' in the Netherlands between 1585 and 1586 in a way which echoed Tarlton's relationship with Elizabeth I. Kemp's duties, however, went beyond those of comic play. He is also mentioned in Sidney's letter to Sir Francis Walsingham, dated at Utrecht on 24 March, 1586, as Leicester's despatch-carrier, delivering letters from the Low Countries to London: 'I wrote to yow a letter by Will, my lord of Lester's jesting plaier'.[124] Kemp's role as Leicester's 'postman', as I will show, was reinvented in a number of his parts for Shakespeare.

More obvious links with Tarlton are Kemp's roots in minstrelsy. Kemp's athletic prowess as a dancer is recorded in his membership of a small group of 'instrumentalists and tumblers' at Elsinore in Denmark in approximately 1586.[125] While Tarlton had been most famous for his musical skills, Kemp made dancing the centrepiece of his clowning. As the new 'master of mad jigs and merry jests', Kemp would dominate London's stage for the remainder of the decade until his hasty

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[123] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. xii.
[124] Nungezer, *Dictionary of Actors*, p. 216. For a discussion of Leicester in the Netherlands, see R. C. Bald, 'Leicester's Men in the Low Countries', *Review of English Studies* 19 (1943), 395-7.
[125] Bald, 'Leicester's Men', p. 396.

departure from the Lord Chamberlain's Men in 1599.[126] His reputation as a performer

of jigs is recorded towards the end of his career with Shakespeare in two contemporary

accounts: first, in Thomas Marston's *Scourge of Villainy* (1598):

> A hall, a hall!
> Room for the spheres, the orbs celestial
> Will dance Kempe's jig;[127]

and second, in a less than celestial context, in Everard Guilpin's *Skialetheia* (1598):

> But oh purgation! you rotten-throated slaves
> Engarlanded with coney-catching knaves,
> Whores, Bedles, bawds, and Sergeants filthily
> Chaunt *Kemps* Jigge.[128]

It is Kemp's reputation as a 'master of mad jigs and merry jests' which made him

famous. Indeed, most of Kemp's pre-London career appears to be as an independent

entertainer. But in 1588, by which time Kemp was based in the capital,[129] he came

under the timely patronage of Ferdinando Stanley, or Lord Strange, and part of the

successful theatrical troupe known as Lord Strange's Men which performed regularly in

London, both at the public playhouses and for the court at Whitehall, and in other parts

of the country.[130]

It seems, therefore, that Kemp's relationship with Strange's Men marked a

number of new beginnings for the actor as a professional stage performer: from

aristocratic patronage to commercial theatre; and from working as a solo comedian to

operating within a company of players. [131] By the time of the deaths, in the same year,

of both Tarlton and Leicester, Kemp was back in London, already a celebrity, and in a

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[126] The Morris dance, described by Wiles as the 'centrepiece' of Elizabethan folk culture. See Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 44. The Morris dance was also a particular speciality of Kemp's, as I will discuss in Chapter Two.

[127] Thomas Marston, *Scourge of Villainy* (1598), Satire XI, l. 31, cited in Nungezer, *Dictionary of Actors*, p. 218.

[128] Everard Guilpin, *Skialetheia* (1598), Satire V, cited in Nungezer, p. 218.

[129] Gurr places Kemp in London in 1586. See *Shakespearean Stage*, p. 34.

[130] Gurr contends that in the pre-1594 period, 'travelling was the Tudor norm' for playing companies. See Gurr, *The Shakespearean Playing Companies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 41.

[131] Cf. Chambers, *Stage*, II, p. 123.

strong position to replace Tarlton as the next hero of folk culture. In 1590, Kemp's

autonomy as a leading comedian was confirmed when he was acknowledged as

Tarlton's successor in Nashe's *Almond for a Parrat*.[132] Kemp, it seems, had now fully

replaced Tarlton by reputation on the London stage. He had also replaced Tarlton at

court, a fact recorded in Heywood's *Apology for Actors* (1612), which describes Kemp

as having 'succeeded' Tarlton, 'wel in the favour of her majesty, as in the opinion and

good thoughts of the general audience'.[133]

Throughout the early 1590s, Kemp consolidated his fame and popularity. When

Stanley died in April 1594, Kemp and many of his fellow actors passed into the service

of the Lord Chamberlain. Kemp's five-year association with Shakespeare and the

Chamberlain's Men was an unusually stable period for the troupe before its move to

The Globe which coincided with Kemp's departure. During this time, both Kemp and

the tragedian Burbage became the most famous actors of their generation.[134] However,

as Wiles' biography shows, Kemp's comic persona remained independent from the rest

of the company for the majority of his theatrical career. It was the jig which made

Kemp famous; and it was Tarlton's persona of the 'Lord of Misrule' to which he always

aspired as an actor.

ii.   Kemp's jigs

Kemp's talent for the jig, a by-product of the misrule tradition which C. R. Baskervill

describes as 'a fad of the London populace when Elizabethan drama was at its

height',[135] provides the clearest links between his act in the 1590s and the medieval past

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[132] See above, p. 39.
[133] Thomas Heywood, cited in Peter Thomson, *Shakespeare's Theatre* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), p. 11.
[134] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 34.
[135] C. R. Baskervill, *The Elizabethan Jig and Related Song Drama* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1929), p. 6.

from which it emerged. The traditional forms of festivity characteristic of popular culture, however, came gradually to be recognized as a threat to established social order.[136] As plays grew increasingly orderly, or even authorial, in respect of their composition, performance and reception, the jig became the central event in what Wiles describes as the 'postlude'.[137] It would still have been Kemp's business, as the foremost clown of his own day, to lead audiences out of the play and into the jig. After the scripted play was finished, the clown took over the stage completely in a traditionally 'topsy-turvy' enactment of misrule, a considerably different type of entertainment in which vigorous participation from onlookers perpetuated the kind of anarchic theatre which flourished under Tarlton.[138]

As already noted, anti-theatrical polemic of a slightly earlier period such as that of Gosson correlated stage plays with a range of subversive popular customs. In an attack on play-going, written in 1583, and in the context of increasing official suspicion of theatrical practices, the antitheatricalist Phillip Stubbes complained with particular vehemence about the 'bawdy, wanton shewes & uncomely gestures' used in plays and interludes.[139] By 1590, the jig itself was considered unfit for what Tarlton himself described, probably with his tongue rammed firmly into his cheek, as 'gentlemen's humors'.[140] Despite this, the jig remained vastly popular with theatregoers. This was most likely because, as Michael Bristol notes, it 'promoted unruly passions and impiety

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[136] Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (London: Temple Smith, 1978).

[137] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 43.

[138] For detailed information on the late-Elizabethan jig, see Baskervill, *The Elizabethan Jig*, pp. 354-65.

[139] Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomy of Abuses* (London: Richard Jones, 1583), esp. ll. viii-xii, in http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 4 February, 2012]. For a full discussion of sixteenth-century antitheatricality, see Jonas Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), pp. 80-131.

[140] James O. Halliwell, ed., *Tarlton's Jests and News out of Purgatory* (London: Shakespeare Society, 1844) 'Appendix', p. 107.

and fostered habits of social disobedience'. It was also responsible, according to

Bristol, for both 'individual profligacy' and 'riotous crowd behaviour'.[141]

As a sub-literary form, however, much of the evidence of action and dialogue

contained in jigs is found in anecdotes which date from a period later than the one with

which I am most concerned.[142] But they do give an idea of the type of response

identified by Bristol that the jig could provoke in a playhouse. For example, Davies'

description below provides another example of a 'stain' on the stage which appealed to

all classes:

> For as we see at all the play house dores,
> When ended is the play, the daunce, and song;
> A thousand townsmen, gentlemen and whores,
> Porters and serving-men together throng.[143]

Members of the public, it seems, often stormed theatre gates at the end of a play, purely

in order to witness the jig. By 1612, the jig was officially supressed at the Curtain

playhouse:

> By reason of certain lewd jigs, songs and dances […] lewd and ill-disposed
> persons in great multitudes do resort thither at the end of every play.[144]

The popularity of the jig, however, seems to have ensured that such bans did not last

and 'whether [the crowds] paid, stampeded their way in, or entered freely is still

unclear'.[145] In 1613, Thomas Dekker similarly described the unruly atmosphere in a

playhouse at the end of a play when audiences were often augmented by those who

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[141] Michael D. Bristol, 'Theatre and Popular Culture', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, pp. 231-48 (pp. 234-5).
[142] There are no illustrations of the English jig, but one illustration survives in a German woodcut. The German *Singspiel* was modelled on the English form and the illustration, reproduced in Wiles, shows two dancing couples with bells and ribbons on their shoes. Reproduced in Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 49.
[143] Robert Krueger, ed., *The Poems of Sir John Davies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 'In Cosmum', *Epigram XVII*, p. 136.
[144] Reproduced in Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, IV, 340-1. For more on this type of forced entry into the theatres, see A. J. Cook, *Privileged Play-goers of Shakespeare's London* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 220, 242.
[145] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 47.

could not afford the penny fee for the main play, and hung around the theatre doors until

the end of the action proper:

> The stinkards speaking all things, yet no man understanding anything; a mutiny
> being amongst them, yet none in danger […] the swiftness of such a torrent, the
> more it overwhelms, breeding the more pleasure.

Dekker, despite his own reputation for the unsavoury, also labelled the jig as 'nasty' and

'bawdy', the reception of which provoked a 'torrent' of pleasure which is 'more blacke

[…] then the most horrid Sceane in the Play was'.[146] Dekker's attitude is most likely

down to the fact that, as the above descriptions suggest, the jig, and not the play,

remained the highlight of dramatic entertainment.   As late as 1626, another anecdote

records how 'a jig shall be clapped at, and every rhyme/Praised and applauded by a

clamorous chime'.[147]

Anecdotal and dramatic descriptions of the jig and its unruly influences seem to

confirm what Bristol describes as the 'base, common and popular element of early

modern society', which he sees as constituting a major element of late-Elizabethan life

in London.[148]   The jig, then, was an important factor, in the social life of early-modern

Londoners. Wiles shows, for example, that the emergence of the jig is related to the

history of dance, particularly the Morris dance, the centrepiece of Elizabethan folk

culture and a particular talent of Kemp.[149] In *Nine Daies Wonder*, Kemp describes

himself as 'Head-Master of Morris Dancers, High Headborough of hays, and only

tricker of your Trill-lillies and best bell shangles between Sion and Mount Surrey'.[150]

But the jig's creative synthesis of popular and courtly dance-culture, with its fusion of

the 'Morris' and the 'galliard', remained correlative with more mainstream drama as the

public taste for bloody tragedy and 'clownage' developed into a more sophisticated

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[146] Dekker, *Strange Horse Race*, C4v-D.
[147] *The Fair Maid of the Inn* (c. 1626), cited in Baskervill, *Elizabethan Jig*, p. 115.
[148] Bristol, 'Theatre and Popular Culture', p. 232.
[149] Cf. Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 45.
[150] Kemp, *Nine Daies Wonder*, ed. Dyce, p. 3.

ethos. When Hamlet, for example, scorns the clown's 'cinque-pace of jests' in the 1603 first quarto of the play (9.35), he is referring to the basic steps of the courtly 'galliard', which a skilful comic performer like Kemp would have enhanced with exaggerated leaping and tumbling from the Morris tradition.

One of the reasons the jig flourished was precisely because of this fusion, where its performers were able to draw freely on well-known folk and courtly dances while improvising new steps and movements of their own. More importantly, though, the Morris dance, through the fool's wooing, provided the basic structure of the jig with clear sexual overtones – another feature which was highly appealing to audiences as noted, particularly in a theatrical culture which had inherited a fascination with bad behaviour.[151] The late-sixteenth century, however, also saw moves towards physical freedom in its dancing customs. Touching during dance, for example, had previously been taboo, and antitheatrical puritans such as John Northbrooke were provoked by the vogue for 'uncleanly handlings, gropings and kissings', questioning 'what good doth all that dancing of young women, holding upon men's arms that they may leap the higher?'[152]

An understanding of the erotic element of the jig helps, perhaps, to explain its popularity at a time when families were severed as young males left their homes to find work in cities. The increase in the city's male population also boosted the income of its brothels which sprang up in the same localities as the theatres, outside the jurisdiction of London's civic authorities and ideal places for prostitutes to solicit clients. In 1598, Guilpin described the reactions of an elderly citizen to a jig at a theatre while Kemp himself was playing. The jig, Guilpin claimed, 'made him young again', and Guilpin

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[151] Cf. Claire Sponsler, *Drama and Resistance: Bodies, Goods and Theatricality in Late Medieval England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. xv.

[152] John Northbrooke, *A Treatise wherein Dicing, Dauncing, Vaine plaies ... are Reproved ...* (London, 1579), in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 12 February, 2012].

goes on to describe the old man's exploits at the end of the performance: 'who, coming

from the Curtain, sneaketh in/To some odd garden noted "house of sin".[153] The jig, and

particularly Kemp's it seems, succeeded in serving as a type of urban aphrodisiac with

its intoxicating blend of the more libidinous and insubordinate elements of folk carnival

culture.

Texts survive of four jigs attributed to Kemp, two in German and two in

English. The English jigs are entitled *A proper new ballet, intituled Rowlands god*

soone, To the tune of loth to departe, and *Singing Simpkin*. Kemp's jigs, as Wiles

shows, are distinguishable by their tightness of construction, and their shared comic

theme of adultery. All, then, are concerned typically with sex, and in particular the

deception of gullible husbands by their wives and servants.[154] Moreover, Louis Wright

points out that in John Day's *The Travailes of the Three English Brothers* (1607), the

characters which 'Kemp' and 'Harlequin' cast for their performance include the 'typical

commedia dell'arte figures' of 'faithless wife', 'cuckold husband' and 'cuckolding

servant',[155] stereotypes which not only frequent Kemp's jigs, but also served to

undermine the sentimental and romantic paradigms of more legitimate forms of drama

at the time.[156]

At one and the same time, then, both 'darling' and 'anathema' to the

surrounding authorial maelstrom,[157] the jig, and Kemp's in particular, are worth further

investigation for what they can tell us about the development of playwriting at the time

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[153] Guilpin, *Skialetheia*, cited in Baskervill, *Elizabethan Jig*, p. 112.

[154] For a more detailed summary of the contents of Kemp's jigs, see Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 48-52.

[155] Louis B. Wright, 'Will Kemp and Commedia dell'Arte', *Modern Language Notes*, 41 (1926), 516-529 (p. 519). Cuckoldry is an ancient comic trope. The term 'cuckold' derives from the cuckoo bird, alluding to the alleged habit of the female in changing its mate frequently and authentic (in some species) practice of laying its eggs in other nests within its community.

[156] I take this point from more up-to-date research on the jig by Roger Clegg, who delivered a paper entitled '"Jigging veins of rhyming mother wits"' at the University of Reading Early Modern Studies Conference, 'Controversy, Protest, Ridicule, Laughter, 1500-1750', 9-11 July 2010.

[157] Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, p. 225.

of his documented appearances in *A Knack* in the mid-1590s which is the subject of Chapter Two.

V.   Enter Shakespeare

As already noted, in comparison to Kemp's acknowledged celebrity as an actor, Shakespeare remained anonymous as a playwright for the first half of his dramatic career. By the time of Marlowe's death in 1593, a milestone in Shakespeare's early dramatic career, Shakespeare had written *1, 2 and 3 Henry VI* (1591-3), *Richard III* (1592-3), *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (c. 1593), The *Taming of the Shrew* (1592), *The Comedy of Errors* (1592-4) and *Titus Andronicus* (c. 1592).[158] The only publications to name him has an 'author' by that time, however, were the poems *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), both of which were published by fellow Stratfordian Field, who printed Shakespeare's name at the end of each poem's dedication to Henry Wriothesly, the Earl of Southampton. *Venus and Adonis* was a notable success and, during Shakespeare's lifetime, his most popular published work, appearing in ten editions by 1616 and quoted in numerous journals, letters, and plays of the period.

It was not until 1598 that Shakespeare's name appeared as the author of a play, when two London publishers decided independently that Shakespeare's popularity had reached the point where it was profitable to put his name on the title-pages of their quartos. In that year, Burby brought out a 'newly corrected and augmented' first quarto edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* by 'W. Shakespere', and Simmes published second editions of *Richard III and Richard II*, both by 'William Shake-speare'. Moreover, both the 1598 quarto of *Love's Labour's Lost* and the 1599 quarto of *1 Henry IV* assert that

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[158] This initial dating of the plays is taken from 'A Shakespearean Chronicle', in *The Norton Shakespeare*, pp. 3365-92. The dates of *Titus Andronicus* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* are discussed in more detail in Chapters Three and Four respectively.

they have been 'Newly corrected and augmented/By W. Shakespere' and 'Newly corrected by W. Shakespeare' respectively.

1598 also saw Shakespeare lauded by Francis Meres in his *Palladis Tamia, Wits Treasury*, a work largely consisting of translated classical quotations and exempla in which Meres compared Shakespeare to classical authors on two occasions. In the first Meres claims that,

> As the soule of *Euphorbus* was thought to live in *Pythagoras*: so the sweete wittie soule of Ovid lives in mellifluous & honytongued *Shakespeare*, witnes his *Venus* and *Adonis*, his *Lucrece*, his sugred Sonnets.
>
> (From *XIV*)

In the second extract, Meres praises Shakespeare's drama:

> As *Plautus* and *Seneca* are accounted the best for Comedy and Tragedy among the Latines: so *Shakespeare* among ye English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage.
>
> (From *XV*)[159]

In terms of Shakespeare's theatrical success, by now the Chamberlain's Men, along with the Admiral's Men, was established as one of the two leading London companies by the Privy Council decree of 1598, which ensured a stability of conditions of performance on which both companies laid the basis of their mutual prosperity, and remained unchallenged for the next twenty-five years.[160]

In 1600, a further five plays were published, four of which (*2 Henry IV, A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Much Ado About Nothing*) announced Shakespeare's authorship on their title-pages. That year, Shakespeare's name also appeared for the first time in the Stationers' Register where, according to an

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[159] Francis Meres, *Palladis Tamia, Wits Treasury* (1598), reproduced in *The Norton Shakespeare*, pp. 3324-25.

[160] Cf. Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, pp. 42-3.

entry dated 23 August 1600, *Much Ado About Nothing* was 'Written by Master

Shakespere'.[161] It also contained a part for '*Kemp*' as Dogberry.

On the subject of Shakespeare's reputation, Erne argues that,

if we consider the suddenness and the frequency with which Shakespeare's
name appears on title pages of printed playbooks from 1598 to 1600, it is no
exaggeration to say that in one sense, "Shakespeare", author of dramatic texts,
was born in the space of two or three years at the end of the sixteenth century.[162]

But it was poetry and not drama that launched Shakespeare's career as a writer, and

poetry, it seems, which maintained his reputation. According to Erne, Shakespeare was

quick to remove his name as author from William Jaggard's 1612 edition of *The*

Passionate Pilgrim, an anthology of poetry by Shakespeare and other writers including

Thomas Heywood, and which described itself as 'newly corrected and augmented. By

W. Shakespeare'. In a letter appended to his *Apology of Actors* in the same year,

Heywood records that Shakespeare was 'much offended with M. Jaggard that

(altogether unknowne to him) presumed to make so bold with his name'. [163] It seems,

then, that we have come full-circle in this discussion of Shakespeare and Kemp so far.

In 1594 an actor's name is added to a dramatic text; in 1612 a playwright's name is

removed from a poetic one: more evidence, perhaps, of Helgerson's cultural 'shift'

outlined above.

In terms of celebrity, approximately ten years lie between the recognized and

documented careers of Shakespeare and Kemp and they are separated to an extent by

this temporal divide. However, in 1592, the probable year of *A Knack*'s first

performances, we find them working together for Lord Strange. Stanley was

Shakespeare's patron as well as Kemp's at this time, and his players were based both at

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[161] For a summary of the early publication history of Shakespeare's plays, see Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, pp. 93-4.

[162] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p. 63. Erne also shows that similar publication histories attest to the move towards print authorship of other playwrights, including Marlowe, Nashe, Lyly and Peele.

[163] Thomas Heywood, *An Apology for Actors* (London, 1612), G4v, cited in Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, pp. 1-2.

the Southwark Rose and at the Knowsley playhouse in Lancashire.[164] Between

February and June 1592, Strange's Men are recorded at Henslowe's Rose, where they

enacted a repertory of some twenty-three plays, including one or more of Shakespeare's

Henry VI trilogy. We also know from Henslowe's diary that *A Knack* was performed

by Lord Strange's Men at The Rose theatre in Southwark between June 1592 and

January 1593.[165]

Helgerson argues that this suggests that the relationship between Kemp and

Shakespeare was already underway by 1590-91.[166] Moreover, he cites the play

originally entitled *The First Part of the Contention Betwixt the Two Famous Houses of*

York and Lancaster, or *2 Henry VI*, as a work which probably links Kemp and

Shakespeare, as there is every possibility that the part of the rebel-clown Cade was

played by the Morris dancing Kemp, as Helgerson and others believe: 'I have

seen/Him', claims the Duke of York's character, 'caper upright like a wild

Morisco,/Shaking […] his bels' (3.1.354-66). In these lines, it seems, both playwright

and jig-maker are linked.

In the late summer of 1592, while the theatres were closed by an outbreak of

plague, Nashe and Greene's play *Summer's Last Will and Testament* was performed for

Archbishop Whitgift at his Croydon palace.[167] Katherine Duncan-Jones argues that the

troupe performing were Strange's Men, and that the company included at that time both

Kemp and Edward Alleyn. Duncan-Jones goes on to claim that Shakespeare also took

part in the play as an actor.[168] In this light, we can posit an association between

Shakespeare and Kemp as performers several years before their first appearance on

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[164] For more on Shakespeare's Lancastrian connections in 'the lost years', see Richard Wilson, *Secret Shakespeare: Studies in Theatre, Religion and Resistance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 49.

[165] Foakes and Rickert, *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 19.

[166] Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, pp. 213-4.

[167] I return to the subject of the plague-related closure of London's theatres in Chapter Two.

[168] Katherine Duncan-Jones, 'Shakespeare the Motley Player', *Review of English Studies*, 60:247 (2009), 723-43.

paper as payees for the Lord Chamberlain's first court performance during the Christmas of 1594-5. More recently, evidence of Kemp and Shakespeare working for Strange's Men in 1592 has been put forward by Robert Bell.[169]

Whether or not these early theatrical connections between Kemp and Shakespeare are reliable, we can assume, I think, that the two had worked together by the time that *A Knack* was performed in June 1592. It has even been suggested that Shakespeare wrote Kemp's part in *A Knack*.[170] Be that as it may, by 1592 the famous Kemp was used to being accommodated by playwrights who remained largely unknown, and even having scenes specially written for him and inserted into plays.

VI.   Conclusion

The tangled threads of acting and writing on the late-Elizabethan stage are not easy to unravel. What is perhaps clear, though, is the extent to which Tarlton and then Kemp were more than just 'clowns', in that they embodied a residual and timeless tradition of festive stage comedy. They also both coincided with the emergence of the early modern author. In order to draw this first chapter to a close, then, it is perhaps worth noting that in 1592, Nashe's pamphlet *Strange Newes* refers bitingly to one of Harvey's attempts at comedy, asking: 'for what can bee made of a Ropemaker more than a Clowne? *Will Kempe*, I mistrust it will fall to thy lot for a merriment, one of these dayes'.[171] This was a challenge which Kemp would take up that very year in *A Knack*, and which would prove his fame and autonomy as a powerful and popular theatrical entertainer both in print and in performance.

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[169] Bell, *Shakespeare's Great Stage of Fools*, p. 9.

[170] Edward Hubler, ed., *Hamlet*, The Signet Classic Shakespeare (New York: The New American Library, 1963), p. xxiv.

[171] McKerrow, *Works of Thomas Nashe*, I, 287. Nashe's remarks, as in the case of *An Almond for a Parrat*, served to perpetuate both his private feud with Harvey and the Marprelate controversy in referring to Harvey's low-class, protestant origins as the son of a rope-maker. See Hornback, *The English Clown Tradition*, pp. 133-4.

As I will show in the following chapter, the enduring appeal of Kemp's popular stage is reflected in the early printed edition of *A Knack* and seems opposed, or at least works in contradiction to, what might be described as more 'authorial' concerns. But 'KEMPS applauded Merrimentes', both advertised and recorded in the 1594 quarto of the play, also articulate the permeable boundaries between theatrical and literary culture. The play unsettles, therefore, the neat linear 'shift' identified by Helgerson, and propounded by Wiles amongst others, from a 'players'' to an 'authors'', theatre which was supposedly complete by the end of the decade. While Kemp's 'applauded' role suggests some artistic tensions between the relative positions of famous clown and anonymous author, it also points to a more complementary fusion of stage and page than has so far been acknowledged in recent revisionist discussions of Shakespeare.

And therein lies the dilemma explored overall in this thesis, and investigated further in the following chapters about the nature of the interaction between clown and playwright in the production and revision of a play-text. Superficially, there would seem to be an unbridgeable gap between the popular and the literary, the player and the author, 'clownage' and 'high' verse. As I will show in the remainder of this thesis, however, this gap is more apparent than real. What we might term tensions between page and stage actually reveal a cooperative and creative partnership between the two, as opposed to oppositional concerns. Perhaps, though, at this point we should leave the final words of the argument to Snug and Peter Quince in rehearsal for their play:

Snug.	Have you the lion's part written? Pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.
Quince.	You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

<div align="center">(2.1.55-7)</div>

CHAPTER TWO

A KNACK TO KNOW A KNAVE

My study of *A Knack to Know a Knave* paves the way for the rest of this thesis. First, it exposes the fluid and multifaceted relationship between acting and writing on the late-Elizabethan stage, since an examination of the 1594 quarto allows the play, and Kemp's influence in its composition, to be considered from a more commercial point-of-view in the contexts of both the late-Elizabethan theatre and book trades. Second, it provides a further, and perhaps more concrete, connection between Kemp and Shakespeare. In 1592, the point at which I take up their story, Kemp's name was 'magnetic' enough to advertise a play,[1] and by 1594 to sell a 'book'. Shakespeare, by comparison at this time, as I have shown, remained unnamed and relatively unknown as a dramatist. In 1594, however, Kemp and Shakespeare's careers converged on a more permanent and professional basis when they both became founding members of the Chamberlain's Men, the beginning of a partnership between Shakespeare and his leading clown which continued throughout the decade. Before turning to the text of *A Knack* produced in that year, I want first to examine what we know about the performances and publication of the play between 1592 and 1594.

I.   *A Knack* on stage and page

The earliest note of *A Knack* in performance is recorded in Henlowe's diary in June 1592: 'ne-Rd at a knacke to knowe a knave 1592 … iij^{li} xij s'.[2] We can assume two things from the wording of this entry: the first is that the play was in some way 'new'; and second, that it was a success. E. K. Chambers argues that 'Henslowe's "ne",

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[1] I borrow the term 'magnetic' in relation to Kemp from Weimann and Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance*, p. 84.
[2] Foakes and Rickert, *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 19.

whatever its precise significance, is usually a prefix attached to a play "the first tyme yt wasse plaid"'.[3] Henslowe's income of three pounds and twelve shillings is certainly comparable to the takings for another apparently 'ne' play, 'titus & ondronicus', first performed on 24 January 1594.[4] This 'titus', probably Shakespeare's play, made three pounds and eight shillings for Henslowe, takings which, according to Jonathan Bate, were 'among the best' box office of that season.[5] There is also every possibility, as I will show in due course, that Henslowe's 'ne' describes *A Knack* as recently revised or, at least, 'newlie set foorth' in print, as the quarto's title-page suggests.

The other dates listed by Henslowe for performances of *A Knack* in 1592 are 15 and 22 June and 31 December, followed by three performances in January 1593 on 3, 14 and 24 of that month.[6] The long gaps between January to June, and June to December in 1592, are presumably due to the closure of the London theatres during outbreaks of plague. Gurr lists 1592-3 as one of the 'really bad' plague years.[7] Chambers records that on the evening of 12 June that year, the Lord Mayor of London, Sir William Webbe, broke up a public disturbance in the borough of Southwark. At an enquiry the following morning, it was established that 'the sayed companies assembled themselves by occasion & pretence of their meeting at a play'.[8] Approximately ten days later, as Bate notes, all of the capital's theatres were closed by order of the Privy

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[3] Cited in Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, II, 144-6.

[4] As noted in the Preface, the old-style system of dating, which began the calendar year in March instead of on 1 January, has been adjusted. Neil Carson has shown that Henslowe's diary does contain some dating errors. See, for example, the sudden change from January 1592 to 1593 on p. 19. Editing the diary in 1845, John Payne Collier complained that Henslowe 'kept his book, as respects dates in particular, in the most disorderly, negligent and confused manner'. See Collier, *Henslowe's Diary* (London, 1845), cited in Neil Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's Diary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. ix. Now, critics are more forgiving as it is considered ananchronistic to study the diary as the equivalent of a business leger.

[5] Jonathan Bate, ed., *Titus Andronicus*, The Arden Shakespeare 3rd Series (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 69-70.

[6] Foakes and Rickert, *Henslowe's Diary*, pp. 19-20.

[7] Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, p. 78.

[8] Reproduced in Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, IV, 310.

Council, and on 22 June Henslowe's records come to a temporary halt.[9] Lord Strange's

Men did not perform for Henslowe at The Rose again until 29 December that year, at

which point we find four more performances of *A Knack*. At the end of January 1593,

performances came to a halt once again when a new order closed the theatres for nearly

a year. This time, a prolonged outbreak of plague was definitely to blame:

> Forasmuch as by the certificate of the last weeke yt appeareth the infection doth
> increase […] we thinke yt fytt that all manner of councourse and publique
> meetinges of the people at playes, beare-bitinges, bowlinges and other like
> assemblyes for sportes be forbidden.[10]

Henslowe would not open The Rose again for over a year. After Christmas 1593, his

diary records a short season from 27 December to 6 February 1954, played by 'the earle

of susex his men'.[11]

Duncan-Jones argues that critics have largely ignored the impact of the plague

on theatrical life during Shakespeare's career.[12] The effect of plague was momentous,

however, as outbreaks of the disease caused massive disruption to the income of the

major playing companies. As Gurr argues, while many of the troupes regularly toured

around the country, 'by far the best living was to be made in the metropolis', and 'every

player's ambition was to belong to a company securely resident in London'.[13] Bouts of

the infection in London never failed to endanger the companies, causing major 'shuffles

of membership' or worse.[14] By September 1593, the year in which the theatres were

shut for its entirety, Pembroke's Men, London's most successful company to date, had

gone bankrupt. Also, in a diary entry the same year, Henslowe describes how Tarlton's

company, the Queen's Men, had 'brock and went into the countrey to playe'.[15] By mid-

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[9] Bate, *Titus*, p. 69.
[10] Reproduced in Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, IV, 313.
[11] Foakes and Rickert, *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 20.
[12] Katherine Duncan-Jones, ed., *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, The Arden Shakespeare 3rd Series (London: Thomson Learning, 2007), p. 8.
[13] Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, p. 6.
[14] Ibid., p. 78.
[15] Foakes and Rickert, *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 7.

1594, the Earl of Hertford's company had stopped performing altogether; Sussex's Men

had been forced to disband on the death of their patron, Thomas Radclyffe; and there

are no records of Strange's Men, known as Derby's Men by then, performing in London

at all during 1594.[16]

In terms of *A Knack*'s initial performances, circumstances beyond the control of

both Henslowe and Lord Strange meant that the play's life, at least on London's stages,

was cut short. However, during this economically vexing time, box office losses were

often compensated for by selling off play-texts to publishers, an important point in

relation to the appearance of *A Knack* in 1594 which records Kemp's fame. Critics have

not always acknowledged the parallels between plague and print. Alfred Pollard, for

example, had difficulty in accepting that the flood of play registrations began when the

theatres re-opened in late 1593, as opposed to when they were closed by the Privy

Council in the January of that year.[17] Pollard's argument was based on a more old-

fashioned view of performance and publication as competing alternatives. Pollard, no

doubt, was influenced by Heywood's address 'To the Reader' which prefaces *The*

English Traveller in 1633. Heywood's address is responsible, in the main, for

promoting the widespread belief that early modern acting companies were generally

opposed to the publication of plays. His oft-quoted words speak of works which did not

reach print for a number of reasons, one being that they were 'still retained in the hands

of some Actors who thinke it against their peculiar profit to have them come in Print'.

A further comment by Heywood is even more revealing in terms of the status of

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[16] In September 1593, Ferdinando Stanley, Lord Strange, inherited the Earldom of Derby. His company then became known as Derby's rather than Strange's Men. For more on the fate of the playing companies, see Scott McMillin, *The Elizabethan Theatre and The Book of Sir Thomas More* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 57.

[17] Alfred W. Pollard, *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos: A Study in the Bibliography of Shakespeare's Plays 1594-1685* (London, 1909), cited in Blayney, 'The Publication of Playbooks', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, pp. 383-422 (pp. 383-4).

playwriting at this time, where he claims that, 'it never was any great ambition in me, to bee in this kind Volumniously read'.[18]

The recent work of textual critics such as Peter Blayney, Roslyn Knutson, and Richard Dutton suggests that the London companies viewed performance and print as synergistic as opposed to rival forms of dramatic media.[19] For Blayney, in particular, the belief that 'acting companies usually considered publication to be against their best interests', is one of the 'flimsy' early-twentieth-century 'narrative[s]' which have muddied Shakespeare scholarship since the publication of Pollard's *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos* in 1909. Blayney proves his point by listing statistics which show a marked increase in entries in the Stationers' Register for the printing of 'play-books' between the months of December 1593 and May 1595, dates which correlate with the opening, as well as the closing, of the theatres during plague-related disruption. Discussing the wave of play-book publication shortly after the playhouses reopened in December 1593, Blayney argues as follows:

> It would seem likely that the closure, rather than the reopening caused the glut. But if we decline to make that assumption, there is a perfectly plausible reason why the reopening itself might have prompted the players to flood the market with scripts. The strategy is known today as "publicity", or "advertising".[20]

Perhaps there was no point in advertising a play that you could not see, and therefore the players capitalised on the reopening of the theatres to make up for lost income.

An unprecedented number of plays were printed at the end of a period of plague in 1594, of which eighteen had been written for, and performed before, a paying audience.[21] Blayney argues further, however, that the financial gain from the sales of

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[18] R. H. Shepherd, ed., *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood*, 6 vols (London, 1876; repr. London: Pearson, 1964), IV.5.
[19] Blayney, 'Publication of Playbooks', pp. 383-422; Roslyn L. Knutson, 'The Repertory', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, pp. 461-80; Richard Dutton, *Licensing, Censorship and Authorship in Early Modern England: Buggeswords* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), esp. pp. 90-113.
[20] Blayney, 'Publication of Playbooks', pp. 383-6.
[21] Cf. Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p. 46.

plays to publishers would have been insignificant, estimating that a stationer would have paid approximately 30 shillings for a manuscript.[22] 'Since the overall demand for plays was unimpressive', Blayney concludes, 'it is likely that many of those that saw print were offered to, rather than sought out by, their publishers'.[23] Coupled with the usual paucity in the demand amongst the reading public for 'play-books', the printing and selling of plays, it seems, was a less than reliable source of income, let alone profit. Stationers, in fact, were fortunate if sales exceeded the initial print run in most examples of published drama.

More controversially, and in direct opposition to Heywood's claims, Erne argues that Shakespeare's company eventually endorsed a policy of publishing plays two years after their initial performances.[24] Rates of literacy in early-modern London by this time are now thought to have been higher than previously acknowledged. For example, it is now believed that by the early 1620s, seventy per cent of London's tradesmen were literate, which provides a possible reason for Heywood's dramatic snobbery.[25] Moreover, Stern has also argued recently that, despite scholarly claims of widespread illiteracy throughout early modern London, there was a profound connection between both reading and watching plays. 'Bookish spectators', Stern claims, 'were often to be found in the London playhouses', where text from the title-pages of plays was also used as 'title boards' during performances. In this way, as Stern suggests, 'the practice of reading critically in the theatre was melded with the practice of watching critically'. For example, the words '*The Tempest*' printed in large lettering next to the stage, as

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[22] W. W. Greg had already argued much earlier that 'the few shillings that a publisher would have paid for a manuscript can have been no matter of consequence to a thriving company'. W. W. Greg, *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare: A Survey of the Foundations of the Text* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942), p. 44.

[23] Blayney, 'Publication of Playbooks', p. 398.

[24] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, pp. 78-100..

[25] Brayman Hackel, 'The "Great Variety" of Readers"', p. 141.

Stern argues, must have suggested some thematic resonances to the audience which

went beyond that of a mere storm at sea, and perhaps to one in the mind.[26]

There does, then, seem to be an association between plays as both performances

and as written (or printed) texts. Blayney's contention that the links between the

publication of plays and the reopening of the theatres would be known today as

'"publicity"' or '"advertising"' seems particularly applicable to the publication of *A*

Knack in 1594. In this light, and in that of Stern's theory outlined above, one wonders

what the effect *A Knack*'s printed reference of Kemp's 'merrimentes' might have had in

the playhouse during the play. As Nungezer suggests, the promise of Kemp's personal

appearance in the scene would have been taken as a 'guarantee of amusing clownage'.[27]

In this way, his 'merrimentes' must also have triggered off a number of expectations of

comic and anarchic play. As Marlowe's *Faustus* reveals, such demands were still at

large by 1604 and this may explain, to an extent, why *A Knack* was printed in early

1594.

Following the reopening of the theatres in late 1593, Jones lodged his

publication of *A Knack* with the Stationers' Company on 7 January 1594. The entry in

the Stationers' Register reads as follows:

> Rich: Iones Entered for his Copie vnder theandes of the Wardens. A comedie
> entitled a Knack to knowe a knave newlye sett fourth as it hath sundrye tymes
> ben plaid by Ned. Allen and his Companie wth kemps applauded Merymente of
> the men of Gotehm.

The details included here suggest that Jones was attempting to make the most of the

play's impressive theatrical genesis. The use of Alleyn's fame as a tragedian seems to

have been quite standard. Using evidence from Henslowe's diary, Susan Cerasano has

shown how '[Edward] Alleyn's acting was "marketed" to The Rose Playhouse's

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[26] Tiffany Stern, 'Watching as Reading: the Audience and Written Text in Shakespeare's Playhouse', in
How To Do Things With Shakespeare: New Approaches, New Essays, ed. Laurie Maguire (London:
Blackwell, 2008), pp. 136-59 (pp. 137-52).
[27] Nungezer, *A Dictionary of Actors*, p. 217.

audience as much as Marlowe's plays'.[28]   There is also a link here between Alleyn and

the residue of an earlier comic stage. Gurr argues that following the failure of the

Queen's Men, and 'depressed' after the death of Tarlton in 1588, their close rivals

Worcester's Men became London's most successful company. It was from Worcester's

Men, as Gurr notes, that 'the leading actors of the next decade, and in particular one,

Edward Alleyn, emerged'. Eventually, following two years of 'rapidly changing

fortunes' amongst the capital's acting troupes, 1590 saw two companies amalgamate

and take up position as London's principal company. This was the 'joint enterprise' of

the Admiral's and Strange's Men, which lasted until 1594 when the most successful

company of all, Shakespeare's Lord Chamberlain's Men, were formed out of what Gurr

describes as the last major reshuffle.[29]

It is perhaps unsurprising, then, to find Kemp's name listed alongside that of

Alleyn's in the promotion of *A Knack*. The only known quarto edition of the play

followed suit later that year. The title-page reads similarly as follows:

> A most pleasant and/merie new Comedie,/ Intituled,/*A Knack to knowe a Knaue*.
> Newlie set foorth, as it hath sundrie/tymes bene played by ED. ALLEN/and his
> Companie.
>
> *With KEMPS applauded Merrimentes*/of the men of Goteham, in receiuing/the
> King into Goteham.[30]

In both the Stationers' Register and the quarto, Kemp's name, along with that of

Alleyn's, is 'magnetic' enough to be used as an explicit marketing tool with which to

sell the play to readers. In the quarto itself, however, Kemp is not only named but his

'applauded' comic role is also explicitly alluded to. Moreover, the play's reference to

Kemp is more prominent and stands alone, and the previous Stationers' reference to his

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[28] Susan P. Cerano, 'Edward Alleyn, the New Model Actor, and the Rise of the Celebrity in the 1590s', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England: An Annual Gathering of Research, Criticism and Reviews*, 18 (2005), 47-58 (52). On Alleyn's other roles, see Thomson, 'Rogues and Rhetoricians', pp. 321-335.
[29] Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, pp. 34-7.
[30] Both the Stationers' entry and the title-page of *A Knack* are reproduced in Proudfoot, *A Knack*, p. v.

'applauded Merymente' is transcribed into '*Merrimentes*'. This may well have

promised, more temptingly, a prolonged comic display by the famous clown, with

Kemp's independent persona and cross-company celebrity reflected more emphatically

in the quarto, both in the wording and in the material lay-out of the title-page.

 As a major selling point behind the production of the quarto, Kemp's reputation

would have been particularly useful in providing wide-spread publicity for the play,

both on stage and in print, and perhaps even in tavern yards, given his reputation and

links with Tarlton. Philip Gaskell has shown how the title-pages of early modern plays

were important marketing commodities and far more than mere front-covers to printed

plays. The type used to print them was often kept standing in the press after the printing

of the book, which allowed for the convenient re-use of type if additional advertising

were required.[31] The title-pages of plays were also often used as playbills with which to

attract audiences at this time. As Chambers notes, they were 'set up on posts in

conspicuous places up and down the city and probably also at the play-house doors',[32]

so offering yet more evidence, it seems, of the porosity between page and stage at the

time.

 Certain authors, however, seem to have objected to this practice. In 1594, the

year of *A Knack*'s publication, Thomas Nashe's Preface to *The Terrors of the Night*

complained that,

> a number of you there bee, who consider neither premises nor conclusions, but
> piteouslie torment Title Pages on euerie poast, neuer reading farther of anie
> Booke, than Imprinted by Simeon such a signe.[33]

Nashe's words suggest a fickle London public, more interested in watching a new play

than in reading it. Much later, however, this keenness for 'popular' culture appears to

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[31] Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 116.
[32] Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, II, p.547.
[33] McKerrow, *Works of Thomas Nashe*, I, 343.

have been transposed to the idea of the book itself,[34] where the speaker of John Davies of Hereford's *Paper's Complaint* derides those who 'pester Poasts, with Titles of new bookes'.[35] Later again, in the third epigram of his 1616 Folio, Jonson, addressing the bookseller, instructs him not to 'haue my title-leafe on posts, or walls'.[36] By this time, it seems that dramatists were even less keen than Heywood to allow their 'works' to be associated with the stage.

Despite these objections, *A Knack's* title-page, I would suggest, eloquently expresses the 'mingle-mangle' of theatrical and literary culture still at large in 1594. Both the Stationers' record of the play and the quarto's paratext bind together the supposedly competing arenas of stage and page at this time. They also document Kemp as part of the play's impressive theatrical pedigree and use him simultaneously to promote the play both in performance and in print. It is worth returning briefly, in this light, to Henslowe's 'titus & ondronicus'. As in the case of *A Knack*, there is every possibility that this play was an updated version of an earlier work which was played at the same time as *A Knack* in January 1593. Henslowe's diary lists performances of another 'titvs', now believed to have been *Titus and Vespasian*, which may have been an earlier version of Shakespeare's play, on 6, 15 and 25, the second of which was played the day after 'the cnacke' on 14 January, and the third after 'the knacke' on 24 January.[37] If Kemp, as I discuss in Chapter Three, took the part of the clown in Shakespeare's *Titus*, then the multiple references to the actor in the registration and publication of *A Knack* the same year might well reveal Jones' desire to capitalise on

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[34] I use the term 'popular' in the sense of new here.

[35] Alexander B. Grosart, ed., *The Complete Works of John Davies of Hereford*, 2 vols. (London: Privately Printed, 1875-77; repr. New York: AMS Press, 1967), II.76, cited in Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p. 97.

[36] C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson, eds., *The Works of Ben Jonson*, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-52), VIII, 28, cited in Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p. 36.

[37] I will return to this subject in more detail when discussing the dating of Shakespeare's *Titus* in Chapter Three.

the clown's return to the London stage, and particularly on his forthcoming appearances in Shakespeare's spectacular new revenge tragedy.[38]

Given these circumstances, *A Knack*'s explicit promotion of Kemp's 'applauded merriments' is not surprising in a text which describes itself as 'newlie set foorth', as the comedian was charismatic enough on stage to attract new audiences. As Thomson argues, commercial theatre needed the 'crowd-pulling' presence of the stage clown. 'The audience', Thomson continues, would have demanded his presence and 'accepted no less. It wanted its money's worth.'[39] And so, it seems, did readers. Four years on from his publication of *Tamburlaine*, which contains the efforts of both playwright and publisher to drive a wedge between theatre and literature, Jones is clearly reliant on Kemp's reputation as a theatrical performer of 'merriments' to validate his printed text of *A Knack*. Ironically enough, Jones provides a final endorsement of his quarto of the play. Following his impressive and recognisable printer's device, used regularly between 1592 and 1595,[40] the text reads:

> Imprinted at London by Richard Jones, dwelling
> At the signe of the Rose and Crowne, nere
> Holborne bridge. 1594.

It is Jones himself, then, who dominates the final quarter of the quarto's title-page, in lettering which is far clearer than any of the preceding type.[41] As in the case of *Tamburlaine*, *A Knack*'s title-page contains a wealth of information with which to attract both audiences and readers. Moreover, Erne's 'authorizing conglomerate' in *Tamburlaine* is now made up of printer and actor as opposed to printer and playwright, while there is still no reference to any author, or authors, of the play. In *A Knack*, they

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[38] Bate notes the unusually long rehearsal period for *Titus* of four weeks, which caused the play to open well into Henslowe's run at The Rose that January. See Bate, *Titus*, p. 69.

[39] Thomson, 'Rogues and Rhetoricians', p. 334.

[40] See R. B. McKerrow, *A Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers In England, Scotland, and Ireland, and of Foreign Printers of English Books*, *1557-1640* (repr. Conneticut: Martino Publishing, 2005).

[41] This is despite the fact that James Roberts was the likely printer of the text. Cf., Proudfoot, p. v.

are side-lined even further as space is made on the quarto's title-page for Kemp's 'applauded' role as a conspicuous foil to the anonymous author.

It was not only Kemp, then, who took up Nashe's challenge to produce a 'merriment'. So did Henslowe, and also Jones, who pounced on Kemp's reputation as a theatrical merry-maker with a textual promise of the clown's antics for readers as well as playgoers. In this way, we can see how Kemp's fame as a leading clown was clearly a bankable commodity for both Henslowe and Jones in disseminating their play to London's culturally diverse audiences. Kemp appealed, it seems, both to the gaping, 'conceited fondlings' in the playhouses, and also to Gabriel Harvey's 'wiser sort',[42] both at court and amongst the capital's burgeoning readership. *A Knack* points in this way, I would argue, to how the 'low' art of theatre continued to dominate the dramatic – and even print - arena at this time.

II.   Authorship, composition and revision

A Knack's anonymity is by no means unusual for a play published at this time. The question of the play's composition, however, is one which has vexed scholars for several hundred years, perhaps because of the connections it provides between Kemp and Shakespeare who is believed, as noted, to have written Kemp's part in the play. The eighteenth-century editor Edmond Malone attributed the play's composition to Greene. Since then, a number of other playwrights have been added to the list, including Nashe and Peele.[43] Other names offered entrench the play's performative, and festive, origins more deeply. The comic actor and playwright Wilson has been put

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[42] Gabriel Harvey, *Marginalia*, ed. G. C. More Smith (Stratford-upon-Avon: Shakespeare Head Press, 1913), reproduced in *The Norton Shakespeare*, gen. ed. Stephen Greenblatt, with eds. Walter Cohen, Jean Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), pp. 3329-30 (p. 3329).
reproduced in *The Norton Shakespeare*, pp. 3329-30 (p. 3329).
[43] Arthur Freeman ascribes joint authorship of the play to Greene and Nashe, in 'Two Notes on *A Knack to Know a Knave*', *Notes and Queries*, 9:9 (1962), 326-7.

forward as one possibility. Even Kemp himself, according to the editor F. G. Fleay, was responsible in part for the authorship of the play.[44] This leads me to another possible reason behind the strategic marketing of Kemp in the quarto of *A Knack*, one which relates to its composition and points, perhaps, to the revision of the play in order to make the most of the actor's fame and popularity in 1594.

Critics describe *A Knack* as strikingly out-dated for its time, with action harking back to the didactic morality plays and interludes of an earlier stage. Edith Pearlman, for example, suggests that *A Knack* is 'an old-fashioned moral play, part abstraction and part pseudo-history',[45] in which the presence of the character Honestie pervades the play with a socially conscious theme in the vein of older allegorical drama. It is interesting to note, therefore, that Weimann and Bruster describe Kemp's 'merrimentes' sequence as either 'a comic insertion' or 'some clownish supplement' to the play,[46] suggesting that the play may well have been updated at some point. As Malone noted, Greene's prose works show a similarity with the text of *A Knack*. But Greene was dead by 1592, so if he did write all or part of the play, it must have been in existence well before then. G. R. Proudfoot suggests that the play's title was borrowed from the lost recusant 'book', also entitled *A Knack to Know a Knave*, which enjoyed some notoriety in the 1570s.[47] Carol Chillington Rutter argues that the play Henslowe's diary refers to as 'Knacke' which was staged at The Rose in 1594-5 was *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, which was 'probably a reworking of *A Knack to Know a Knave* from Strange's repertoire of 1592'.[48]

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[44] For a full account of the performance and publishing history of the play, see Proudfoot, *A Knack*, pp. v-vi. See also Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, IV, 24-5.

[45] Edith Pearlman, 'Shakespeare at Work: *Romeo and Juliet*', *English Literary Renaissance*, 24:2 (1994), 315-342 (330).

[46] Weimann and Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance*, p. 84.

[47] Proudfoot, *A Knack*, p. vi.

[48] See Carol Chllington Rutter, ed., *Documents of The Rose Playhouse* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), pp. 87-8. More recent scholarship on the origins of *A Knack* is scarce. There are two articles, both written in the 1930s, however, which attest to its continuing popularity on stage which

If Henslowe's 'ne' label does describe *A Knack* as 'marketably new', to paraphrase Knutson,[49] as opposed to newly written, then the prominence of Kemp in the printed play may well reflect the adaptation of an older work. We know from Henslowe's diary that he often paid playwrights to adapt or revise plays in order to 'freshen' them.[50] Plays could be performed unchanged too often and become stale, causing them to lose their appeal for audiences. As Kastan argues,

> nearly two-thirds of the plays listed in Henslowe's diary either begin as collaborations or have additions or revisions undertaken by other writers as companies sought to keep their property current.[51]

Stern also shows how the adaptation and updating of plays was frequent policy in late-Elizabethan theatre. A significant level of change was often made to plays which had already been performed, Stern contends, in order to extend and enhance box office potential.[52] The title-page of Q2 *Romeo*, for example, one of the plays containing evidence of Kemp, claims to have been 'newly corrected, augmented, and amended'.[53] Plays, it seems, were revised regularly and updated as scholars suggest. Also, though, alteration was a 'prized quality', especially if it guaranteed an increase in revenue in an environment where publication, as well as performance, could give old texts new life and meaning.[54]

The success of *A Knack* in 1592, coupled with Kemp's appearance in 1594, certainly implies revision, where his 'applauded merrimentes' are recorded in a play

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might be due to updating: Louis B. Wright, 'Social Aspects of Some Belated Moralities', *Anglia* 54 (1930): and Robert Boyes Sharpe, 'The Real War of the Theatres: Shakespeare's Fellows in Rivalry with the Admiral's Men, 1594-1603', in *Repertories, Devices, and Types*, Modern Language Association of America, Monograph Series 5 (Boston and London: Oxford University Press, 1935). Both publications are cited by Tom Rutter, 'Merchants of Venice in "A Knack to Know an Honest Man", *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 19 (2006), 194-211 (195).

[49] See Knutson, 'Shakespeare's Repertory'.

[50] Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, p. 11.

[51] Kastan, *Shakespeare After Theory*, p. 34.

[52] Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, p. 45. On the updating of plays, see also Bentley, *Profession of Dramatist*, pp. 198-99.

[53] See Plate 6.

[54] Cf. Cedric C. Brown and Arthur F. Marotti, eds., *Texts and Cultural Change in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997).

which is 'newlie set foorth'. Its popularity may also be attributed to the lure of Kemp as a foil to any didactic intentions in the play's out-of-date morality thrust. As Martin Wiggins argues, 'most London playgoers […] were more actively interested in the pleasures of the stage than its potential for moral instruction'.[55] Kemp's appearance must have been a major source of attraction for audiences. I would also suggest, in this light, that one of the reasons for the explicit promotion of Kemp on the title-page of the play can be found in the term 'merrimentes' itself.

Thelma Greenfield argues that Theseus' invocation of youthful revels at the opening of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* occupies territory which is either 'adjacent or identical' to Folly's domain in Desiderius Erasmus' *The Praise of Folly* (1509).[56] For Greenfield, Theseus' command to 'stir up the Athenian youth to merriments' and 'awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth' (1.1.13-14), reveals the over-arching comic philosophy of the play.[57] In contrast to more orthodox views of 'folly', contained in works such as Sebastian Brant's *Ship of Fools* (published in 1497 and 1507), Erasmus claimed for his goddess 'the same freedom which the uneducated allow in popular comedies'.[58] As Weimann and Bruster argue, the Erasmian figure of Folly

> not only projected the deep irony of carnivalesque inversions and contrarieties; she also invoked expectations associated with stage in the marketplace, as when ostensibly she adopted 'an extemporaneous speech' in, deliberately, the language of 'pitchmen, low comedians, and jokesters.'[59]

Kemp's own 'merrimentes' might be described as a claim to an all-inclusive comedy which depends on a largesse similar to that of Erasmus' goddess in her ability to bring pleasure to both readers and audiences alike. We can see how the clown-related

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[55] Martin Wiggins, *Shakespeare and the Drama of his Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 27.
[56] Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, trans. Clarence H. Miller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979).
[57] Thema N. Greenfield, '*A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the *Praise of Folly*', *Comparative Literature*, 20:3 (1968), 236-244 (236).
[58] Erasmus, *Praise of Folly*, ed. Miller, p. 12.
[59] Ibid., p. 10.

information on the title-page of *A Knack* encourages one both to see and read the play through the narrow window of Kemp's comic participation, as opposed to its wider moral framework. Despite the brevity of his appearance in *A Knack* (the sequence is made up of only ninety-two lines of dialogue), the scene in which he appears contains a number of instances of the mischievous customs of residual stage festivity outlined by Weimann and Bruster above, and inherited by Kemp as an entertainer in the popular tradition. *A Knack* provides, in this way, further evidence of the continuing demand for 'unsophisticated' 'clownage' by 1594. It also provides evidence of Kemp as an instrumental force in the business of theatre, 'whose workings [were] dominated by parameters of profit, desire, production, consumption, and power'.[60] We can, then, perhaps attribute Kemp's appearance in *A Knack* as much to external commercial factors as to any internal dramatic necessity.

III.   The 'merrimentes' sequence

Wiles contends that the comic sequence in which the famous clown appears is 'only loosely tied to the narrative'.[61] But there is a closer correlation, I believe, between Kemp's 'merrimentes' and the wider play which merits further study.

    A Knack's morality essence may well reveal that what Wiggins describes as the 'Horatian axis between education and entertainment' remained apparent in certain plays of the time.[62] The play is set in the tenth-century England of King Edgar and Saint Dunstan, and has two quite separate narrative threads which blend the play's didactic stance with romantic comedy. It illustrates, in this way, the type of dramatic 'mingle-mangle' Lyly complained of in *Midas*. But it becomes even more of a 'hodge-podge' if we consider how this mixture is embellished further by Kemp's 'merrimentes'.

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[60] Weimann, *Author's Pen and Actor's Voice*, p. 12.
[61] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 73.
[62] Wiggins, *Shakespeare and the Drama of His Time*, p. 27.

The main plot of the play contains an archaic dramatic timbre, where a coney-catcher, a corrupt courtier, a hoarding farmer, and an uncharitable priest who takes goods in pawn (the last two also export wares to England's enemies overseas) are denounced and punished by Honestie. In the sub-plot, the king's trusted servant Ethenwald, the Earl of Cornwall, woos the beautiful Alfrida on behalf of the king, but falls in love with her and marries her himself. The king's power, then, is effectively subverted in that he is deprived of his betrothed by one of his courtiers in a comic-romantic plot-line. Kemp's 'merrimentes' follow on immediately from a conversation between the king and his courtier Perin, in which Ethenwald has been exposed as a traitor.[63] The concerns of the 'merrimentes', however, are not those of social morality or princely ethics. If anything, the scene seems more concerned with disrupting the relatively slow-paced action of the play up to this point. It also contains, however, some thematic and comic links with the plot outlined so far and which merit further investigation in the light of Kemp's popularity.

A summary of the sequence is helpful at this point. Kemp and two other comic actors enter the play with the following entry direction: '*Enter mad men of Goteham, to wit, a Miller, a Cobler, and a Smith*' (l. 1363).[64] The clowns enter the action in the guise of tradesmen - in, that is, a pseudo-civic vein, glancing perhaps satirically at the amateur guilds who performed the mystery plays. It is the least 'civic' of the characters, the Miller, who declares immediately the 'Mad Men's intentions to deliver a petition to the king. His opening lines also reveals a desire, through what appears to be a deliberate quibble, to '*mis*behaue our selues to the Kings worship' (l. 1365, my emphasis). This instils the scene, from the outset, with a 'topsy turvy' aesthetic,

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[63] The sequence is printed between lines 1363 and 1411 according to Proudfoot's line numbering. References are given parenthetically in the text from this point on.

[64] *A Knack to Know a Knave* (London, 1594), E4ᵛ, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 26 March 2013], reproduced on Plate 7.

alerting us to the fact that both the king, and the play, are the potential victims of festive subversion.

A bout of competitive and comic disagreement ensues as to who should speak to the king on the Mad Men's behalf. After some discussion, the Cobbler, played by Kemp, wins out:[65]

> *Mil.* I think the Smith were best to do it, for hees a wise man.
> *Cob.* Naighbor, he shall not doe it, as long as Jefferay the
> Translater is Maior of the towne.
> *Smith.* And why, I pray, because I would have put you from the Mace?
> *Mil.* No, not for that, but because he is no good fellow,
> Nor will not spend his pot for companie.

At this point, the tone of the language changes and becomes both lascivious and irreligious. The Smith responds, 'Why (sir) there was a god of our occupation, and I charge you by virtue of his godhed, to let me deliver the petition' (ll. 1367-74). Kemp's Cobbler-mayor immediately expands on this theme and introduces the festive, and in this case blasphemous, theme of cuckoldry: 'But soft you, your God was a Cuckold, and Godhed was the horne, and that's the Armes of the Godhed you call upon'. He will, he declares, 'stand to nothing/onlie but this.' 'But what?' the Smith replies, 'beare witnesse a gives me the But, and I am not willing to shoot'. The Smith's indignation mounts and the Miller has to calm him down with the following promise: 'let the Cobler deliver it, you shall see him mar all' (ll. 1375-88). This settles the argument and sets up the comedy to follow.

The Smith agrees, replying bawdily to the Miller that 'I will commit my selfe to you,/And lay my selfe open to you, lyke an Oyster'. The Miller then tells the duped Cobbler of the decision to let him deliver the petition, but implores the clown, cunningly, to 'doe it wisely for the credite of the towne' (ll. 1389-93). When the king

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[65] Wiles lists Jeffrey the 'Cobler' as one of Kemp's roles. Cf. *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 73.

enters and asks his retainer, 'How now Perin, who haue we here', the Cobbler responds

as follows:

> We the townes men of Goteham,
> Hearing your Grace would come this way,
> Did thinke it good for you to stay,
> And hear you, neighbours, bid somebody ring the bels,
> And we are come to you alone to deliver our petition.
>
> > (ll. 1400-04)

This is followed by the climax of the scene when the Mad Men's petition for a license

'to brew strong Ale thrise a week' is read out to the king by Perin, alluding comically,

perhaps, to the other characters' illiteracy. The king immediately grants the petition and

the brief scene ends as follows:

> *Kin.*   Well sirs, we grant your petition.
> *Cob.*   We humblie thanke your royall Majestie…
> *Kin.*   Come *Dunston*, lets away.
>
> > *Exeunt omnes.*
> > (1406-11)

The sequence is an odd and perplexing interlude in the play in many ways. Pearlman

notes that Kemp's jests are now rarely performed because they relate so often to

contemporaneous events which make no sense to audiences today.[66] Indeed, the

sequence is usually read in the light of the satiric overtones which relate to Kemp's

reputation as an anti-puritan and his involvement in the Marprelate 'war'.[67] However, if

we place the scene within the context of subversive stage 'clownage', it becomes, I

would argue, less obtuse. Moreover, given the number of references to cuckoldry in the

scene, there is an obvious correlation between the 'merrimentes' themselves, and what

we know of the contents of Kemp's jigs.

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[66] Pearlman, *Shakespeare at Work*, p. 330.
[67] The 'anti-puritan' contents of the scene are analysed most recently by Hornback, in *The English Clown Tradition*, p. 134.

IV.   Kemp's 'applauded' role

Kemp's roots in the 'misrule' tradition provided the foundations for the success and

independence so palpable on *A Knack*'s title-page. However, one of the elements of

Kemp's 'merrimentes' most frequently commented on is its paucity. While noting that

the play was one of Kemp's 'great successes', for example, Pearlman also argues that it

merely represents a 'pretext for clowning'. There is little, Pearlman adds, which is

'overtly witty' about the scene, and suggests further that:

> Without [Kemp's] advertisement on the title-page of *A Knack to Know a Knave*,
> even the most discriminating modern reader would be hard put to discover the
> glory of Elizabethan popular comedy in his few flat lines.[68]

It is difficult, admittedly, to get a real sense of staging from Kemp's fleeting appearance

in *A Knack*. It is also difficult to understand how, considering the quarto's overt

promotion of Kemp, the printed scene would have satisfied those readers tempted by the

actor's appearance in the play whose functional business as clown would have been to

instil the performance with comic vitality.

Wright argues, however, that 'without doubt the bulk of the clownery was

omitted in the printed version, or left for the improvisation of Kemp and his clowns'.[69]

Wiles suggests similarly that the 'scene was constructed in order to give Kemp freedom

to improvise' if he chose.[70]   Hornback binds the potentially fractious media of stage

and page yet further together, noting that the brevity of the scene indicates that 'Kemp

improvised more in performance to warrant advertising his connection to the play on the

title page'.[71] What Pearlman does not acknowledge, then, is that the 'merrimentes'

scene is brief due to the fact that the text of the play cannot reproduce action which was,

in the main, interpolated on stage. Moreover, if Kemp was at the centre of Strange's

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[68] See Pearlman, 'Shakespeare at Work', p. 330.
[69] Wright, 'Will Kemp and Commedia dell'Arte', p. 519.
[70] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 73.
[71] Hornback, *English Clown Tradition*, p. 134.

Men, and more famous even than Alleyne, as the lay-out of the quarto's title-page

suggests, we can be fairly certain that much of what might be termed the 'knock-about'

improvisation of the scene either went unrecorded, or lost its impact in the play's

transition from performance into the medium of print.[72] Consequently, while on the

page, for the solitary reader, these coldly printed lines can seem absurd; in the theatre

the effect would have been very different.

In order to illustrate this point more fully, it is useful to quote the director

Ingmar Bergman:

> One can write dialogue, but how it should be delivered, its rhythm and tempo,
> what is to take place between the lines – all this must be omitted for practical
> reasons.[73]

In the context of early modern 'clownage', this disparity between text and performance

is even more discernible. Weimann and Brewster argue that clowning,

> contained a nonsensical ingredient that not only precluded representational
> meaning but could not easily be reproduced on the page (if, in fact, it were able
> to be reproduced at all).

In the case of Kemp's brief and puzzling scene in *A Knack*, then, the text contains an

element of performance which can be 'perceived' but not 'perused'.[74] As a result, the

dialogue which does remain allows the scene to operate seemingly independently of the

wider play, and was also highly likely to vary from one performance to another. We

can best read the 'merrimentes' sequence, therefore, in the context of what Weimann

describes as the 'ancient, almost ubiquitous practice of unscripted, unsanctioned

performance', which would change from one performance to the next, and, as a result,

was textually unstable in print.[75]

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[72] I take the term 'knock-about' from Weimann and Bruster who use it to describe the 'nonsensical ingredient' in clowning. See *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance*, p. 81.
[73] Cited in Williams, *Drama in Performance*, p. 5.
[74] Weimann and Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance*, pp. 79-81.
[75] Weimann, *Author's Pen*, p. 24.

This instability is demarked further by the details of the 'Mad Men's' speech, where the most striking idiomatic element of the 'merrimentes' is the bawdy and blasphemous thrust of the overall dialogue. When Jeffrey declares, for example, that he will 'stand to nothing/onlie but this', the phallic pun is clear.[76] As Welsford shows, the root of salacious language on the early modern stage can be traced back to the satyr of Old Greek comedy and connections with the phallus.[77] An ambitious stage professional such as Kemp (and, no doubt his Mad Men colleagues), however, would have been unlikely to remain content with fixed comic parts. Coupled with the expectations of his 'rotten-throated slave' followers, Kemp would also have been more likely to turn away from, or undermine, any scripted lines – not only because he was expected to as the heir of Tarlton, but also in order to exploit his own comic talents in ways we can only guess at. As Weimann and Bruster argue, 'the jester's quasi self-sufficient store of facial mimicry and vulgar bodily *gestus*, defies any purely literary mode of representation'.[78]

Here, then, it seems likely that Jeffrey's words would have been accompanied on stage by suitably crude gestures and expressions which could not be translated into printed text, but which would have allowed the clowns to milk the comic potential of the scene to the full. We know, for example, that Kemp was notorious for making faces. A reference to him and his on-stage tricks appears in *A Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, when the character of Dromo, ruthlessly satirising Sidney,[79] states that 'clownes have bene thrust into playes by head and shoulders, ever since Kempe could make a scurvey face'.[80] It also seems probable that in *A Knack*, Kemp's 'scurvey' face would have had the same effect as Tarlton's 'head' peeping between Peacham's 'tire-house doore and

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[76] One of the meanings of 'to stand' in early modern vernacular was to have an erection. See, for example the dialogue of Sampson, one of the boisterous Capulet servants who open *Romeo and Juliet*: 'Me they shall feel while I am able to stand, and 'tis known I am a pretty piece of flesh' (1.1.25-6). G. Blakemore Evans, ed., *Romeo and Juliet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984; 2003), p. 69.

[77] Welsford, *The Fool*, p. 274.

[78] Weimann and Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance*, p. 79.

[79] See below, p. 37.

[80] Macray, *Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, 5.675-7.

Tapistrie'. In this way Jeffrey, like Tarlton's clowns, would typically have presented a 'very real' personality on stage.[81] We might further assume that, as in the case of the plays in which Tarlton appeared where the comedy depended largely on the audience knowing the actor as himself,[82] Kemp was similarly cast in *A Knack* 'as himself'. In this light, I would argue that Kemp's Jeffrey contains similar evidence of what Weimann and Brewster describe, in relation to Tarlton's Derick, as the 'threadbare guis[e] of the performer's biographical agency', where 'the social identity of the performer is […] compounded with, laughably, a counterfeit status'.[83]

First, Jeffrey insists on delivering the petition to the King by pulling rank over the other 'Mad Men': 'as long as Jefferay the Translater is Maior of the towne.' There is a suggestion, as already noted, that the other clowns allow him deliberately to deliver the petition in order to see him 'mar all'. Hornback describes Kemp's 'Translater' role as the 'misterming mayor of Gotham'.[84] Along with his 'scurvey' faces, Kemp was known as a 'mistak[e]r of the word', as Speed's description of Launce 'as your old Vice still' in *Two Gentlemen* suggests (3.1.277). Speed's words are telling in terms of the clown's use of the popular tradition in this early Shakespearean comedy. But they are also revelatory in the context of Kemp playing Launce, the role which is the subject of Chapter Four. Kemp had a propensity, it seems, for 'marring' words in a way which would now be termed as 'malapropism' after Mrs. Malaprop in Richard Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775), and thus synonymous with the ludicrous use of language most apparent in the later role of Dogberry examined in Chapter Six. The term 'Translater', then,

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[81] Welsford, *The Fool*, p. xii.
[82] See below, p. 33.
[83] Weimann and Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance*, p. 84.
[84] Hornback, *English Clown Tradition*, p. 134.

refers to the 'Maior's' and Kemp's own reputation as a maker of 'wordplay' and notorious cultivator of the pun.[85]

The language of the 'merrimentes' sequence thus builds on the liminal connections between the remote fictionality of the play and what Terence Hawkes describes as a '"real world"' experience.[86] If, for example, the scene is read in the context of the Marprelate dispute, then it illustrates the point made by Stern that actors were expected to respond to events extraneous to the script, or at least to events outside the world of the plays in which they took part.[87] As Hornback argues, 'the mad aldermen of Gotham are depicted as having several of the stereotypical features (even beyond ignorance) of the stage puritan'. As the clowns debate who shall deliver their petition, they not only invoke God's name (l. 1367), but also that of the pagan god Vulcan when the Smith hypocritically invokes the 'vertue of [the] godhead' of the 'god of [his] occupation' (ll. 1374-5). Kemp's Jeffrey, in this way, takes part in 'stock […] anti-puritan comedy' in the role of an '"ecclesiastical cobbler"'.[88]

A Knack's aldermen's trades of Cobbler, Miller and Smith would also have represented a recognisable part of the fabric of London society, disturbing the play's historical setting further by adding an undeniably contemporary flavour to the scene. It is interesting to note, in this light, further allusions to contemporary 'clownage' in the sequence itself. The Mad Men's demands to 'brew strong ale', for example, is reminiscent of Tarlton's subversive, tavern-style humour.[89] If we are to believe the text of *Tarltons Jests* once more, the following anecdote recounts an instance of the actor's extraordinary comic bravado:

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[85] M. M. Mahood opens her seminal account of punning in Shakespeare's plays with the contention that 'wordplay was a game the Elizabethans played seriously'. See M. M. Mahood, *Shakespeare's Wordplay* (London: Methuen, 1968), p. 9.
[86] Terence Hawkes, *Shakespeare in the Present* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 93.
[87] Cf. Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, p. 27
[88] Hornback, *English Clown Tradition*, p. 134.
[89] On Tarlton's infamous 'tavern' style, see Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 14.

The queen being discontented, which Tarlton perceiving, took upon him to delight her with some quant jest. Whereupon he counterfeited a drunkard and called for beer, which was brought immediately. Her majesty, noting his humor, commanded that he should have no more, for quoth she, he will play the beast, and so shame himself. 'Fear not you,' quoth Tarlton, 'for your beer is small enough.' Whereat her majesty laughed heartily and commanded that he should have enough.[90]

A Knack's reference to the brewing of 'strong ale' also provides a further connection between Kemp, Shakespeare and the festive aesthetic in the play, through the subversive politics of *2 Henry VI's* Cade, probably already staged by 1592, and with Cade possibly played by Kemp as Helgerson and others believe.[91] Cade makes the following demands in 4.2:

There shall be in England seven halfpenny loaves sold for a penny, the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops, and I will make it a felony to drink small beer. All the realm shall be in common, and in Cheapside shall my palfrey go to grass. And when I am king, as king I will be.

(*2 Henry VI*, 4.2.58-62)

Cade, Hornbook argues, along with Helgerson, is another example of 'Kemp's celebrated anti-puritan clowning'.[92] But a more relevant observation at this point, perhaps, is that Cade's speech anticipates a socially subversive flavour, similar to that promoted by Kemp at the end of his 'merrimentes' in *A Knack*, when the Cobbler-mayor addresses King Edgar in a surprisingly confident manner:

We the townes men of *Goteham*,
Hearing your Grace would come this way,
Did thinke it good for you to stay,
And hear you, neighbours, bid somebody ring the bels,
And we are come to you alone to deliuer our petition.

(ll. 1400-4)

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[90] See *Tarltons Jests*, A2r.
[91] See below, p. 61, n. 257.
[92] Hornback, *English Clown Tradition*, p. 135. See also Stephen Longstaffe, '"A Short Report and Not Otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', in *Shakespeare and Carnival: After Bakhtin*, ed. Ronald Knowles (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 13-25.

Clearly, the Cobbler does not wait until he is presented to his monarch. Much later, Feste's relationship with Olivia in *Twelfth Night* (1601), which challenges her superiority, retains the subversive element of Jeffrey's clownish dramatic function; and this is played out more obviously in the 'allowed' verbal fencing between Lear and his Fool (1608). This type of social subversion is rooted in the 'misrule' culture of residual theatrical modes. [93] More often than not, however, aristocratic rank, while challenged in certain folk traditions, usually retains its social hegemony. At the end of the action of *A Knack*, for example, Honestie refuses to amend the death sentence imposed on two (puritan) villains.

From this point of view, we might also read Kemp's 'merrimentes' sequence, along with critics such as Pearlman, as an example of one of Sidney's anathemas in its 'extreame shew' of on-stage 'doltishnes'. [94] The simple and clownish tetrameter rhyme in Jeffrey's presentation to the king ('Hearing your Grace would come this way,/Did thinke it good for you to stay') is typical of Kemp's comical doggerel, as I will show in later chapters. The Cobbler's lines sit awkwardly within this short scene, and the rhyme has the clumsiness of improvisation as the clown appears, predictably, to abandon the script at will. In other words, Kemp's Jeffrey contains what Weimann describes as the 'unmasking and debunking potential of [the fool's] mimesis'. [95]

We might also attribute the sparseness of Kemp's printed 'merrimentes', then, to the actor's links with earlier forms of autonomous 'clownage' which undermine attempts to portray fictional verisimilitude on stage. Jean Howard argues that 'the material practices attendant upon stage production and theatre going were at odds with

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[93] For an account of the subversive power of medieval and early modern theatrical culture, see Sponsler, *Drama and Resistance*.

[94] Sidney, *Apologie for Poetrie*, K2^r.

[95] Weimann, *Popular Tradition*, p. 11.

the ideological import of the dramatic fables that the theatre disseminated'.[96] This

creates, to use Belsey's phrase, 'collisions between emblem and illusion', as both

character and spectator participate in making dramatic meaning through the figure of

Kemp on stage.[97] Kemp's particular connections with Tarlton and the Vice tradition

would thus have infused him with the capacity to deliberately juggle the layers of

illusion and reality at work in the play. Such features can allow plays, as Hawkes

argues, to 'explod[e] with "presentist" energy into the here-and-now material life of its

spectators', thereby 'provoking, engaging with, moulding, constructing and modifying

inchoate experience'.[98] The result, as Weimann's extensive work on the presentist

aesthetic of the popular stage has shown, is that an audience's experience of the play is

deepened and their response to the merging of their own world with that of the fiction

presented on stage becomes part of the play. The audience, as Hawkes argues

elsewhere, would have left the playhouse with 'the speech of the play on the stage as

part of the oral reality of the speech of life off-stage'. [99]

Coupled with skills of improvisation inherited from the Vice tradition, these

liminal elements of 'clownage' in *A Knack* would have ensured that Kemp's antics

occupied the subversive space of the Vice's 'play' still dominant in late-Elizabethan

theatre. We can see, in this light, how Kemp must have occupied an ambiguous zone of

performance in the play. Both actor and character at once, Kemp's Jeffrey unsettles and

disperses what Weimann describes as 'locations' of authority 'between the writing and

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[96] Jean E. Howard, *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 7.
[97] Belsey, *Subject of Tragedy*, p. 31.
[98] Hawkes, *Shakespeare in the Present*, pp. 94, 97.
[99] Terence Hawkes, *Shakespeare's Talking Animals: Language in Drama and Society* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), p. 56.

production of the play', [100] and then propagated by the jig to follow, as I will show in the following section.

So far in *A Knack*, Kemp sits on an earlier tremulous border between page and stage. The clown's extemporal theatricality, generated by performance, affects the play-text and its reproduction in print. In this way, he provides an unstable and unfixed linguistic and semantic trope which exploits the plurality of meaning in both writing and performance, and which, as we will see, sometimes deliberately invites misconstruction. His body can thus be interpreted as a 'duplicitous signifier',[101] one which can work against the grain of the text in silent expressions or gestures which cannot be fixed in print as it is sustained, as Worthen argues, neither by a text, nor by relation to an author.[102] Kemp's success as Jeffrey on stage, therefore, depended, to a large extent, on those very 'fond and frivolous jestures, digressing and […] far unmeet for the matter', which had to be omitted if a text was to be rendered suitable for a 'wise' readership. In this way, Kemp's 'merrimentes' are reminiscent of, and perhaps aligned with, the sub-literary jig.

V.   Kemp's jig versus Kemp's play

Baskervill views the jig as merely a residue of popular culture, and not necessarily connected to developments on stage.[103] I would argue, however, that what we know of the jig presents a further line of enquiry into Kemp's 'merrimentes' in *A Knack*, and thus into the play itself.

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[100] Weimann, *Author's Pen*, p. 18.
[101] Terry Eagleton, *William Shakespeare* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), p. 7.
[102] Cf. William B. Worthen, *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 28.
[103] Baskervill, *Elizabethan Jig*, p. 6.

For Wiles, the 'Mad Men's' scene seems completely self-contained,[104] a quality which may well reflect the wider move to restrict the clown-related festivity voiced in *Tamburlaine*. However, any spirit of 'misrule' hinted at in the scene, and by extension in the play itself, would have lived on in the clowns' jig at the end of the performance, where the boundaries between play and audience were obfuscated further.[105] Rather than considering the jig as 'excrementally' tacked onto the end of a performance, therefore, there is a more weighty connection to be made between Kemp's 'merrimentes' and the festive undercurrent of the wider narrative of the play. Moreover, as I will show in this section, Kemp's brief appearance in *A Knack* encourages us to view both play and jig as mutually supportive, as opposed to disparate dramatic forms.

A closer look at the language and structure of the 'merrimentes' scene contributes to documentary evidence of Kemp's reputation as Nashe's 'Cavaliero Kemp' in his 1590 *Almond for a Parrat*, and, as he describes himself in his *Nine Daies Wonder*, a 'master of mad jigs and merry jests'. It is easy to imagine how the overt sexual overtones in Kemp's 'merrimentes' sequence must have been highly appealing to audiences, particularly the 'whores, bedles, bawds, and sergeants' who, according to Guilpin 'filthily' chanted 'Kemps Jigge'. I have already noted the phallic references made in the scene. The Smith's demand to 'beare witnesse a giues me the But, and I am not willing to shoot' suggests, perhaps, more vigorous activity on stage (ll. 1382-3). There are also explicit references made to the familiar trope of the 'cuckold', common in medieval folklore and literature, as noted, and a prominent feature of Kemp's own jigs. Jeffrey's statement to the Smith, therefore, is revealing: 'your God was a Cuckold, and Godhed was the horne' (1375-6). As also noted above, the references to 'God'

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[104] Cf. Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 73-4.
[105] Cf.Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition*, p. 21.

were part of the anti-Puritan debate identified by Hornback. Such overtly vulgar and

blasphemous language could also be read, I would suggest, as a tempting mid-

performance taster for those 'filthy' followers of Kemp and his jigs.

Baskervill argues that Kemp's 'merrimentes' seem highly ironic in *A Knack*, a

play with a strong vein of moral didacticism.[106] Jig-related material, however, is not

confined to the 'merriments' sequence. Early in the action, when sent to woo Alfrida on

the king's behalf, Ethenwald states his intention to betray, and effectively cuckold, the

king before even seeing his master's chosen bride:

> Now I am come to doe the kings command –
> To court a Wench & win her for the king –
> But if I lyke her well, I say no more,
> Tis good to haue a hatch before the dore:
> […]
> So may I see the Maid, woo, wed, I and bed her to.
>
> (ll. 727-33)

There are shades here of Shakespeare's later comedy *Twelfth Night* (1601), where

Viola/Cesario ironically wins the heart of Olivia, which suggests that Elizabethans

might well have been far more accustomed to such 'proxy wooings' on stage than we

are today.[107] Cornwall's lines are also reminiscent of Suffolk's almost Freudian slip in

Act 5 of Shakespeare's *1 Henry VI* (c. 1590):

> I'll undertake to make thee Henry's queen,
> To put a golden sceptre in thy hand,
> And set a precious crown upon thy head,
> If thou wilt condescend to be my –

Margaret: What?
Suffolk: His love.

>
> (5.3.117-21)

Here, Suffolk is speaking of the royal match with England he can make for Margaret of

Anjou. However, the secret thought that Margaret might become his love, and not

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[106] Baskerville, *Elizabethan Jig*, p. 115.
[107] Nuttall, *Shakespeare the Thinker*, p. 39.

Henry's, breaks through the lines, providing what Gary Taylor describes as a 'catch in the rhythm' of the action.[108]

There is no such palliative excuse for *A Knack*'s Ethenwald; the character's traitorous desire to deceive the king is later made quite explicit: 'have you never heard that theame,/Deceit in love is but a merriment' (ll. 912-3). In this way, Ethenwald's pursuit directs the play into a realm of festive and social dissidence, not to mention that of Kemp's comic appeal. His lines make a vital link, therefore, between his own treachery and the 'merrimentes' sequence to come. It provides, therefore, an opportunity for a more effective 'catch' in the action later on, where the 'Mad Men's' scene is sandwiched deliberately between two sequences of action which are directly concerned with the subject of Ethenwald's deception.

The 'merrimentes' sequence itself follows hot on the heels of a conversation between the king and his courtier Perin, in which Ethenwald has been exposed as a traitor. Moreover, moments before the clowns enter the play, the king learns that Alfrida is not 'foule', as Ethenwald has described her, but 'fair and vertuous' after all. The comic irony of cuckoldry is clear, and audiences and readers already know that the king has been deceived. In the dialogue which follows, however, the king and Perin celebrate their revelation in high-blown language, heavily classicized with poetic rhetoric. Perin describes Alfrida as

> faire,
> As is the radiant North star Christaline,
> That guides the wet and wearie Traueller,
> Soust with the surge of *Neptunes* watery main.

The King responds with a speech which contains no less than six classical allusions, referring to '*Cynthea*', '*Hercules*', '*Pollyxena*', '*Troylus*', 'Great *Alexander*', and the

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[108] Gary Taylor, ed., *1 Henry VI* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 42-3. Nuttall points out that Shakespeare's model here is Ovid's *Pygmalion*, *Metamorphoses*, X. 275-6. See Nuttall, *Shakespeare the Thinker*, p. 38.

'Queen of Amazons', before deciding to 'sound' out Ethenwald's 'subtill practizes' (ll. 1342-58).

The sexualized language of the clowns described above, who enter at this point, deflates the rhetoric of the King and Perin. It also heralds the lower, comic content of Ethenwald's speech to follow, which begins directly on the exit of the other characters from the stage. Following the direction '*Exeunt*' at the end of the 'merrimentes' sequence, Ethenwald enters '*alone*' at line 1412, in order to soliloquise on his nuptial misfortunes. Already married by this point to Alfrida, he suspects that the king has found him out. Moreover, the king comes, Ethenwald fears,

> to see if he can fynd
> A front whereon to graft a paire of hornes –
> But in plain tearms, he comes to Cuckold me.
>
> (ll. 1416-18)

There is a linguistic, then, as well as thematic descent in the tone and action of the play when the clowns enter the scene, but it also continues once they have exited the stage. The 'cuckolding' table, it seems, has been reversed in another scene laden with dramatic irony, and completing a narrative thread infused with the undisciplined and subversive mentality of the jig in Ethenwald's pursuit of Alfrida.

A further connection between the jig and *A Knack* is found in Dekker's *The Honest Whore* (c. 1604). The full title of Dekker's play as printed on its title-page, '*The Honest Whore,/With,/the Humours of the Patient Man/and the Longing Wife*', appears to present its adulterous 'Humours' to readers in a way which is reminiscent of Kemp's tempting 'merrimentes' in *A Knack*. In the play, there is a link with the earlier *A Knack* during a conversation between the characters Mathaeo and Hipolito. Mathaeo warns Hipolito as follows:

> If you have this strange monster, Honestie, in your belly, why so Iig-makers and
> chroniclers shall picke something out of you: but and I smell not you and a

> bawdy house out within these tenne daies, let my nose be as bigge as an English
> bag-pudding: Ile followe your lordship, though it be to the place aforenamed.[109]

As already noted, in *A Knack* Honestie is one of the play's major links with the morality tradition. In Dekker's play, however, Mathaeo warns Hipolito of the jig's ability to corrupt a similarly personified form of 'Honestie'. Indeed, the result of watching a jig, for Hipolito, will be a visit to a 'bawdy house'.[110]

Dekker's play aligns both jig, and 'jig-makers' such as Kemp, with the more bodily pleasures of London's South Bank hospitality still at large, as we already know, by 1604. What we also find in *A Knack*, however, through the trope of cuckoldry which connects the scenes as described above, is evidence that episodes of presentational 'clownage' continued to exist side by side with attempts at more symbolic or representational forms of acting. Barber's 'saturnalian' release, undoubtedly prompted by the 'topsy-turvy' 'merrimentes' scene, thus finds expression within the overarching dramatic narrative of the play, and not just at the end in the jig.

VI.   Conclusion

In *A Knack*, Kemp provides a pivotal point around which discourses of theatrical and literary culture swirl and blend. The 'merrimentes' scene captures empirical evidence of the famous clown's continuing theatrical autonomy and renown in 1594. Moreover, the quarto's title-page, coupled with evidence of popular culture in the wider play, complicates the normative ratio of rising author and falling clown which unsettles Helgerson's neat trajectory of the move from a 'player's to an author's theatre' taking place throughout the 1590s. Rather, the play engulfs and articulates its own paradox –

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[109] Thomas Dekker, *The Honest Whore* (1604), A5ʳ, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 12 February, 2012].
[110] Through Hipolito, moreover, there is not only a hint of promiscuity in the jig to come but also the more familiar theme of 'cuckoldry', as the name 'Hipolito' is linked, semantically at least, with the play *Phaedre* by Seneca (c. 20-65 AD), and its portrayal of the adulterous affair between Phaedre and her step-son Hippolytus.

one which, while attempting to marginalize the clown, also serves to propel him to the fore.

Ironically enough, then, it seems that Kemp's 'merrimentes' in *A Knack* show how, in seeking to ban traditional 'clownage' from plays, literary authorship, at the same time, confirmed its presence. There continued, therefore, a 'residually oral' and boisterous culture, where 'the new learning and writing had not fully supplanted the vitality in the oral communication of the unlettered',[111] and which managed to resist the strivings of Sidney and his followers. Indeed, Weimann argues that Shakespeare's use of popular culture is unparalleled. The clowns we thus meet in the following chapters on Shakespeare's plays continue to reveal themselves as

> a rich hybrid in which the court fool, the Vice of the morality plays, the genius of Dick Tarlton, and the individual talents in Shakespeare's troupe merged with countless other elements of clowning and popular entertainment.[112]

The playwright allowed his own dramaturgical methods, it seems, to be permeated constantly by a residual and functional festive aesthetic. The result, as I will show, is a creative mix of clown and poet which adds a dynamic element of theatrical textuality to the extant and variant editions of the printed plays studied in the following chapters which focus more closely on the working relationship between Shakespeare and Kemp.

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[111] Weimann, *Author's Pen*, pp. 43, 7.
[112] Weimann, *Popular Tradition*, p. 12.

CHAPTER THREE

TITUS ANDRONICUS

Late on in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, a brief and curious scene occurs. During

Act 4 Scene 3, Titus and his men shoot their petition-bearing arrows into the sky. Their

aim in so doing is to provoke a response from the gods to their hopeless plight. Denied

temporal justice in the play so far, Titus, once 'Rome's best champion' (1.1.65), has

reached the depths of his despair. His daughter Lavinia has been raped and mutilated;

two of his sons have been framed for treason and murder, and cruelly put to death; and

Titus has been tricked into chopping off one of his own hands in a gruesome exchange

for their heads. Titus' 'sorrows are past remedy' (4.3.31), but redress, at least through

Rome's established legal institutions, is unobtainable. As the tragedy unfolds, and

Titus' 'time to storm' breaks (3.1.262), the hero shoots his arrows into heaven. In

answer to this aggressive and ritualistic display, however, the gods remain silent and

invisible. On to the stage, instead, walks a clown: 'Newes, newes from heaven', the

clown cries, 'Marcus, the Poast is come'. At least, so prints the first quarto of the play,

or Q1, published in 1594.[1] In the extant quartos which follow in 1600 and 1611, and in

the First Folio edition of the play in 1623, the clown's opening lines belong to Titus

himself. In the later editions of the play, therefore, this line is used to signal the clown's

entrance, rather than allowing him to announce himself.

Dutton argues that attention to multiple texts is essential in any authorship

debate.[2] The peculiar textual anomalies surrounding the clown's arrival, along with

other details, certainly instil Q1 with a marked theatrical authority where the clown

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[1] Textual references for Q1*Titus* are taken from Thomas L. Berger and Barbara Mowat, eds., *Titus Andronicus*, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). The clown's lines are printed at H^v, ll. 1828-9. See Plate 8.
[2] Richard Dutton, '"Not one clear item but an indefinite thing which in parts of uncertain authenticity"', *Shakespeare Studies* 36 (2008), 114-122 (p. 122).

function and textual variations intersect. In turn, this lends weight to Wiles' argument

that Kemp played the part of the clown in *Titus'* performances in approximately 1594,

which Q1 presumably records as I will show. For Wiles, the clown's part was written

by Shakespeare specifically for Kemp, and there are 'obvious' parallels between what

he describes as the clown's 'self-contained "merriment"' in *Titus*, and Kemp's

documented 'merrimentes' sequence in *A Knack*.[3] Indeed, in all of the early printings of

the play, the clown's scene is a disconcerting interjection. But in Q1, his noisy arrival

triggers a sequence of slapstick comic play which halts the tragic narrative at a crucial

moment even more profoundly. The clown's first appearance in the play in 1594,

therefore, would have been far more disruptive than the 'Mad Men's' 'naughtie'

interruption of *A Knack*, and far more distracting if played by the jigging Kemp. Q1

Titus thus reveals the clown as a source of narrative disruption – but also enhancement –

of the play's Roman world, as the scenes in which he appears slip effortlessly between

tragedy and farce.

Most scholars now accept *Titus* as a play on which Shakespeare collaborated

with Peele.[4] I am proposing, in this chapter, a different collaborative element in the

production of the play: one between Shakespeare and Kemp themselves, in a working

environment where dramatic decisions did not lie in the hands of the playwright/s alone.

My argument is based on two main contentions: the first is that, hot on the heels of his

success in *A Knack*, Kemp also played the part of the clown in *Titus* in a scene which is

similar in structure and in content to the 'merrimentes' in the former play; my second

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[3] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 73-4. This line of argument is strengthened further by Pearlman's contention that Kemp's 'merrimentes' in *A Knack* bear a marked resemblance to his performance as Peter, recorded in Q2 *Romeo*, and discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

[4] See Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare as Co-Author: A Historical Study of Five Collaborative Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). See also Paul Hammond, 'Shakespeare as Collaborator: The Case of *Titus Andronicus*', in *Collaboration and Indisciplinarity in the Republic of Letters: Essays in Honour of Richard G. Maber*, ed. Paul Scott (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), pp. 195-210. It is always difficult to be precise on collaborative parts, but Hammond distinguishes between Peele's broadly political Rome in Act One, and the more imaginative space that Rome represents in the later Shakespearean sections of the play.

premise is that the variant textuality of the clown's scenes in *Titus*, revealed by a comparison of the early quarto texts, suggests a number of adaptations to this interlude, both during and after its composition, prompted, perhaps, by Kemp's theatrical eminence. *Titus'* clown, it seems, is not only a result of the continuing demands for festive comedy, but also to the emergence of Kemp as a major comic actor for Shakespeare.

This chapter is itself divided into two main parts: the first deals with the authorship and dating of the work, and with the nature of the Q1 text which contains the key textual pointers relating to the clown's mutable role; and the second part contains a close textual study of the clown's two brief scenes in Q1 (4.3 and 4.4 in modern editions of the play).

I.   Early performances of *Titus*

The plague-related challenges faced by Henslowe in staging *A Knack* in 1592 continued to present similar difficulties with early performances of *Titus* in 1594. When the capital's winter season was cut short at the end of January 1593 by order of the Privy Council, the playhouses remained closed for nearly a year as the death toll from plague rose steadily through the summer.[5] The cold winter brought some respite, however, and the wily Henslowe was able to re-open The Rose just after the following Christmas. He quickly produced a short season of plays from 27 December 1593 to 6 February 1594, played 'by the earle of susex his men'. One of the works in The Rose's repertory at this time is recorded in Henslowe's diary for its first performance as 'ne – Rd at titus & ondronicus the 2[4] of Jenewary'.[6] As noted, takings for this play were among the best

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[5] See Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, II, 95.

[6] Foakes and Rickert, *Henslowe's Diary*, pp. 21-3. The date of *Titus'* first performance is actually 23 January as recorded originally in the diary but this date has been corrected to 24 January. Bate argues that this correction was made in order to list *Titus* as the fourth play of the week on the assumption that

of the season, generating an opening income of three pounds and eight shillings. When

repeated on 28 January and 6 February, the play yielded forty shillings each time.

Despite the play's initial success, its potentially long London run was interrupted by a

further closure due to a plague notice issued on 3 February, which closed Henslowe's

Rose again with effect from 7 February.[7]

At the time when the theatrical longevity of *Titus* was seriously compromised,

its literary life began. On 6 February 1594, the day of the play's last performance at

The Rose, the Stationers' Register records the following entry by the printer John

Danter: 'A Noble Roman Historye of Tytus Andronicus', and 'the ballad thereof'.

There is some uncertainty over whether this listing does actually refer to Shakespeare's

play, or to an earlier version of the prose *History of Titus Andronicus*.[8] (If it is the

former, then Danter's version of *Titus* was the first of Shakespeare's plays to be

registered for publication. Up to that point, only *Venus and Adonis* had been entered on

18 April 1593.) But at some point in 1594, Danter's edition, which we now recognise

as the 1594 first quarto, or Q1, of Shakespeare's *Titus*, despite its typical anonymity,

was on sale with the London booksellers Edward White and Thomas Millington in St

Paul's churchyard.[9] The ballad spin-off, usually sold as a penny broadsheet along with

the play's title-page, would have ensured the immediate marketing of the text to a wide

readership.

In comparison with the registration of *A Knack*, entered in the Stationers'

Register on 7 January 1594 shortly after the theatres were re-opened, Shakespeare's

Titus was registered just one day before they were closed again on 7 February. I have

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there was no performance on the previous Sunday. The Privy Council banned playing on Sundays at the
request of Archbishop Grindal. See Bate, *Titus*, p. 70.
[7] Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, II, 95.
[8] Alan Hughes, ed., *Titus Andronicus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994; repr. 2006), p. 1.
[9] *Titus Andronicus* (London, 1594), title-page, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com
[accessed 24 January, 2013]. See Plate 9.

already discussed in Chapter Two Blayney's theory of how the publicity generated by concurrent performances explains the increase in sales of playbooks at the various points of the theatres' re-openings during 1592-4.[10] There are, however, a number of valid reasons which may account for the hasty sale of *Titus* at the point of their closure that February, the main one being, as Kastan argues, that it is almost certain that the play's publication at this time 'was motivated by the closing order in an effort to salvage something from the termination of performances of what was a successful new play'.[11]

Titus' 'bizarre' violence of dismemberment would certainly have catered for the public's continuing taste for sensation and violence generated by playwrights such as Marlowe and Thomas Kyd.[12] Kyd's celebrated revenge play *The Spanish Tragedy* (c. 1589-90), the 'biggest theatrical hit of the 1590s,' according to Bate, was published in five quarto editions by 1633.[13] *Titus* also conformed to the contemporary vogue for spectacular staging. Throughout the play, Shakespeare makes bold and innovative use of all three levels of The Rose's stage which would have suited the recently extended theatre.[14] The fashionably long processional entry at the beginning of the play, for example, would have required particularly complex staging, with various entry points on to the stage apart from through the tiring house:

> *Enter the* Tribunes and Senatours *aloft: And then enter*
> Saturninus *and his followers at one dore*, *and* Bassianus *and*
> *his follwers, with Drums and Trumpets*
>
> (Q1, A3^R, ll. 2-5).

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[10] See above, pp. 70-71.

[11] Kastan, '"To think these trifles some-thing", p. 5.

[12] Hughes, *Titus*, p. 4. On the late-Elizabethan taste for realistic images of death and mutilation on stage, see Richard Sugg, *Murder After Death: Literature and Anatomy in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2007), esp. p. 17.

[13] Cf. Bate, *Titus*, p. 118.

[14] For an illustration of the reconstruction of The Rose theatre as extended in 1592 (it was originally built in 1587), see C. Walter Hodges' painting reproduced in Bate, *Titus*, p. 5.

This technique of opposing factions entering the stage through opposite doors occurs in the opening stage direction of *2 Henry VI*. *Titus* is also comparable in this way to the start of Peele's *Battle of Alcazar* (1589) with its extravagant opening processional entrance, and with his *Edward I* (published in 1593) which contains the following direction near the beginning of the play:

> *The Trumpets sound, and enter the traine, viz. his maimed*
> *Souldiers with headpeeces and Garlands on them, every*
> *man with his red Crosse on his coate: the Ancient borne*
> *in a Chaire, his Garland and his plumes on his headpiece,*
> *his Ensigne in his hand. Enter after them* Gloucester *and*
> Mortimer *bareheaded, and others as many as may be.*
>
> (l. 40 SD)[15]

As Russell Brown argues, Shakespeare's *Titus*, with its multi-level staging and large cast, would have drawn on the strength of the entire Sussex ensemble. [16] It must, then, have been an expensive play to put on, and the play's extensive preparation for staging is indicated by the fact that it was not until four weeks into Henslowe's season at The Rose that he records the first performance of the play.[17]

   Titus' spectacular appeal may thus also go some way in explaining its impressive opening box office income. Henslowe would often charge double for first performances, both to make as much money as possible in case the piece was not repeated, but also, as Stern argues, to make members of the play's first audience feel exclusive.[18] When *Titus* was registered just before the re-closure of the playhouses, therefore, it was presumably in order to ensure a degree of compensation for box office losses. Faced with the closure of the theatres once again, the sale of the play-script to Danter suggests that Henslowe and Sussex's Men were desperate for a source of income

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[15] George Peele, *Edward I* (London, 1593), 1.40, cited in Bate, *Titus*, p. 88. On Elizabethan stage spectacle, see John H. Astington, 'Playhouses, players, and playgoers in Shakespeare's Time', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare*, eds., Margreta de Grazia and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 99-113.

[16] John Russell Brown, *Shakespeare: The Tragedies* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), p. 11.

[17] Bate, *Titus*, p. 69.

[18] Tiffany Stern, *Rehearsal From Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000; repr. 2003), p. 115.

at this point, however limited, and to keep the play prominent in the public eye until it reopened.

What, though, of Danter's reasons for purchasing the play? We know from Blayney's work that the publication of plays was not a reliable source of income. Considering *Titus'* opening success, though, Danter presumably saw an opportunity to piggy-back on recent performances of the play. Similarly to *A Knack*, Q1 *Titus* describes itself as an authentic record of playhouse success, claiming to contain the play,

> As it was Plaide by the Right Ho-
> ourable the Earle of *Darbie*, Earle of *Pembrooke*,
> and Earle of *Sussex* their servants.

Perhaps, as Jones had done only a month before, Danter saw a similar opportunity to capitalise on the theatrical success of the play. While it was normal practice to foreground theatrical, as opposed to authorial, authenticity in printed plays, the level of detail here is unusual for its time, particularly Danter's listing of the three separate companies.[19] For editors, however, Q1's title-page is problematic, in that it also obfuscates a clear dating of the play. This leads me to the subject of the composition of Shakespeare's *Titus*, and to further traces of Kemp's influence in writing the play.

II.   New play or old?

Editors have yet to reach agreement on when *Titus* was written.[20] There are two dominant schools of thought: the first, and the majority editorial view, is that due to Danter's three-company listing on Q1's title-page, Shakespeare's play enjoyed a longer

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[19] Cf. Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, pp. 40-41.

[20] As noted, the problems surrounding the dating of Shakespeare's plays continue. Most recently, Maguire and Smith have tackled the issues over dating the Folio-only *All's Well That Ends Well*, usually dated 1602-3. In suggesting a re-dating of 1606-7, Maguire and Smith confirm MacDonald Jackson's 2001 theory that the play was written for King's Men at a time when Shakespeare was collaborating with Thomas Middleton on *Timon of Athens*. See Maguire and Smith, 'Many Hands'.

performance history than Henslowe's diary records in the early months of 1594; the

second theory, less popular with editors, is that Henslowe's 'ne' annotation is correct

and that the play was newly composed in late 1593 for its New Year performances at

The Rose.[21] Either way, whether *Titus* was revised or newly composed for Henslowe,

we can link the play to Kemp in a number of ways.

Dealing first with the former, more traditional editorial stance, academic opinion

places *Titus* as Shakespeare's first tragedy, and most editors contend that Q1's title-page

indicates that the version of *Titus* it contains had already been in existence for some

time prior to 1594.[22] Q1 thus records the play as passing successively between the three

companies listed, and playing in the provinces during the London theatres' repeated

plague-related closures at a time when, Gurr argues, 'travelling was the Tudor norm'.[23]

If Q1's title-page order of companies is correct, *Titus* would first have been

performed on stage by Lord Strange's (or Derby's Men) in the early 1590s. The play

would then have passed to Pembroke's Men, but judging from the contents of a letter

from Henslowe to his son-in-law Edward Alleyne dated 28 September 1593,

Pembroke's Men could not have played *Titus* after the last week of August 1593 as they

were bankrupt by that time, and the play was taken up by Sussex's Men.[24] According to

Gurr, Sussex's Men were travelling in the summer of 1593 and returned to London for

a six-week winter season for Henslowe, and needing reinforcements from 'the better

remnants of the broken Pembroke's' Men.[25] If we take Q1 at face-value, then,

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[21] Bate supports this supposition and contends that the play was newly composed in late 1593 and therefore new when it was first performed for Henslowe. See Bate, *Titus*, pp. 69-70.

[22] J. C. Maxwell suggests a dating of the play at 'about 1589-90', in Maxwell, ed., *Titus Andronicus*, Arden 2nd Series (London: Routledge, 1953; repr. 1989), p. xxxiv. Eugene Waith similarly decides on a date preceding 1592 for the original composition of the play, with a revision in late 1593, in Waith, ed., *Titus Andronicus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 10. Gary Taylor and the Oxford *Complete Works* editors also opt for an early composition date of 1592. See Wells and Taylor, *A Textual Companion*, p. 113.

[23] Andrew Gurr, *Shakespearean Playing Companies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 36.

[24] See Chambers, *Stage*, II, 129-32.

[25] Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, pp. 40-41.

Shakespeare's *Titus* had been in existence for several years by 1594 and Henslowe's 'ne', in this light, more likely refers to the play as either 'newly revised', 'newly (re-)licensed', or 'newly entered in the repertoire', as Berger and Mowat suggest.[26]

Textual variants in the successive printings of Shakespeare's *Titus* mark it out as a play which would receive a number of strategic adaptations during its stage life in order to keep the work fresh and appealing to audiences. For example, the First Folio edition of *Titus* contains evidence of substantial revision of the text in the addition of the so-called 'fly-killing scene' (3.2). Rasmussen's work on textual revision shows how large passages of narrative could be 'grafted' on to an existing play in order to make it fashionably new. He argues, in relation to *Titus*, that the lengthy 'fly-killing' scene was added at around the turn of the seventeenth century, and represents the increasing interest in psychological tragedy which flowers in *Hamlet*.[27]

Titus' killing of the fly is comparable to the added 'mad' scenes in *The Spanish Tragedy*, as Philip Edwards argues.[28] For Hughes, *Titus*' links with Kyd's play strengthen the case for its updating after it was first published 1594. If Shakespeare's play was revised at some point, the clown episode may have been an addition to an earlier form of Shakespeare's tragedy, already extant by 1594. Citing Nashe's *Strange News* (1592), with its confirmation of the 'merriment' as Kemp's particular forte, Wiles argues for the revision of *Titus* in order to accommodate the actor. Wiles suggests that the clown's scenes in *Titus*, while analogous with the antics of Gotham's 'Mad Men' in

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[26] Berger and Mowat, *Titus*, p. 5. There are also a number of contemporary allusions to Shakespeare's *Titus*, which lend weight to theories that that the play was not new in 1594. For accounts of these, see Bate, *Titus*, pp. 71-2, and Hughes, *Titus*, p. 4.
[27] Eric Rasmussen, 'The Revision of Scripts', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, pp. 441-460 (p. 448).
[28] Philip Edwards, ed., *The Spanish Tragedy*, (London: Methuen, 1959), p. xxvii.

A Knack as noted, were 'inserted into a play of a very different texture' and concludes that the part of *Titus*' clown was, in fact, 'written in' to the play 'for Kemp's benefit'. [29]

In the light of a possible earlier version of the play, there are further links to be made between *A Knack* and *Titus* in terms of both performance and print. First, as noted, during the brief season of 29 December 1592 to 1 February 1593, Henslowe's diary records three performances of what Bate describes as 'a *Titus*', on 6, 15 and 25 January.[30] As Henslowe does not mark the play as either 'Andronicus' or 'ne', Hughes contends that it almost certainly refers to a revival of the 'lost' play *Titus and Vespasian* which is first recorded as new in Henslowe's diary in April 1591:[31] 'ne – Rd at tittus & vespacia the 11 of ap^rell 1591'. In June 1592, the diary records 'tittus & vespacia' in the same repertory listing as a ten-day run of 'a knacke to knowe a knave'. 'Titvs' is next mentioned on 6 and 25 January 1593, which appears to be the same day after 'the knacke' was performed on the 24th of that month.[32] A play known as '*Titus*', then, was performed in the same winter season as *A Knack* in 1592-3, and on one occasion the plays were performed on consecutive days.

Titus Andronicus was not recorded as 'ne' by Henslowe until January 1594. However, there are two verbal echoes of Shakespeare's play in *A Knack*'s 1594 quarto.[33] The first is contained in the opening scene of *A Knack*, when King Edgar likens himself to 'wise Vaspasian, Romes rich Emperour' (l. 4). The next link appears later on in *A Knack*, when one character bids another welcome:

[29] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 34.
[30] Bate, *Titus*, p. 74.
[31] Hughes, *Titus*, p. 4.
[32] Foakes and Rickert, *Henslowe's Diary*, pp. 17-20. As noted in Chapter Two, there is an abrupt change in Henslowe's diary where he records the same season as both January 1592 and 1593.
[33] Paul Bennett, 'The Word "Goths" in *A Knack to Know a Knave*', *Notes and Queries* (November, 1955), 462-3.

> As *Titus* was unto the Roman Senators,
> When he had made a conquest on the Goths:
> That in requital of his service done,
> Did offer him the imperial Diademe […]

<div align="right">(ll. 1490-3).[34]</div>

These passages in *A Knack* do not record precisely the action of Shakespeare's play, but the second extract does seem to précis the first part of Shakespeare's (or possibly Peele's) Act One. As Hughes notes, the passages are difficult to ignore in the context of the possible revision or updating of Shakespeare's *Titus*, or in reading *Titus and Vespasia* as a possible 'lost source' for the later play.[35]

The point to be made in terms of Kemp is that given the fact that companies were often required to carry up to forty plays in their repertories at any one time,[36] the same actors from Strange/Derby's company presumably performed in both *A Knack* and the *Titus* recorded in Henslowe's diary in 1592-3. If the famous Kemp had regularly appeared on stage in *A Knack*, and perhaps the earlier *Titus* at this time, then his fame and reputation may well have contributed to Shakespeare's decision to include, or at least significantly adapt, the actor's role in a re-worked version of the later *Titus Andronicus* for Henslowe.

This may be a speculation too far. However, there is a marked proximity between the publication dates of *A Knack* and Shakespeare's *Titus*, both of which were registered in January and February 1594 respectively. Considering Jones' marked promotion of Kemp in *A Knack*, and the fact that his quarto of that play was registered only two weeks before *Titus*' opening performance, it may well be that Jones wished to boost publicity, and to capitalise on Kemp's forthcoming appearances as the clown in Shakespeare's *Titus*.

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[34] Proudfoot, *A Knack*.
[35] Hughes, *Titus*, p. 4.
[36] Wickham, *A History of the Theatre*, p. 121.

Similarly, Danter's decision to register his quarto of *Titus* just two weeks after its first performance, and as the theatres closed, is not so surprising. The opening of Shakespeare's tragedy, it seems, marks a pivotal point which is almost equidistant between the registrations of Jones' *A Knack* and Danter's *Titus*. And while this might seem a coincidence, it is surely less so in the light of Kemp's celebrated 'merriments' as a bankable commodity on both stage and in print. It is less so again, of course, if *Titus* was not only a sensation on stage in 1594, but also 'ne', or at the very least a 'freshen[ed]', version of that recorded by Henslowe between 1591 and 1593.

There is also every possibility that Shakespeare's *Titus* was newly composed in 1594. Bate remains in the minority amongst editors of the play in contending that Henslowe's 'ne' annotation on 'the 23 of Jenewary 1593' does indeed mark it as a newly written play. The most persuasive argument for this less popular stance, put forward by David George, is that Danter's title-page listing of Derby's, Pembroke's and Sussex's Men indicates that the play was in fact performed by just one company, Sussex's Men, the troupe named by Henslowe as playing at The Rose from 26 December 1593.[37] There is good reason to postulate the likelihood of out-of-work actors from different companies coming together in the first opening season after the ravages of plague.[38] Even if Derby's Men, with Kemp, were still active in the capital at this time, the extensive performances of *Titus* suggested by the three companies listed on the quarto's title-page seem unlikely given the short period of time between the play's first performance at The Rose in January and its registration with the Stationers in February 1594.

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[37] David George, 'Shakespeare and Pembroke's Men', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 32 (1981), 305-23.
[38] Cf. Scott McMillin, 'Sussex's Men in 1594: the evidence of *Titus Andronicus* and *The Jew of Malta*', *Theatre Survey*, 32 (1991), 214-23.

Furthermore, Bentley suggests that it is easy to forget that the driving ambition of London's playing companies at this time was to make money.[39] From a more economically viable point of view, it is worth returning to Danter's unusual listing of three companies. It was, perhaps, more tempting to play-goers, and prospective buyers of the quarto, to connect the play with the most prestigious companies of the day. Bate notes that the only plays printed before 1594 which mention more than one company on their title-pages were John Lyly's *Sapho and Phao* and *Campaspe* (c. 1584), both of which refer to the fact that they were played before the 'Queenes Majestie', both 'by her Majesties Children' and 'the Boyes of Paules'. Following *Titus*, the next printed plays to indicate what Bate describes as 'joint production' were Lyly's *Love's Metamorphosis* (1601), and Thomas Dekker's *Sastriomastix* (1602). Again, the performances recorded are distinguished from each other in a similar way: in the former case as 'First playd by […] and now by […]'; and in the latter as 'presented publikely, by […] and privately, by […]'.[40]

Jones' edition of *A Knack* also shows clearly that it was in the printer's interest, in 1594, to draw on as much theatrical celebrity as possible. Considering Jones' strategic use of cross-celebrity marketing in *A Knack*, which names performers from the once-joint Strange's and Pembroke's Men, Danter's use of three companies alerts us to a similar attempt to imbue his edition of *Titus* with a similar guarantee of stage-related authority. This is particularly evident from the top-billing of 'Darbie['s]' Men. When, in September 1593, Stanley inherited the Earldom of Derby, his company, formerly known as Strange's Men, were able to take advantage of their patron's newly acquired and more impressive title. Hughes argues that Danter's opportunistic reference to

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[39] Bentley, *Profession of Dramatist*, p. 62.
[40] Cf. Bate, *Titus*, pp. 75-6.

'Darbie['s]' Men, and their recently elevated Peer on his quarto of *Titus*, encouraged the play to be connected with more exclusive realms of aristocratic patronage.[41]

Whether or not Shakespeare's *Titus* was new at this time, we cannot ignore the celebrated Kemp's potential contribution in securing Henslowe the rich box-office pickings his diary documents for the play's opening performances. If Henslowe was charging inflated entry fees for what Stern might describe as a 'playtext's "rehearsal" party',[42] the actor's presence can only have guaranteed its success. In the light of Kemp playing the clown, Danter's reasons for the swift and seemingly deliberate exploitation of the quarto's close links with the play in performance and 'Darbie['s]'Men, despite the closure of the theatres, are more plausible.

Finally, as we know that the company included both Shakespeare and Kemp in 1594, Q1's title-page also links the play more solidly to their foundational relationship.[43] Before turning to the clown's appearances in the play, however, it is worth taking a closer look at Q1 itself: first, in its status as a 'foul paper' text, based on Shakespeare's working manuscript;[44] and second as the only edition of the play to exploit the clown's, or Kemp's, arrival in the play so clearly.

III.   The Q1 text

The publication history of Shakespeare's *Titus* suggests that the dramatist's earliest and bloodiest tragedy was highly successful in its own time. Following Q1 in a direct line of descent, the play appeared in quarto twice more during Shakespeare's lifetime: the

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[41] Hughes, *Titus*, p. 3.
[42] Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan*, p. 115.
[43] George, 'Shakespeare and Pembroke's Men', p. 306.
[44] The term 'foul papers' was first coined by Greg in 1942, in *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare*. It is now one of the New Bibliographical terms, along with 'prompt books', which has been exposed by critics such as Werstine and William B. Long as suspect and misleading in classifying the categories of copy-text which lie behind early modern printed plays. See Long, 'Stage-Directions: A Misinterpreted Factor in Determining Textual Provenance', in *Transactions of the Society for Textual Scholarship*, 1985:2, 121-37.

second quarto (Q2) was published in 1600 and seems to have been taken from a copy of Q1 that was missing its final pages; the third quarto (Q3) effectively reprints Q2 with some minor corruptions; finally, the 1623 First Folio text of the play (F1) was largely prepared from Q3, but differs from the quartos more substantially, with extensive stage directions and the addition, as noted, of the 'fly-killing' scene.

As we have seen, Q1 *Titus'* title-page listing of companies makes the first printed edition of the play unique. Editors contend that Q1was also almost certainly printed from Shakespeare's working manuscript,[45] despite the fact that, as Mowat argues, there is no way of telling from an early printed text of a Shakespearean play whether it was printed from a holograph or from a play-book.[46] According to Bate, Q1 *Titus* contains three main textual features which suggest its authorial origins: imprecise entry directions; inconsistent speech prefixes; and a number of 'currente calamo' passages, or so-called 'false starts', where the playwright seems to have begun a passage but changed his mind without deleting sufficiently his first thoughts with the result that both versions appear in the printed text.[47] Q1contains three examples of such revision which seem to have been made during the process of the play's composition: at 1.1.35-8, where the 'sacrifice' of the 'noblest prisoner of the Gothes' contradicts the death of Alarbus in the same scene; at 3.1.36, where the half-line 'and bootless unto them' interrupts the flow of Titus' grief-stricken speech at the plight of his sons; and at 4.3.94-107, during the clown's first scene, which I look at closely in the second half of this chapter.[48]

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[45] Cf. Maxwell, *Titus*, p. xv; Waith, *Titus*, p. 39; Hughes, *Titus*, p. 12.

[46] Barbara Mowat, 'The Reproduction of Shakespeare's Texts', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare*, pp. 13-29 (p. 23).

[47] Bate, *Titus*, p. 74. See also E. A. J. Honigmann, 'Shakespeare's Deletions and False Starts', *Review of English Studies*, 56:223 (2005), 37-48.

[48] For more recent scholarship on Shakespeare's 'false starts' which appear throughout the early printed editions of the canon, see Ernst Honigmann 'Shakespeare in the act of composition', in *Shakespeare's Book: Essays in Reading, Writing and Reception* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), pp. 165-183.

We know from the work of Wells on other 'foul paper' texts that such textual 'inconsistencies' can reveal the act of writing.[49] They can, that is, provide a view of the working, revising playwright, as Ernst Honigmann argues.[50] Similarly, Q1's 'false starts' offer textual snapshots of Shakespeare's 'mind and hand' in the actual process of composition.[51] But rather than revealing a faultless process of authorship, as Hemminge and Condell's words suggest, 'blots' of this type offer evidence of authorial reworking which point to the importance of these reworked passages within the overall narrative structure of the plays in which they appear. Thus, *Titus*' first quarto, as Bate argues, very probably 'represents something unusually close to a play as Shakespeare wrote it'.[52]

Widening the authorial perspective through the lens of working theatre, Wells argues elsewhere that Shakespeare wrote,

> not as a dramatist whose work would be completed at the moment that he delivered a script to the company for which it was written, but as one who knew that he would be involved in the production process.[53]

For the performance critic Alan Dessen, Q1 *Titus*' textual inconsistencies reveal it as a working document which stands 'at one remove' from Shakespeare's play-script, and close to the actors who performed the play it records.[54] In this light, if Q1 contains a textual transmission of *Titus*' original performances with Kemp as the clown, its valuable 'rehearsal' status as a play, in Stern's terms, further explains the textual anomalies contained in the clown's scenes.

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[49] See, for example, Stanley Wells, 'Editorial Treatment of Foul-Paper Texts: *Much Ado About Nothing* as Test Case', *Review of English Studies*, XXXI:121 (1980), 1-16 (p. 1).

[50] See Ernst Honigmann, *Myriad-Minded Shakespeare: Essays on the Tragedies, Problem Comedies and Shakespeare the Man* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989).

[51] John Hemminge and Henry Condell, 'To the great Variety of Readers', *Mr William Shakespeares Comedies Histories and Tragedies First Folio*, in *The First Folio of Shakespeare* 2nd edn, ed., Charlton Hinman, intr. Peter Blayney (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Co., 1996), p. 7 (A3r).

[52] Bate, *Titus*, p. 98.

[53] Stanley Wells, *Re-editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 57.

[54] Alan Dessen, *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 12.

In the context of staged drama, then, Q1's textual features not only reveal how the play was written, but also how it was performed. Q1 points, in this way, to evidence of how the play was composed and adapted in order to accommodate the working stage milieu. As I will show, *Titus'* early publications also reveal the figure of the traditional stage clown as remarkably influential in terms of performance decisions. The first quarto in particular, however, reflects two main qualities: first, the socialised nature of dramatic composition at the time of the play's early production on stage; and second, a working environment in the mid-1590s where staging and extempore acting could both prompt and enforce revisions to the play-script in the interplay of authority between text and performance.

My main contention in this chapter is that the part of *Titus'* clown was taken by Kemp. So far, the dates of the play's early performances, its links with Derby's Men, and Q1's probable reflection of the play as it was first performed, all point to such a conclusion. That evidence is sharpened further by a close textual analysis of the clown's appearances in the play, where Q1's peculiar bibliographical circumstances allow a reading of an acknowledged authoritative text, but which also records the unstable influence of theatrical performance. As I will show below, the working play-script was corrected, revised and changed in order both to capitalise on, and contain, Kemp's distinctive comic flair in the play's clown scenes. It was moulded, that is, to suit the still dominant zeitgeist of the interpolative stage in an interplay of authority between text and performance, playwright and clown, still at large at the time of *Titus'* original publication in 1594. The traces of Kemp which I contend are contained in Q1 thus also testify to the working relationship between actor and playwright in the changeable process of writing and performing the play. If *Titus'* clown was played by Kemp, then evidence contained in Q1 suggests the actor's ability to rewrite, or at least

tangibly influence, the author's script on a far deeper level than his 'merrimentes' in *A Knack*.

IV.   'Enter the Clowne'

Shakespeare's rewriting of Ovid locates *Titus Andronicus* in the classicised world of ancient Rome. Despite this, the play contains a part for a clown, and a distinctly Elizabethan one at that. In order to introduce this idea, it is useful to outline the action of 4.3 up to the point of the clown's arrival in the scene.

As already noted, the clown arrives in the play during Titus' armed quest for justice. 'Ad Jovem', 'ad Apollinem', Titus instructs his men as he hands them arrows, before taking 'ad Martem' for himself as the metaphorical god of war (4.3.54-5). Titus' language in this scene is reinforced with the thrust of battle with its references to 'archery', and 'metal' and 'steel' (4.3.2, 48). However, the classical rhetoric on display is also sexually charged. Titus instructs his men to 'take to your tools' in pursuit of the goddess who has 'fled': 'Happily you may catch her in the sea', or if not, they must 'pierce the inmost centre of the earth' (4.3.5-12). 'To it boy', Titus cries to his grandson, Young Lucius, as his men 'shoot' their ritualistic 'shafts' 'a mile beyond the moon' (4.3.59-62, 66).

In aiming 'beyond the moon', however, Titus' arrows find their target in 'Virgo's lap' (4.3.65). At the opening of the scene in which the clown first appears, therefore, there is a direct reference to Elizabeth I in the familiar trope of Astraea, Ovid's goddess of Justice, who was commonly identified with the astrological Virgo. The iconography would have been familiar to Shakespeare and the more elite members of his audiences from Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (first published c. 1590) which directly praises Elizabeth as the embodiment of astrological justice. In his epic

poem, Spenser hails Elizabeth's reign as the restoration of Ovid's 'Golden Age', when

Astraea 'return'd to heaven' as 'the Virgin', or Virgo, 'sixt in her degree'.[55] Frances

Yates argues that Spenser's figuration of Elizabeth as the Virgin Queen is subverted by

Shakespeare's *Titus*, where Virgo is shot to pieces during the Andronici's on-stage

attack on the gods.[56] Titus' sharp darts of retribution, therefore, may well have been

aimed at Gloriana herself, as Marcus' astrological rhetoric reveals, thus suggesting a

deeper subversive message in this clown-related scene than in the 'topsy-turvy' antics of

the 'Mad Men' in *A Knack*.

For all its partisan polemic, however, Titus' aggressive and ritualistic display

ends on a similarly festive note to that in *A Knack*, and with another comic conjunction

of clowns and cuckoldry. Couched in celestial spin, and just before the entrance of the

clown, Titus and Marcus crudely discuss the grosser bodily concerns of Saturninus'

cuckolding by the Moorish servant Aaron:

Titus	Ha, ha! Publius, Publius, what has thou done?
	See, see, thou hast shot off one of Taurus' horns.
Marcus	This was the sport, my lord. When Publius shot,
	The Bull, being galled, gave Aries such a knock
	That down fell both the Ram's horns in the court,
	And who should find them but the Empress' villain!
	She laughed, and told the Moor he should not choose
	But give them to his master for a present.
Titus	Why there it goes, God give his Lordship joy.

(4.3.68-76)

At this point the clown appears and, in Q1, he arrives along with a textual anomaly

which sets the text apart from all later editions of the play. Q1 prints the clown's arrival

as follows:

[55] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, in *Complete Works*, eds. John C. Smith and E. De Selincourt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), V.I.11.
[56] Frances A. Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1975), p. 30. *Titus'* clown scenes have been the subject of extensive debate, both in relation to the potential counter-Reformation context of 4.3's attack on 'Virgo', and to the social and political resonances of the clown's death by hanging in 4.4. See, for example, Wilson, *Secret Shakespeare*, p. 36

Enter the Clowne with a basket and two pigeons in it

Clowne	Newes, newes from heaven.
	Marcus, the post is come.
Titus	Sirrah, what tidings? Have you any letters?
	Shall I have justice? What says Jupiter?

<div align="right">(ll. 1827-31)</div>

In all further publications of the play, including modern editions, the clown's opening

lines belong to Titus. Q2, Q3 and F1 all print the clown's arrival as follows:

Enter the Clown with a basket and two pidgions in it.

Titus	Newes, newes, from heaven,
	Marcus the Poast is come
	Sirrah, what tidings? Have you any letters?
	Shall I have justice? What says Jupiter? [57]

Considering Q1's temporal closeness to the play on stage, the quarto's variant speech

prefix for the clown's entry lines, although slight, is notable. As we know, Danter's

publication of *Titus* was registered on the same day as its final performance for

Henslowe in February 1594. It is difficult to determine, therefore, which came first, the

play-book or the clown's line, as there is no way of knowing the decisions or influences

which lay behind the clown's noisy arrival in Q1. What I want to show in the following

sub-sections, however, is that the appearance of this odd bibliographic irregularity in

Q1suggests that the extemporising Kemp played *Titus*' clown in the performance or

performances which Q1 records. Before moving on to the sequence of action the

clown's arrival in *Titus* heralds, then, it is worth considering a number of contexts

which may account for Q1's distinctive anomaly, and which also tie the play further to

Kemp.

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[57] William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus* (London, 1600), H[r], in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 24 January, 2013]. See Plate 10.

V.   Whose line is it anyway?

Stern argues that one of the textual issues less often considered in Shakespeare studies is how 'one version of a play in performance is different from others'. 'Shakespeare's plays', she contends, 'were written and rewritten throughout their production, taking markedly different forms on their first day [and] on subsequent days'.[58] It was thus common practice to continue revising and adapting parts in plays before, during and after performances, in order to accommodate the changeable conditions of playmaking.

Let us first assume, then, that the clown's first lines in Q1 *Titus* originally, and officially, belonged to Titus himself, as the later publications of the play seem to attest. There are a number of details which lend weight to this idea. Most obviously, perhaps, the lines make more dramatic sense if spoken by Titus, both in the use of Marcus' name, and considering that he has just shot his arrows into 'heaven'. They also make more sense from the point of view of performance. If Titus announced the clown's arrival, then it would have allowed for a more directed entry in giving the actor time to get on to the stage and take up position for the lengthy sequence which follows. It is also worth noting that Q1 prints 'Marcus' in italics immediately beneath the clown's opening line in the style of the other speech prefixes in the scene:

>   *Clowne*   Newes, newes from heaven.
>   *Marcus*, the post is come.

This indicates that 'the post is come' may, at some point, have been spoken by Marcus, after Titus had announced the arrival of 'Newes, newes'. The removal both of the italics and the comma after Marcus' name in Q2 suggests further that both lines originated with, and were returned to Titus, at some point after publication in Q1 in 1594.

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[58] Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, p. 1.

Considering the narrow time frame between the performances and publication of *Titus* in 1594, any confusion relating to who spoke the lines at the point of the clown's arrival in the play – the clown himself, Titus, or perhaps even Marcus – may not have been clarified by the time the play went to print. Bate glosses the clown's Q1 entrance in 4.3 as follows: 'Q1 gave the line to the Clown, probably on the erroneous supposition that the entry direction carried an implied S[peech] P[refix]'. For Bate, then, Q1's lines are down to the assumption made by the compositor that '"News, news" would be spoken by the bringer and not the receiver of it'.[59]

This idea is added to by the fact that we know that speech prefixes were sometimes added to a play-script after the dialogue had been written. As noted in Chapter One, Rasmussen shows that revisions were made throughout the dialogic action of *Sir Thomas Moore*. The layout of the manuscript of that play also suggests that the playwright/s wrote the dialogue first, and added the names of the speakers afterwards. Changes made by 'Hand C' to the designation of characters on the left-hand-side of the manuscript, for example, indicate attempts to clarify the speaking parts in the play. *Titus*' own variable clown part thus alerts us to the fact that the speech prefix for the 'Clowne' at the point of his arrival in Q1 may have also have been inserted after the lines were composed. This reflects, perhaps, Q1's 'rehearsal' status as a hastily printed transcription of the play as first performed, or even the fact that the version of the play it contains was never actually staged in public.[60]

It is, of course, impossible to know either way. But, in this light, we might also consider the fact that Q1's 'Newes from heaven' did indeed originally belong to the clown, played by Kemp in 1594 as Wiles contends, and that they were reassigned to

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[59] Bate, *Titus*, note to 4.3.77.0, p. 234.
[60] Bate notes that on 1 January 1596, *Titus* was performed, probably by the Chamberlain's Men, for Sir John Harington at Burley-on-the-Hill. Harington had links with the Essex circle so the play's exploration of the question of succession would have been of considerable interest to him. Perhaps, then, Q1's more strident clown represents what Bate identifies as a 'vein of Tacitism' in the play. See Bate, *Titus*, p. 43-4.

Titus at some point between that year and 1600 when the second quarto, which reflects

the change, and thus its own theatrical 'lineage', was published.[61] Either that, or at

some point during rehearsals or even once the play was already on stage, the clown stole

Titus' lines.

Alison Gaw argues that while casting decisions are rarely clear from the contents

of a brief printed speech where the reader has no knowledge of the actor's personality,

the choice of a particular actor for a small part is far more obvious on stage.[62] This is

certainly the case in *A Knack* where the textual representation of Kemp's 'merrimentes'

is unlikely to bear much resemblance to the action which took place on stage, as I have

shown. Presumably, then, the opportunity of similar extemporal play in *Titus*, however

brief the role itself, may well have been just as attractive to the famous Kemp.[63] In the

light of Q1's 'clownage', therefore, the following contemporary account of similar

practice by the satirist Joseph Hall allows a quite different perspective on the clown's

Q1 lines:

> Now, lest such frightful shows of Fortune's fall,
> And bloody tyrant's rage, should chance appal
> The dead-struck audience, midst the silent rout,
> Comes leaping in a self-misformed lout,
> And laughs, and grins, and frames his mimic face,
> And jostles straight into the prince's place;
> Then doth the theatre echo all aloud
> With gladsome noise of that applauding crowd.
> A Goodly hotch-potch! When vile russetings
> Are matched with monarchs and with mighty kings.
> A goodly grace to sober Tragic Muse,
> When each base clown his clumsy fist doth bruise,

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[61] Stern argues that certain texts are significantly different from each other because they have different 'lineages'. See *Making Shakespeare*, p. 49.

[62] Gaw, 'Actor's Names', p. 340.

[63] The brevity of *Titus*' clown part is unlikely to have bothered an actor of Kemp's status in 1594. We know from Nungezer's *Dictionary of Actors* that leading actors played short roles in plays at this time. The stage direction 'Enter Gabriel' in the First Folio text of *3 Henry VI* (1.2.48-52), for example, most probably refers to an unusually short five-line role for Gabriel Spencer, one of the leading lights, along with Alleyn, in Pembroke's Men. See Nungezer, *Dictionary of Actors*, pp. 336-7.

> And show his teeth in double rotten row,
> For laughter at his self-resembled show. [64]

Q1's self-announcing clown seems even more typical of the ubiquitous practices of popular comedy, outlined by Hall in 1597, where performances, it seems, continued to be halted in order for clowns such as Tarlton and Kemp to arrive on stage as themselves, and address the audience in their own time. The arrival of *Titus'* clown, particularly if played by Kemp, must have underpinned the kind of playhouse rumpus described above.

As Q1's messenger from the gods, he is certainly able to 'jostl[e] straight into the prince's place', and cheekily address the aristocratic Marcus on first name terms: '*Marcus*, the post is come'. Here, the comma placed after Marcus' name in Q1, and which is missing in Q2, suggests a pause or emphasis in the line, perhaps giving the actor a chance to play up to the audience with one of his 'scurvey' faces .[65] As Hall suggests later in the same account, the 'pure *Iambick*' voice of the poet may have 'ravish[ed the gazing Scaffolders'. Before that, though, the 'stinkards' would have certainly welcomed the 'leaping in' of their own 'self-misformèd lout' in the shape of Kemp.

It seems so far, then, that Bate's Q1 compositor may well have been correct in giving the clown his 'newes from heaven'. What Bate and other editors fail to acknowledge, though, is that, as in the case of Kemp's petition-bearing cobbler in *A Knack*, *Titus'* own more rustic messenger points to similar typecasting.[66] If *Titus'* clown was played by Kemp in the performance or performances Q1 records, then we find, once again, evidence of Weimann and Bruster's 'biographical agency' in the

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[64] Joseph Hall, *Virgidemiarum* 2, Liber 1, Satire III, 1598, in *Poems of Joseph Hall*, ed. A Davenport (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1949), pp. 14-15, cited in Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, p. 29.
[65] I will discuss in Chapter Four on *Two Gentlemen* how punctuation and ellipsis in Launce's printed prose speeches can reveal interpolative action.
[66] On typecasting, especially along the lines of personality 'type', see Stern, *Making*, p. 63.

actor's role. As noted in Chapter One, Kemp worked as a real-life 'postman' in his role

as despatch-carrier for Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester.[67] On one occasion, Kemp

certainly did 'mar all' as the Miller in *A Knack* suggests, in delivering certain letters.

When Kemp returned to England in 1588, he carried with him letters from Sidney to his

wife Frances. Hidden in one was a note to her father, Sir Francis Walsingham, urging

him to prevent Lady Dudley from joining her husband. But Sidney had chosen the

wrong postman. Kemp ignored his instructions to deliver the correspondence to Lady

Sidney, and passed all the correspondence straight to Lady Dudley. It is impossible to

tell whether or not this was a deliberately mischievous action on Kemp's part.

Nevertheless, Sidney called Kemp a 'knave' for his interference.[68]

We already know from Tarlton's career that in order to cater for the increasingly

sophisticated London audiences of the mid-1590s, country folk were deliberately

caricatured as naïve, gullible and slow-witted. More important in the light of Kemp's

arrival in *Titus*, therefore, is that the clown's deceptive simplicity is also signalled to

both audiences and readers by his humble avian companions: 'Enter the Clowne with a

basket and two pigeons in it.' After the stage direction, the clown's pigeons are

mentioned again at 4.3.86, 4.3.90, 4.3.94 4.3.103, and 4.4.43. Presumably, this is in

case audiences miss them, as the pigeons are clearly an important component of the

scene. According to Wright, the clown's pigeons enhance his stock comic features and

are brought on stage in order to provide a deliberately comic antithesis to the aristocratic

Andronici.[69] I would also argue that, as birds clearly associated with messages, they

help to transform the clown into Titus' messenger with his own 'newes from heaven',

and subsequently into Kemp in a familiar guise of an anti-puritan comic.

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[67] See above, p. 53.

[68] Cited in Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 31-2.

[69] Louis B. Wright, 'Animal Actors on the Elizabethan Stage Before 1642', *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, 42:3 (1927), 656-669 (p. 661). On Shakespeare's use of animal props, see also Francis Teague, *Shakespeare's Speaking Properties* (Lewisburg: Bucknall University Press, 1991).

We know from *A Knack*'s blasphemous Cobbler that Kemp's act could provide a conduit for the type of contemporary comic satire identified by Hornback. Consider, in this context, the clown's opening line which, in claiming to bring 'newes from heaven', allows him to announce himself in the familiar idiom of London's pamphleteers.[70] There also seems to be a direct reference here to satirical works such as Nashe's *Strange News*, entered in the Stationers' Register by Danter on 12 January 1593 under the title *The Apology of Pierce Penilesse, or Strange News of the intercepting of certain letters and a convoy of verses as they were going to victual the Low Counties*.[71] Intercepting 'letters' to the 'Low Counties', or the Netherlands, seems particularly apt in the light of Kemp's earlier contretemps with the Earl of Leicester.

Even more pertinent is the anonymous ballad *Greene's Newes both from Heaven and Hell* (1593), probably penned by Barnaby Rich, and which alludes in particular to Tarlton's comic impact in plays.[72] There is also a curious pamphlet, published two years after Tarlton's death, *Tarltons News out of Purgatory. Onelye such a jest as his Jigge, fit for Gentlemen to laugh at. Published by an old companion of his; Robin Goodfellow*.[73] The ballad describes an occasion when Tarlton's opening appearance 'brought the whole company into such vehement laughter, that not able again to make them keep silent, for that present time they were fain to break up', an anecdote which fits quite accurately with Hall's later admonition of similar forms of 'clownage' still at large in 1597.[74] The clown's opening lines in Q1 *Titus*, with his own 'newes from heaven', certainly recollect the title of the ballads mentioned above and seem particularly apt in the context of unruly clowning in early 1594. It posits him,

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[70] Stern argues that Shakespeare's London affected what the playwright wrote. See *Making Shakespeare*, p. 11.

[71] Thomas Nashe, *The apologie of Pierce Pennilesse* (London, 1593), in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 17 April, 2013].

[72] Barnaby Rich, *Greenes newes both from heauen and hell* (London, 1593), in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 17 April, 2013].

[73] Cited in Welsford *The Fool*, p. 283.

[74] Cited in Nungezer, *Dictionary of Actors*, p. 363.

moreover, not only as a conduit for satire, but also as a comic messenger from God, or at least, the gods.

A further reason for difference in Q1's clown scene in 1594 might well be economic. Again, we have already seen in *A Knack* how the popularity of certain actors, and particularly Kemp, could contribute to success on stage and increase box office income. From Henslowe's financially astute point of view, the clown's Q1 lines in the mouth of Kemp, or any other clown for that matter, would surely have provided a far greater comic, not to mention profitable, impact for The Rose's expectant audiences - the 'rotten-throated slaves', 'whores, beadles [and] bawds' we have already met at the jig.

Q1's arrangement may also have suited the playwright. David Bradley contends that 'all actors know the importance of entrances', a point which is confirmed a number of times in relation to Kemp in this thesis.[75] As an actor himself penning the play in the early 1590s, therefore, Shakespeare would have been aware of the value of Kemp in the clown's role at that time. He may well, therefore, have constructed the part for Kemp, as Wiles contends, in a way which allowed the actor to make the most of his arrival on stage. Moreover, considering Q1's 'foul paper' copy, it is worth noting Long's contention that 'authorial stage directions were very seldom changed in the theatre'.[76] In this light, the use of the definite article in the clown's entry direction lends further weight to the idea of Kemp in the part, and to his status as the leading company clown. Wiles makes this point in relation to the first arrival of the Capulet servant Peter in *Romeo*. The 1599 second quarto of *Romeo*, another text which is believed to derive from Shakespeare's draft of the play,[77] and which later records Kemp in the role of

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[75] David Bradley, *From Text to Performance in the Elizabethan Theatre: Preparing the Play for the Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992; repr. 2009), p. 23.
[76] Long, 'Stage-Directions', p. 125.
[77] Brian Gibbons, ed., *Romeo and Juliet* (London: Methuen, 1980; repr. 2006), p. 1.

Peter during Act 4, also refers to 'the clowne' at the point of Peter's first arrival in the play in 1.2. For Wiles, this is normal practice: once Shakespeare had the role for '*the* Clowne', or Kemp in *Romeo*, he had no need to repeat the direction.[78] Kemp, or 'the' clown for Sussex's Men at the time of *Titus*' first performances, may well have been similarly cast.

As I will show in the remaining chapters, Shakespeare went on to capitalise on the success of Kemp's heavenly 'messenger' in *Titus*. In this light, Q1's 4.3, a copy close to its author as scholars agree, might well reflect Shakespeare's original design or sketch for the clown's arrival in the play. But whether or not this is the case, Shakespeare, by now, would have been aware of what Russell Brown describes as 'the processes of collaboration that would bring his plays before their audiences'.[79] Moreover, as Leah Marcus argues, 'a good actor – a good company – may well have been capable of improving a text, even from the author's point of view'.[80] Wells and Taylor contend similarly that Shakespeare relied on his colleagues to '"edit"' his manuscripts, 'at least mentally and perhaps physically', as they read them.[81] Shakespeare, then, can have been in little doubt that his lines would be subject to modification at some point and, perhaps predominantly, 'in the light of actual performance'.[82] Both Shakespeare and his clown, then, could have been 'in on the revisions' to the play, as Orgel puts it.[83] And if the revisions followed the authorial creation of the scene, we can see a case for an ensemble 'sketching', as opposed to individual writing, of the clown's arrival in the play.

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[78] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 84.
[79] Russell Brown, *Writing for Performance*, p. 39.
[80] Leah Marcus, 'Modelling, Revision and Adaptation', a paper given at the Adaptation and Revision' seminar for the *Shakespeare Association of America* Conference (April, 1994), cited in Jay L. Halio, 'Handy-dandy: Q1/Q2 *Romeo and Juliet*, in *Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet': Texts, Contexts, and Interpretations*, ed., Halio (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1995), pp. 123-50 (p. 138).
[81] Wells and Taylor, *A Textual Companion*, pp. 2-3.
[82] Bradley, *From Text to Performance*, p. 11.
[83] Orgel, 'What is a text?', p. 5.

If Q1 does contain evidence of Kemp as I have argued above, then we can also see how the part might have been revised in order to reflect his absence from Shakespeare's troupe by the time Q2 was printed in 1600. When, in 1594, Danter printed Derby's troupe first in the list of companies connected to the play, Kemp was one of their leading actors. Q2, printed by James Roberts, was no less vociferous in its claims of theatrical authenticity, describing its contents, 'As it hath sundry times beene playde by the/Right Honourable the Earle of Pembrooke, the/Earle of Darbie, the Earle of Sussex, and the/Lorde Chamberlaine/theyr Seruants'.[84] While the order of Q1's companies has been changed, the Lord Chamberlain's Men are foregrounded in a similar way to Sussex' Men in Q1, as they are given their own line in Q2's title-page layout. By 1600, however, Kemp was no longer a member of that company and his absence by then is perhaps reflected in the quarto by the fact that his Q1 opening lines now belong to Titus.

Also, by 1600 the Chamberlain's company's new clown/fool was Armin, an actor disinclined to extemporise on stage. Armin's style is illustrated by the title-page to his *Quips upon Questions* (1600): 'True it is, he playes the Foole indeed;/But in the Play he playes it as he must'. [85] Armin, it seems, followed the rules of drama, and was less known for speaking 'more than [was] set down' than Kemp. No doubt, he would have promoted a more serious, or tragic, side to *Titus*' doomed pigeon-carrier in a style which might have suited the company, and Shakespeare, more fully. As Erne argues, the dramatist was probably more self-conscious as a dramatic author by the turn of the century, and 'could not help knowing that his plays were being read and reread, printed

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[84] See Plate 11.
[85] Cf. Stern, *Rehearsal*, p. 104. For more on Armin's career as a dramatist in his own right, see Johnson, *The Actor as Playwright*.

and reprinted, excerpted and anthologized'.[86] If, as Russell Brown argues, on

Shakespeare's stage, 'the actors were in charge of what happened', [87] Shakespeare may

well have been more eager to control his play both in performance and in print by 1600.

To sum up so far, it seems that *Titus*, along with *Sir Thomas More*, reflects the

fact that clown parts were notably 'changeable'.[88] But whoever was responsible for this

changeability in the play, it seems that giving the clown the opportunity to announce his

own arrival on stage in 1594, as reflected in Q1, must have proved too good an

opportunity to miss – literally a show-stopper, both of the fictional Andronici attack on

the Roman state, and of the narrative action itself in a robust and ludic intrusion of

down-to-earth Elizabethan comedy. Thus, in the earliest, and apparently most

authoritative, text of the play, the clown's 'newes from heaven' where he noisily

announces himself, delivers a more calculated comic punch - one which, while

continuing the metaphysical intensity of Titus' quest for justice, also serves to comically

undermine it and the play as a whole.

In Q1, then, the clown who speaks his lines as he enters the scene certainly

seems to have been deliberately 'thrust' into the play 'by head and shoulders', and

allowed to play a part 'in majestical matters, with neither decency nor discretion'. He

was, therefore, an anathema to the 'sweet violence' of Sidney's classical ideals of

tragedy.[89] It might also be argued, in this light, that in all texts of *Titus*, the 4.3 arrival

of the clown would have re-directed the tragic thrust of the play at the height of the

hero's grief and despair in a similarly anarchic style. With the audience's blood-lust

sated by now with the play's grisly contortion of Ovid's cruel story and its relentlessly

bloody scenes of execution and dismemberment - 'gobbets of sob-stuff and raw beef-

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[86] Erne, *Literary*, p. 25. The editors of *Shakespeare's Book* also contend that Shakespeare 'wrote plays with an awareness of their future publication', p. 13.
[87] Russell Brown, *Writing for Performance*, p. 8.
[88] Stern, *Rehearsal*, p. 102.
[89] Sidney, *Apologie for Poetrie*, F4ʳ.

steak' thrown to the slavering mob, as John Dover Wilson described the play – the arrival of the clown would have been primed for the comic action to come in the remainder of the scene.[90]

VI.   'Merrimentes' in tragedy

Having interrupted the action of *Titus* with his arrival, the clown's games continue. All of the extant early editions of *Titus* follow Q1 in printing the first half of the conversation between Titus and the clown as follows:

Titus.	Sirra what tidings, have you any letters,
	Shall I haue justice, what saies *Jubiter*?
Clowne.	Ho the Gibbetmaker ? Hee saies that he hath
	taken them downe againe, for the man must not be hangd
	till the next weeke.
Titus.	But what saies *Jubiter* I aske thee?
Clowne.	Alas sir, I know not *Jubiter*,
	I never dranke with him in all my life.
Titus.	Why villaine art not thou the Carrier.
Clowne.	I of my pidgeons sir, nothing els.
Titus.	Why didst thou not come from heaven?
Clowne.	From heauen, alas, sir, I never came there,
	God forbid I should be so bolde, to presse to heaven in my
	young daies:
	Why I am going with my pidgeons to the tribunal
	Plebs, to take up a matter of brawle betwixt my Vncle,
	And one of the Emperals men.

                                    (ll. 1827-31)

In the light of Kemp's comic messenger, Titus' persistent questions and the responses they elicit from the clown seem particularly apt. But they also act as cues to the clown which allow him to demonstrate his continuing status as a liminal agent of festivity between stage and yard.

The first point to note is that Titus, supposedly mad by now and bound, moreover, within the mythic world of Shakespeare's Rome, immediately assumes that the clown literally bears a message from the gods: 'Sirra what tidings, have you any

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[90] John Dover Wilson, ed., *Titus Andronicus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948), p. vi.

letters,/Shall I haue iustice, what saies Jupiter?' The clown, however, ignores Titus'

rhetoric and responds in colloquial English: 'Ho the Gibbetmaker', followed by a

seemingly nonsensical, but prophetic, reference to the hanging of criminals:

> Hee saies that he hath
> taken them downe againe, for the man must not be hangd
> till the next weeke.

The clown thus replies to the aristocratic and warlike Titus with a quibble on 'Jupiter'

for 'Gibbetmaker' or 'gibbeter', which reduces the king of the Roman gods to the

Elizabethan slang for a hangman, and the subject of grisly gossip.

The lines here point to Kemp in a number of ways: first, in that the clown's

quibble on Jupiter is typical of the malapropising actor, and suggests his typically rustic,

as opposed to mythic, status in the play; and second, in the clown's reference to the

hanging which is reminiscent of the end of *A Knack*, where Honestie refuses to amend

the death sentence imposed on the two puritan villains of the piece: 'Trulie no, the spirit

doth not move me thereunto' (l. 1864). As Wilson points out, this is also a topical

allusion. On 31 March 1593, two Lutherans were taken to the Tyburn scaffold to be

hanged. They were reprieved at the last minute, and taken down again, only to be taken

back to Tyburn seven days later and hanged.[91]

Perhaps, then, *Titus*' Tyburn hanging joke is an example of a recycled in-joke

for the audience, and one which had already been used in *A Knack*.[92] This is

underpinned by the possible pun on 'them' above as public notices of hanging, which

very likely resembled theatrical flyers. The privileged spectators at *Titus*' first

performances in 1594 would surely have been ready and waiting for that kind of jesting

from Kemp, and on the lookout for loaded political references and innuendos.

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[91] Wilson, *Secret Shakespeare*, p 36.
[92] On how plays could gesture towards one another, see Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, pp. 74-5.

Ironically enough, hanging will also be the clown's fate in *Titus*, where, in a final twist

of 'gibbet' humour, he is hanged by the emperor at the close of 4.4.

Despite the clown's efforts to distract him, and presumably the audience, from

the play, however, Titus persists in his exalted references: 'But what saies Jupiter I aske

thee?' Once more, the clown responds from within his own time when 'Jupiter' is again

burlesqued – this time as the frequenter of an Elizabethan ale-house: 'Alas, sir, I know

not Jupiter, I never drank with him in all my life'. The lines so far allow the clown, as

Kiernan Ryan suggests of *Two Gentlemen's* Launce, to 'mil[k] gags from the

scrambling of plain communication'.[93] Again, however, we also find a link with *A*

Knack through the resonances of Tarlton's tavern-humour. In *Titus*, though, the clown

is also able comically to expose the close links between drinking, whoring and theatre-

going exploited so vociferously by his predecessor, and which reach a climax in

Shakespeare's characterisations of Falstaff and Sir Toby Belch, both of whom are

liquor-drenched knight-clowns. If it was Kemp taking the part of the clown in Q1, then

the comedy would have been heightened at this point in the dialogue by the words 'I

never drank with him in all my life'. These words sound highly ironic in the mouth of a

self-declared non-drinker, who would later boast of his sobriety: 'my only desire was to

refrain drink and be temperate in my diet', as he claims in his *Nine Daies Wonder*.[94]

With such quibbling, it is not surprising that Titus' questioning becomes more

impatient: 'Why villaine art not thou the Carrier', he demands. Again the clown ignores

Titus' increasing vexation, and his response is deadpan: 'I of my pidgeons sir, nothing

els', in a further clear reminder of his props. If the clown's pigeons have already been

shot by Titus' men, the comedy here is unequivocal. But Titus' questioning

disappointment in 'Why didst thou not come from heaven' is also tangible, adding an

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[93] Kiernan Ryan, *Shakespeare's Comedies* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 49.
[94] On Kemp's emphasis on how little he drank in *Nine Daies Wonder*, see Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 25-6.

element of pathos to the increasing 'mingle-mangle' of reality and illusion at work in the scene. In this light, there are two further points to note in the clown's final brief speech at the end of this sequence: first, the clown's singular 'God' roots him in a Christian, as opposed to Roman, society; and second, only two lines later, 'tribunal plebs' returns us to the fictional world of ancient Rome. The clown's brief speech thus further blends the competing levels of myth and mimesis already allegorically at play in the scene.

We can see, then, how the clown is able to merge his extrinsic Elizabethan persona as a well-known actor with the fictional domain represented at this point in 4.3. Snippets of verbal play, which are typical of contemporary 'clownage', are sandwiched between Titus' rhetoric. In this way, the clown's jests instil the sequence with linguistic and semantic slippages between poetry and prose, the play-world and the play-house, as the illusion of Rome is interrupted and penetrated continually by the clown's low comic style. All is topped off with a final, rustic, and somewhat 'Dogberryesque', flourish on 'emperal' which cannily joins these competing worlds in true festive fashion.

So far, *Titus*' clown demonstrates clearly how, having interrupted the play, the clown, played by a 'star' actor, was able to instil the action with his unique brand of interpolative comedy. But the matter goes beyond this. The presence of the clown in 4.3 produces a more complex dialectic between himself, the play and the audience which imbues the action with an intense vitality – one which seems to suit the playwright as the competing registers of language between elevated metaphor and quotidian speech heighten the comic effects of the scene, all of which are retained in all versions of the play. The clown's presence in the scene, we might conclude, clearly worked well on stage, both for the actor and for Shakespeare. Perhaps, however, all is not as impromptu as it first appears, as the loose pun on Jupiter and topical references to

Tyburn suggest. Rather, behind the clown's seemingly spontaneous comic prose hovers the presence of the dramatist who would have anticipated the clown's antics and catered for him with a virtuoso-style comic performance.

In all versions of *Titus* the clown's conversation with Titus flattens the hero's excessively rhetorical and ritualistic appeal to the gods. As we have seen, in a highly distracting moment, a rustic Elizabethan clown (probably Kemp himself as portrayed in Q1), wanders into classical Rome. This immediately unsettles both the tragic action of the play itself, and the time and space of the play-world. However, it also seems from both the content of the text at this point, and its lay-out on the quarto Q1's page which is followed in the further editions of the play, that the sequence is intended to be an episode of comic interplay between Titus and the clown. What I want to consider in this section, therefore, is how the satirical lampooning of Titus' symbolically charged idiom by the clown contains syntactic and semantic pointers which reveal a unique comic flair. It reveals, that is, a potent combination of poet-playwright and actor-clown operating together.

In terms of the work of both Tarlton and Kemp, the relationship between their performances and the printed texts which reproduce them can often, of course, only be guessed at.[95] Much more so than in Kemp's 'Merrimentes' in *A Knack*, however, the dialogue at this point in the action of *Titus*, while ostensibly allowing the clown the liberty of physical and verbal improvisation, also seems conducted to formula. In this play, while actor-audience contact is minimal, we can see how the presence of the clown retains an atavistic link to older forms of theatre. Moreover, redirecting the scene into the medium of festive comedy, the clown becomes the prose-antithesis to Titus' high-blown poetry, as the hero's Senecan, declamatory tragic stance is undercut

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[95] Cf. Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, p. 16.

continually by the clown's down-to-earth responses. As Titus' hierarchy breaks down, these linguistic forms come into increasing contact with one another, providing a verbal vitality to the scene in its constant shift to the vernacular realm.

In structural terms, the sequence is akin to the device of stichomythia, used in the play elsewhere in keeping with its Senecan paradigm of tragedy.[96] The awkward doublings and repetitions of the conversation enliven and vivify the competing worlds of reality and fiction in which these two characters reside and perform their double-act. When the clown and Titus misunderstand each other, for example, it appears to be in a way which echoes the often deliberate confusion in popular drama, where characters are meant to misunderstand each other. Consider, for example, Shakespeare's use of a similar dialogical tactic in *Richard III*, in the disturbingly prophetic conversation between the Vice-like Gloucester and his nephew and heir to the throne, Prince Edward:

Gloucester [*aside*]	So wise so young, they say, do never live long.
Price Edward	What say you, uncle?
Gloucester	I say, 'Without characters fame lives long'.
[*aside*]	Thus like the formal Vice, Iniquity,
	I moralise two meanings in one word

<div align="right">(Richard III, 3.1.79-83).</div>

As Weimann notes, this is a dramaturgical strategy connected to traditional elements of sixteenth-century popular comedy.[97] A similar linguistic interweaving of character and clown in *Titus* points to a calculated use of the scene in order to promote its striking generic slippage between tragic fall and comic farce. This 'brazen' contrariety, as Weimann might describe it,[98] also elevates the clown to a point of anti-heroic centrality in the narrative structure of the scene. He is able to create a complementary perspective on stage which counterpoints the heroic flavour of the scene where Titus' attack on the gods and Saturninus' court precipitate his tragic fall into vengeance.

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[96] On the use of Senecan stichomythia in *Titus*, see Van Es, *Shakespeare in Company*, p. 36.
[97] Weimann, *Popular Tradition*, p. 33-4.
[98] Weimann uses this phrase in describing the verbal antics of the gravediggers in Act 5 of *Hamlet*. See *Author's Pen*, p. 113.

Titus, of course, is mad, or at least pretending to be, by this point in the play. So the meeting with the clown is not unlike that between Lear and Poor Tom, or other such meetings which mark the tragic abyss. As Welsford's 'licensed critic of the action' in this way,[99] the clown's 'foolish' presence in the scene ensures that its tragi-heroic content is both contaminated and enhanced by its comic undertones. In a similar way to Lear's Fool, then, *Titus*' clown is able to set up a complementary perspective to that of Titus' heroic stance, one which 'counterpoints' that attitude through language which offsets the hero's grief and tragic mien. In this sense, the clown in *Titus* puts the hero's sorrows in proportion - he grounds them through sharpening our sense of the lack of a caring cosmos. He also reminds us that the dispute between Titus and the 'heaven' of the previous action is actually surrounded by a more down-to-earth reality: 'Alas, sir, I know not 'Jupiter'. I never drank with him in all my life'.

In *Titus*, however, the clown 'from heaven' might also be translated as arriving from 'the heavens', of the theatre itself.[100] He embodies, in this way, a social, or at least theatrical, reality which rejects the more mythical themes of the play in favour of the common-sense attitude of a plebeian and secularized audience. As Welsford argues, the clown figure can 'represent practical sense as against theoretical idealism',[101] with the result that Titus and the clown reside in different locations: Titus is bound by the illusion of Shakespeare's ancient Rome, whereas the clown, in his Elizabethan persona, is able to stand apart from the main action of the play. The clown's verbal register allows him to widen this seemingly deliberate gap between illusion and reality as his colloquial speech sets him apart from the rest of the play and his local idiom and slang

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[99] Welsford, *The Fool*, p. 39.
[100] Over the stage, extending out from the tiring-house above the balcony was a cover supported by two pillars rising from stage – 'this majestical roof fretted with golden fire' – as described by Hamlet (2.2.291-2), and also known as 'the heavens'. On the structure of the Elizabethan amphitheatre, see Gurr, *Elizabethan Stage*, pp. 122-3.
[101] Welsford, *The Fool*, p. 26.

is pitched against the feverishly poetic Titus. As a player used to operating outside the confines of the script, as we have seen in the interpolations of *A Knack*, the clown can thus participate in the conversation with Titus who is governed by the logic of the plot in his own 'clownish' way. At the same time, he can jest with the audience on a level which operates beyond the world of the play. But *Titus'* clown does not need to turn to the spectators in the yard, or take up a position in the anti-symbolic space of Weimann's 'platea' at the front of the platform stage where, as de Grazia notes more recently, interaction with the audience was easier.[102] Immediately recognizable, his true Elizabethan persona is revealed through his language and its artful juxtapositioning with the heightened classical oratory of Titus and his men. This not only instils the conversation with a clear linguistic demarcation, but also allows the contrasting idiom on display to reveal the moral and social status of both characters, actors and audience alike. As a result, *Titus'* 'poetic exuberance', to quote W. W. Greg on changes made to Robert Greene's *Orlando Furioso*, receives a 'plentiful dilution of comic interpolation' at the hands of his clown.[103]

There are other ways, too, in which this passage can be read as 'authorial' as opposed to purely extemporal. Stern argues that certain lines in a number of Shakespeare's plays appear to have been written for specific individuals.[104] There are other traces in the dialogue at this point in 4.3 which seem tailored in order to suit Kemp's popular style of clowning in a similar way. In response to Titus' demand for a message from Jupiter, for example, the clown answers in the doggerel-style verse in the line quoted above which further demarks his improvisational status. However, the

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[102] Margreta de Grazia, *Hamlet Without Hamlet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 176. For de Grazia, Weimann's 'platea' is a space which is reconfigured again within the developing aesthetics of illusory mimesis for the subjective soliloquies which explore Hamlet's psyche.

[103] Cited in David Bradley, *From Text to Performance in Elizabethan Theatre: Preparing the Play for the Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 12.

[104] See Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, pp. 71-3. For example, Richard Burbage is often linked to the role of Richard of Gloucester in *Richard III*.

second half of the line, 'I never drank with him in all my life', scans in iambic

pentameter rhythm. When Titus asks in increasing bewilderment if the clown has come

from heaven, his reply, 'from heaven, alas Sir, I never came there', in another

pentameter line immediately before the prose joke about 'my young daies'.

According to Greg, the 'typographical arrangement' of these lines suggests that

the 'gag' about drinking was a marginal addition to the clown's dialogue, and written,

quite probably, by Shakespeare.[105] If Greg's assumption is correct, then perhaps we can

assume further that the joke about pressing 'to heaven in my young daies' was added by

Kemp himself. Along with the third reference to 'heaven', the actor seizes the

opportunity to make a joke, and this time apparently at the expense of his own

appearance. Kemp, by his own account, was a large and ugly man, so if the clown was

played by Kemp, the joke about 'my young daies', as in the earlier example of drinking

with 'Jupiter', would have been highly ironic in the mouth of the well-known actor -

probably middle-aged by now, and certainly 'ill-faced', as his *Nine Daies Wonder*

attests.[106]

Read in the light of Kemp as the clown, the exchange with Titus also

foreshadows a technique Shakespeare seems to have repeated with the actor's

recognisably large build in a comical inversion of the emaciated Lancelot Gobbo in *The*

Merchant of Venice. In describing his master Shylock, Lancelot describes himself as

'famished in his service. You may tell every finger I have with my ribs' (2.2.94-5).

Wiles lists Gobbo as one of the characters the 'powerfully built' Kemp performed for

Shakespeare.[107] It is Falstaff, though, perhaps also played by Kemp, who is the prime

perpetrator of such techniques of self-conscious comedy in a 'rich amalgam of popular

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[105] Greg, *Folio*, p. 204, cited in Hughes, *Titus*, p. 161.
[106] Cited in Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 24.
[107] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 24. On early modern casting by physical type, see also Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, p. 63.

and literary traditions',[108] a characteristic particularly apparent in the fat rogue when he aligns himself, both physically and morally, with Lenten fare as a 'a shotten', or very thin 'herring' (2.5.117).

In Act Four Scene Three of *Titus*, I believe, traces of Kemp seem to flicker between the written lines of the author's script, ensuring that the infinite changeability and unpredictable nature of the extemporal stage infuses the scene at this point. What we thus seem to have in this sequence of dialogue overall, is a mixture of verse and spontaneous prose, where the text reflects a dramatic performance which is at least partially scripted. It is, however, impossible to tell to what extent the clown's extempore lines in *Titus* were of his making or Shakespeare's. But the lines do seem written for a particular dramatic function: not just for a character, but for an actor to stretch them into a theatrical performance that engages with the audience. Catered for in this way, the renowned clown can perform with, as opposed to merely for, the audience, deepening his comic impact. *Titus'* clown, in his unique position, thus turns aristocratic foolishness into comedy and, as it were, theatrical ambiguity, which is what Sidney was really complaining about.

In this light, *Titus'* clown, if played by Kemp, points to the merging of two potentially conflicting media in the scene, where both scripted words and unscripted acts of bodily performance coexist within a textually mediated play-script. This allows the clown to play with the script both to his own, and to the dramatist's, ends. At each written line of the clown's part, as in the case of *A Knack*, there is evidently room for some comic stage business. In *Titus*, however, Shakespeare and his leading clown, and

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[108] Jean E. Howard, Introduction to *1 Henry IV*, in *The Norton Shakespeare*, pp. 1147-56 (p. 1154).

script and stage, seem to be working as one in the trade-mark generic experimentalism of the playwright's early work.[109]

VII.   Exit the clown

Following the comic sequence with Titus analysed above, the clown does appear to be brought back in line with the play by Shakespeare. Not only does he become a more worldly messenger-deliverer to the emperor, he is also sent to his death for his pains. But there are further traces of Kemp at work here, which point to the dramatist's revision of the scene around him.

The first point to note is that at this point in Q1, Marcus joins the conversation between Titus and the clown, but there is evidence of 'incomplete revision' to the scene in one of the quarto's recognised 'false starts'.[110] The clown's announcement that he is on his way to seek justice (ironic enough in the light of Titus' own vengeful tragic plight) leads on to a request that he should play postman with his pigeons again. First Marcus, and then Titus, both decide to send the clown to the emperor with a message which alerts editors to the 'false start' in the passage. With the change of speaker, moreover, the medium of the message is also changed from an 'oration', or speech, to a written 'supplication'. Q1 prints the text as follows:

Marcus.	Why sir, that is as it can bee to serue for your Oration, and let him deliuer the pidgeons to the Emperour from you.
Titus.	Tell mee, can you deliuer an Oration to the Emperour with a grace.
Clowne.	Nay truelie sir, I could neuer say grace in all my life.
Titus.	Sirra come hither, make no more adoo, But giue your pidgeons to the Emperour,

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[109] On Shakespeare's early experimentalism in *Titus*, see Nicholas Brooke, *Shakespeare's Early Tragedies* (London: Methuen, 1973; repr. 1979), pp. 13-47.   Brooke offers a study of six Shakespearean tragedies, all of which offer 'early' and 'experimental' explorations into the generic form. The other plays explored are *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard II*, *Julius Caesar* and *Hamlet*.

[110] Hughes, *Titus*, gloss to 4.3.93-112, p. 133.

>| | By mee thou shalt haue iustice at his hands, |
>| | Hold, hold, meane while here's money for thy charges, |
>| | Giue me pen and inke. |
>| | Sirra, can you with a grace deliuer up a Supplication? |
>| *Clowne.* | I sir. |
>| *Titus.* | Then here is a Supplication for you, and when you |
>| | come to him, at the first approch you must kneele, then |
>| | kisse his foote , then deliver up your pidgeons, and then |
>| | looke for your reward. Ile bee at hand sir, see you do it |
>| | brauelie. |
>| *Clowne.* | I warrant you sir, let me alone. |

<div align="right">(ll. 1843-66)</div>

Titus' lines here, 'Tell mee, can you deliuer an Oration to the Emperour with a grace',
followed by 'Sirra, can you with a grace deliuer up a Supplication', are so similar that
they invite editorial suspicion that Q1includes two different versions of the episode,
particularly as the clown gives contradictory responses: 'Nay truelie sir', followed by 'I
sir'.

The second point to note is that the clown's joke about not being able to say
'grace' (ll. 1848-9) leads to a seeming impasse in the action for which Titus admonishes
him and changes the message form from speech to writing. This 'false start' in Q1 is
usually read in the context of the play's religious themes. Wilson argues, for example,
that it is a nod Catholic sympathisers in that the clown's message to the emperor
parallels the petition by Catholic gentry to Queen Elizabeth, delivered by a gullible
Richard Shelley in 1585, and for which he was immediately imprisoned, though not
hanged.[111]

In the light of Kemp's anti-puritan leanings, therefore, the messenger-clown's
quibble on 'grace' is also interesting. [112] This is primarily because of the clown's
recognised role in a messenger-function. Also, though, Wright notes how one of
Tarltons Jests recounts a visit to the Cross Keys Inn in Gracious Street. This is a more

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[111] See Wilson, *Secret Shakespeare*, p. 30.

[112] As noted in Chapter One, Hornback argues that during the fall-out from the Marprelate 'war', Kemp's on-stage comic persona was one which often figured in anti-puritan theatrical discourses during the 1590s. See Hornback, *English Clown Tradition*, pp. 102-142.

tenuous link, perhaps, but coupled with the tavern-located rehearsal described in Henslowe's diary, not to mention the gag about drinking with 'Jupiter', it may well point to more attempts to reproduce Tarlton's popular tavern humour in the mouth of Kemp.[113] There is, then, a further possibility regarding Q1's apparent repetition in these lines which does not seem to have been considered: that Q1's retaining both versions of the lines represents the scene as originally played, and involving Kemp. Marcus's idea of the clown delivering an 'Oration' is followed by the clown's quibble. Titus then immediately admonishes the clown for his wordy prank: 'Sirra come hither, make no more adoo'. This anticipates, I would suggest, Hamlet's later irritable scolding of the actor playing the villainous Lucianus in *The Mousetrap*, the Prince's specially adapted version of *The Murder of Gonzago*, which is staged in 3.2. In the 1603 first quarto of *Hamlet*, moreover, Hamlet's admonishment is intensified by an oath:

> Begin! Murderer, begin! A pox! Leave thy damnable
> Faces and begin! Come!
>
> (9.161-3)

If Kemp was up to his own 'scurvey'-faced capers while quibbling on 'grace' in *Titus*, this sheds some light on Titus' request to 'make no more adoo'. It is also after this line that Titus changes the clown's method of message delivery from 'oration' to 'supplication' - a response, perhaps, to Kemp's demonstrated undesirability, and unreliability, as a verbal messenger in the play. But if we must stay with a 'false start', as editors agree, perhaps this was also down to Kemp. In sensing that by sending the clown to his 'emperal' with a garbled speech, it would prove difficult to maintain the tragic direction of his work, already teetering on the brink of farce as a horror-loaded comedy of body parts. In writing, or rewriting this early tragedy, in the early 1590s, there is every possibility that Shakespeare changed his mind in order to give the clown a

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[113]Wright 'Animal Actors', p. 658.

written, and thus more dependable, message. In other words, Shakespeare made the alteration to his play-script in order to protect his play further from distractive 'merrimentes'.

We have already seen how extemporal and penned dialogue are pitched against each other in this scene, in the competing forms of communication between Titus and the clown. As Hawkes argues, even when a 'great feast of languages' is put on stage at the end of *Love's Labour's Lost* (5.1.37), there is still a 'tension' at large when 'the resonant world of speech is comically opposed to the silent world of writing'.[114] The reference to speech in the form of an 'Oration' comes from the effete Marcus, whose poetic language has already failed the mutilated Lavinia in Act 2. The reference to writing, however, comes from Titus who by this point is active in his revenge with written messages attached to arrows and who, later in Act Five, sets down plans for his barbaric and vengeful feast 'in bloody lines' (5.2.14).

Frank Kermode describes *Titus* as one of Shakespeare's most 'literary' plays.[115] Taking into account the thematic concerns of the work in terms of its Ovidian inheritance, therefore, if both passages outlined above are retained, they may also represent what James Calderwood interprets as the play's overarching concern with the conflicting merits of literary and theatrical form, in its propounding of the written word over speech.[116] This is perhaps more apparent in 4.4 when the clown delivers his message. Just before the clown enters to the emperor and empress, Tamora gloats at her seeming success in driving Titus to the edges of sanity and reason. Q1 and all later editions of the play remain the same in the following passage:

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[114] Hawkes, *Shakespeare's Talking Animals*, pp. 53-4.
[115] See Frank Kermode, *Shakespeare's Language* (London: Penguin, 2000), p. 7.
[116] James L. Calderwood, '*Titus Andronicus*: Word, Act, Authority', in *Shakespearean Metadrama: The Argument of the play in Titus Andronicus, Love's Labour's Lost, Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream and Richard II* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), pp. 23-51.

But, Titus, I have touched thee to the quick.
Thy life blood out if Aaron now be wise,
Then all is safe, the anchor in the port.
Enter Clowne.
How now, good fellow wouldst thou speake with us?

Clowne. Yea forsooth & your Mistriship be Emperiall.
Tamora. Empresse I am, but yonder sits the Emperour.
Clow. Tis he, God and Saint *Steven* giue you Godden,
I haue brought you a letter and a couple of pigeons here.
He reads the letter.
Satur. Goe take him away, and hang him presently?
Clow. How much money must I have.
Tamora. Come sirra you must be hanged.
Clowne. Hangd be Lady, then I have brought up a neck
to a faire end.
Exit
(ll. 1913-28)

Regardless of the sexual connotations of the anchor/port metaphor, Tamora's reference

to her Moorish lover returns us to the cuckolding of her husband at the moment of the

clown's arrival which interrupts her speech. For the second time in the play, then, and

once again on cuckolding cue, the clown enters *Titus'* action with his deflationary rustic

idiom and a further hefty dose of anachronistic and Catholicised satire in which the

semantics of sex and subversion are also quite clear.

However, rather than interpreting the clown's end simply as punishment for

seditious comic licence, as Preiss suggests, [117] and as we see with the examples of Cade

before and Falstaff afterwards, there is also a more telling conclusion to be drawn.

Kemp must have his part, but the earlier revisions around the role discussed above also

suggest some anxiety on the dramatist's part in overcoming the spread of authority

within the plays. Either that, or the clown's jokes in this bloody tragedy simply did not

work. By contrast, the lack of space for extempore comedy, coupled with evidence of

the revision of this half of the scene at the hands of Shakespeare, may well indicate that

the dramatist strengthened his authorial stance with regards to the possibility of further

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[117] Preiss, 'Robert Armin', p. 209.

contamination of his tragedy at the hands of the clown. Just as in the case of Prince

Hal's shocking disownment of Falstaff at the close of *2 Henry IV*, Shakespeare sets up

the audience's expectations of a continuing festive romp in *Titus*, then dashes them.

The audience might recognise Kemp's spoonerising fool, but the comedy is pointedly

short-lived and the clown's death in 4.4 is not only surprising but also discomfiting.

Calderwood certainly interprets the clown's death in this context: that is, as a

'Shakespearean self-judgement', where the dramatist self-consciously expresses his

authorial uneasiness in acknowledging the high artistic price he must pay as a poet in

writing a Senecan 'potboiler' for the 'drooling sadism of the London mob'.[118] Sending

the clown to Saturninus and, by extension, the play's Roman 'gibbeter', thus allows the

dramatist to regain both theatrical and authorial hegemony in his work. The clown's

ephemeral and unpredictable comic force as the ultimate script-disrupter is banished

from the stage and the play. More significantly, the clown's knife, reminiscent of the

Vice's dagger, and thus symbolic of theatrical anarchy and mayhem, is encased within

the written text and Titus' 'supplication'.[119] On a metatheatrical level, the authority of

the 'author's pen' is exercised over the 'actor's voice' in turning the spoken word to a

written passage.

In hanging the clown, Shakespeare could be sure that there would be no more

clownish and 'scurvey faces' or popping heads from the likes of Kemp, at least for the

time being. But we can also see how the clown figure is a master manipulator of

theatrical space. As everyone in the theatre well knew, and as his jaunty resignation to

his fate suggests, the clown would return at the end of the play for the last word, as it

were, in the jig. He might have been sent to his play-world death, but this poor fool is

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[118] Calderwood, *Shakespearean Metadrama*, p. 51.
[119] In Shakespeare's plays, both clowns and fools are grounded in the knavery of the Vice as Margreta de Grazia argues. See *Hamlet Without Hamlet*, p. 180.

not really hanged - at least, not until the next printed edition of the play appears in 1600, which reflects its own unique material circumstances – and the lack of Kemp. By the time Kemp and Shakespeare have parted ways, the clown's 'newes from heaven' is returned to Q2's fashionably madder Titus, and The Globe has banned the jig.

VIII.   Conclusion

The extant early printings of *Titus* reveal how the play, by its very nature, was subject to theatrical change. The Q1 text, almost certainly printed directly from Shakespeare's working manuscript, provides a valuable record of the play's early and apparently open-ended performances. Moreover, if Kemp did take the part of the clown in the initial performances which Q1 seems to reflect, we can see traces of the actor flickering between the lines of the authorial script. In this way, Q1 provides a valuable record of the continuing appeal of festive 'clownage', where Kemp's manifest and revised appearances in the play reveal the working amalgam of dramatist and actor in the creation and recreation of the play-script. Evidence of stage practice, in this light, is just as important as the printed word in interpreting the play. Within the overlapping disciplines of dramatic writing and acting, the clown's presence in *Titus* reveals, too, what Stern might call a 'crux in the creation' of the play,[120] as he injects Shakespeare's Roman world, despite the literary leanings of the play, with a powerful dose of Elizabethan reality.

Despite Sidney's objections, *Titus*' clown scenes suggest that Shakespeare's emerging tragic voice was obliged to take on board the residual conventions of popular festivity which remained important to the success of professional theatre in the early 1590s. The clown entered this tragedy, in other words, because he was expected to. As

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[120] Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, p. 39.

Janette Dillon contends in relation to early modern drama more generally, however, 'the thrusting in of clowns […] taps a deeper root than pragmatic economics'.[121] Kemp is thus also revealed in Q1 as a vital ingredient in Shakespeare's 'experimental' feast in *Titus*, with its startling blend of comedy and pathos, horror and farce. Perhaps, then, 'the persona of the Lord of Misrule to which Kemp always aspired', as Wiles contends,[122] was one which it also suited the dramatist to develop with ever-increasing comic sophistication.

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[121] Dillon, 'Elizabethan Comedy', p. 48.
[122] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 33.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

While the elderly queen dozes off to the lilting iambic flow of Valentine and Proteus,

she perks up considerably at the appearance of Launce (the play's major clown role

performed by a decidedly portly Will Kemp) and his dog Crab. The unruly antics of

this ludic pairing send the Whitehall audience into fits of mirthful delight. Meanwhile,

a young and nervous playwright peeps out from behind the tiring house, seemingly

dismayed at the effects of such 'low' grade humour on his play. I describe a scene from

John Madden's film, *Shakespeare in Love*, the 1998 Hollywood blockbuster which

takes, admittedly, a number of creative licences.[1] As Ryan suggests, however, the sole

feature that has made Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen* receive anything approaching

renown, at any point, is the 'double-act of motley and mutt performed by Launce and

the incontinent Crab'.[2] Scatological Elizabethan humour aside, even George Bernard

Shaw, one of Shakespeare's most vocal critics, could not resist this comic blend of

clown and 'cur': 'the scenes between Launce and his dog brought out the latent silliness

and childishness of the audience', Shaw wrote of Augustin Daly's production of 1895:

'I laugh at them like a yokel myself'.[3]

Madden's scene does appear to reproduce accurately the riotous effects of

traditional 'clownage' on audiences, both at court and on the public stage, which

continued well into the 1590s, as *Titus* shows. Despite the play's almost universal

denigration by critics and editors from the eighteenth century onwards, a revival of

interest in the work during the twentieth century has revalidated Launce as a vital comic

force. According to Harold Brooks, Launce and his unfaithful friend add a significant

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[1] *Shakespeare in Love*. Dir. John Madden. Miramax. 1998 [on DVD-ROM].
[2] Ryan, *Shakespeare's Comedies*, p. 39.
[3] Cited in ibid., p. 39.

comic frisson to the play which is fundamental to its wider action. Shakespeare, Brooks argues further, develops his comedy through the clown's role by means of comic parallels which illustrate and extend the play's themes as part of its 'organic structure'.[4] Indeed, Wiles argues that Launce's more integrated clown role marks a significant turning point on the traditional clown's popular trajectory, and is a result of the latent authorial moves towards literary and mimetic realism outlined in Chapter One.[5]

Launce is 'tied' to the narrative thrust of the entire work,[6] appearing regularly throughout the action in a series of comic set pieces made up of three soliloquies and two duologues, evenly, and perhaps strategically, spaced through the play. He first appears with Crab early on at the opening of 2.3, where he performs a comic monologue in which he addresses the audience on his imminent departure with his master Proteus to Milan; in 2.5, Launce meets with Speed, Valentine's 'pert' Lylian page, on his arrival in Padua;[7] in 3.1, Launce and Proteus find the banished and grief-stricken Valentine, and later in the same scene Launce soliloquises on his 'milk-maid' love; and at the opening of 4.4, Launce makes his last appearance, once again accompanied by Crab, for a final comic monologue which mirrors 2.3 with a further account of his dog's emotional, and social, deficiencies. As a clown in the traditional sense, therefore, Launce is far more entrenched within the narrative of the play than either the bawdy cobbler or peasant pigeon-carrier we have already met, both of which are examples of a more presentational style of comedy, and which provide relatively small-scale interruptions to the wider works in which they appear.

[4] Harold F. Brooks, 'Two Clowns in Comedy (to say nothing of the Dog): Speed, Launce (and Crab) in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*', in June Schlueter, ed., *'The Two Gentlemen of Verona': Critical Essays* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996), pp. 71-8 (p. 71).
[5] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 73.
[6] My use of 'tied' here will become clear in the later parts of the chapter.
[7] Kurt Schlueter, ed., *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990; repr. 2012), p. 15. Launce's arrival in Padua, as opposed to Milan, is one of the play's inconsistencies of time and place which points to the adaptation of the work as I will show.

Neither Launce, nor Crab, then, should be dismissed as mere clowning concessions – either to monarch, or to the 'stinkards' jostling in the playhouse yards. Moreover, there is evidence of revision in the play, suggesting that Launce's part was written and added to an extant version. According to Clifford Leech, the play was written in 'four stages of composition', and during stage three, the 'new character' of Launce was introduced and added to the play specifically for Kemp.[8] For Chambers, the play was finished soon after the establishment of the Lord Chamberlain's Men in 1594.[9] This suggests in turn, as Wiles argues, that when Kemp and Shakespeare became fellows, and equal sharers, in the new Chamberlain's company in 1594, one of the first things that Shakespeare did was to take an existing play and construct a part in it for Kemp.[10]

What I want to consider in this chapter is how this vibrant and dominant clown role ensures that the play's key romantic and friendship motifs are parodied throughout by the satirical and vulgar perspective we have already seen at work in Kemp's plays. Launce's dramatic and thematic potential in *Two Gentlemen*, coupled with the traces of Kemp's performances which I believe are captured in its first published version in the 1623 First Folio, prove a potent line of enquiry into the play. The chapter is again divided into two halves. In the first half, I consider how the date and textuality of the play can be related to Kemp, and also how theories of revisionary composition which now surround Launce are key to reading the role through the perspective of Kemp's signature style of 'clownage'. In the second half of the chapter, I will examine the textual traces of the actor which are revealed in Launce's first arrival in the play in 2.3

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[8] Clifford Leech, ed., *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Arden 2nd Series (London: Methuen, 1972; repr. 1986), pp. xxi-xxxv (p. xxx).
[9] E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), II, 194.
[10] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 73-4.

and in his 'virtuoso' opening monologue.[11] This first scene not only demonstrates Launce's thematic importance, but also reveals the extent of Kemp's comic enhancement of the entire work.

I.   A Folio-only text

What makes this study of Kemp challenging is that *Two Gentlemen* is a Folio-only play. Stern argues that editing 'single' texts such as those contained in the First Folio should be 'simple', as 'there is no alternative text to muddle what is preserved'.[12] However, *Two Gentlemen* presents its own difficulties to any performance-related investigation in two main ways: first, in the considerable temporal distance between the play's assumed first performances in the mid-1590s and its first publication in 1623; and second, in that there is no record of the play on stage until a note of its performance at Drury Lane on 22 December 1762.[13] Evidence of the stage, therefore, is difficult to find in *Two Gentlemen*. Any investigation is impeded further by the classicised editing imposed on the Folio text (F1) text by the King's Men's scrivener, Ralph Crane, who transcribed the play in approximately 1619.[14] Before examining the role of Launce, therefore, it is necessary to take a closer look at F1, and at what we can glean from the text about the play's composition and probable revision for Kemp.

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[11] Ryan, *Comedies*, p. 45.

[12] Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, pp. 48-9.

[13] The duodecimo edition of *Two Gentlemen* published in 1734, is preceded by a note from W. Chetwood, prompter at Drury Lane, but the text shows no 'evidence of theatrical' use. See Leech, *Two Gentlemen*, p. xlv.

[14] Ralph Crane was a professional scrivener, or scribe, known to have worked for The King's Men in the 1620s. Other 'Crane' plays contained in the First Folio include *The Tempest*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Measure for Measure*, and probably *Othello*, *2 Henry IV* and *Timon of Athens*. Non-Shakespearean plays on which Crane worked include Thomas Middleton's *The Witch*, and several plays in the Beaumont and Fletcher Folio of 1647. The 1623 quarto of John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* was also 'almost certainly' transcribed by Crane. See John Russell Brown, ed., *The Duchess of Malfi* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 30.

For further scholarship on Crane's work, see T. H. Howard-Hill, 'Shakespeare's Earliest Editor, Ralph Crane', *Shakespeare Survey*, 44 (1992), 113-29. See also Paul Werstine, 'Scribe or Compositor: Ralph Crane, Compositors D and F, and the First Four Plays in the Shakespeare First Folio', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 95:3 (2001), 315-39.

In comparison to the other plays examined in this thesis, the publication history of *Two Gentlemen* is quite straightforward. The earliest record of the play is its inclusion in the Stationers' Register entry for previously unpublished plays in the First Folio. Perhaps owing to its lack of former publishing, *Two Gentlemen* occupies a prominent position in 'Shakespeare's Book'. According to Blayney, at a cost of approximately fifteen shillings unbound, or one pound in plain calf, Shakespeare's Folio was 'the most expensive book that had ever been offered to the English public'.[15] The play is listed under the 'Comedies' section in F1's contents, and appears as the second work in the volume, printed after *The Tempest* (first), and before *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Measure for Measure* (third and fourth respectively). As the work of Charlton Hinman shows, *Two Gentlemen* was the second play to be set by F1's compositors, and occupies pages 20-38 of the overall text (B4^v-D1^v).[16] Five pages were set simultaneously with the last seven pages of *The Tempest*, as they appear in the same gathering. The last two pages, numbered 37 and 38, are in the gathering which also contains the first ten pages of *Merry Wives*, and this explains the incorrect running title of '*The Merry Wives of Windsor*'.[17]

Perhaps the most logical answer for the *Two Gentlemen*'s literary eminence as the Folio's second play is that it was transcribed, along with the two plays listed above, by Crane, or 'Shakespeare's earliest editor', according to Trevor Howard-Hill. Essentially, Crane repackaged the plays on which he worked for what Bradley calls the Folio's 'upwardly mobile' readers.[18] They thus contain extensive literary mediation, as Werstine has shown. Throughout the Folio volume, most of the Crane's texts' numerous

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[15] Peter W. M. Blayney, Introduction to *The First Folio of Shakespeare*, pp. xxvii-xxxvii (p. xxviii).
[16] Hinman, Introduction to *First Folio*, pp. ix-xxvi (p. xv).
[17] On the compositorial setting of the Folio's comedies, see Blayney, *First Folio*, pp. xxxiv-v. See also Howard-Hill, 'The Compositors of Shakespeare's Folio Comedies', *Studies in Bibliography*, 26 (1973), 61-106.
[18] Bradley, *From Text to Performance*, p. 5.

bibliographical variants were introduced to enhance their 'readability'. They were also 'altered to accord with [Crane's] professional standards'.[19] However, Crane did not always carefully reproduce the transcript of the plays from which he worked. Rather, as Kurt Schlueter argues, the scribe 'felt free to substitute elisions different from those of his copy, greatly influenced punctuation and introduced his own kind of word compounds'.[20]

Bradley argues that the composition and production of Elizabethan plays was dominated to a great extent by the actors available for casting, and thus by the very structure of the theatre itself.[21] This is clear from the obvious lack of stage directions or instructions for performance in early modern play manuscripts and extant early printed texts, which points, as Bradley argues, to the 'existence of widely understood mimetic conventions that must have compensated for their lack of magisterial detail'. There were, then, 'regular and universal' methods of theatrical interpretation which essentially guaranteed the correct transmission from text to performance.[22] In other words, Shakespeare left it to the actors, as we have seen, to an extent, in *Titus*.

Nonetheless, Werstine considers Crane's *Two Gentlemen* a good text in comparison to others in the Folio.[23] The transcription, however, does exhibit some of the copy-text features which are known to have been peculiar to him. One of the chief signs of Crane's intervention in the play are what editors describe as 'massed entrances',[24] seemingly used in order to embellish his transcriptions with a learned air which evoked earlier Renaissance '"continental-classical"' styles of printing drama, and

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[19] Paul Werstine, 'Shakespeare', in D. C. Greetham, ed., *Scholarly Editing: A Guide to Research* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1995), pp. 253-82 (p. 255).
[20] Schlueter, *Two Gentlemen*, p. 160. See also Howard-Hill, *Ralph Crane*, pp. 56-7.
[21] Bradley, *From Text to Performance*, pp. 4-5.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Werstine, 'Shakespeare'.
[24] See, for example, Schlueter, *Two Gentlemen*, p. 159, and Wells and Taylor, *A Textual Companion*, p. 166.

already similarly in use in Jonson's *Works*.[25] In other words, Crane suppressed 'almost

completely' any directions for action contained within the plays on which he worked,

replacing 'hazy' or non-existent stage directions with classicized literary glossing.[26]

While adding a literary flourish to the play, though, Crane's 'massed entrances'

also complicate the normative mode of indicating the entry of characters at the point of

speech. Instead, every character due to appear in a given scene is listed in the initial

stage direction, often long before his or her actual entry, or speech, takes place. A

typical example is found at the opening of the long '*Actus Tertius, Scena Prima*', or 3.1.

Here, the characters required for the scene are listed as follows: '*Enter Duke*, *Thurio*,

Protheus, *Valentine*, *Launce*, *Speed*' (TLN. 1067-9).[27] This is despite the fact that

Valentine does not speak until l. 1121; Launce does not speak until l. 1258; and Speed

does not speak until l. 1346. In the light of Speed's 'pert' part, it is unlikely, as Wells

argues, that the actor playing him in early performances of the play would have been

required to wait around on stage for over two hundred lines of dialogue, 'like the

proverbial spare dinner', before commencing his conversation with Launce.[28] In other

words, Crane's 'massed' direction at this point does not represent performance.[29] In

order to compensate for this, and presumably to update the scene's 'readability', modern

editors open the scene with 'Enter Duke, Turio and Proteus', and add extra entry

directions for Valentine at 3.1.149, Launce at 3.1.188 and Speed at 3.1.272.[30]

The original practices, and practicalities, of staging the play, then, were

inevitably corrupted or altered during the process of 'tidying up' the play-script for the

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[25] Schlueter, *Two Gentlemen*, pp. 159-60.
[26] Wells, *Re-editing Shakespeare*, p. 59.
[27] Line references for F1 are taken from Hinman, *First Folio*.
[28] Wells, *Re-editing Shakespeare*, p. 63.
[29] Cf. Bradley, *From Text to Performance*, p. 8.
[30] See, for example, Schlueter, *Two Gentlemen*, pp. 94-106.

purposes both of bibliographical transmission and of literary mediation for readers.[31]

But editorial difficulties, such as the one outlined above, do not end with Crane. As

Werstine notes, 'agency in the transmission of texts gets blurred' further by the

practices of print.[32] According to Howard-Hill, 'all interior entrances in [Crane's]

dramatic transcripts were written to the right of the dialogue, and were not centred or

otherwise conspicuously marked.' He notes further that because the scribe inserted his

entry directions after transcribing the dialogue, they could be 'misplaced' by F1's

compositors who centred entrances on the width of the column.[33] Because of Crane's

significant interventions in F1, it is also almost impossible for modern editors to

identify the precise nature of the copy-text from which the scribe worked. As Wells

argues, 'we cannot be sure of the precise nature of the script that [Crane] was

copying'.[34] The genesis of F1 thus remains a mystery and the editorial theories which

have attempted to unravel this particular conundrum are diverse.

In preparing his seminal facsimile edition of the First Folio, Hinman regarded

the origins of Crane's copy-text as theatrically dubious, arguing that the play was set

from a 'prompt book' as opposed to an authorial manuscript. As a result, he argued

Crane's transcription of the play is untrustworthy in terms of both its theatrical and

scribal distance from the author.[35] Since Hinman's work, both the terms 'prompt book'

and 'foul papers' have been criticised by Werstine: in the first instance as anachronistic

in terms of theatrical practice; and in the second, as too intentional in terms of

authorship.[36] Despite this, editors have continued to rely on this traditionally accepted

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[31] I take the term 'tidying up' from Wells, *Re-Editing*, p. 59.
[32] Werstine, 'Scribe or Compositor', p. 317.
[33] Howard-Hill, *Ralph Crane*, p. 113.
[34] Wells and Taylor, *A Textual Companion*, p. 166.
[35] Hinman, Introduction, *First Folio*, p. xv.
[36] See Paul Werstine, 'Editing Shakespeare and Editing Without Shakespeare: Wilson, McKerrow, Greg, Bowers, Tanselle, and Copy-Text Editing', *TEXT*, 13 (2000), 27-53. For more recent scholarship on 'prompt books', see Sonia Massia, *Shakespeare and the Rise of the Editor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 139.

distinction between theatrical and authorial copy-text in determining the origins of the play, 'with little success', as William Carroll notes.[37] Taylor argues, for example, that F1 gives no clues as to the nature of the text from which Crane worked. However,

> on the basis of Crane's other Folio plays and other extant manuscripts, we may assume that what Crane copied in this instance had itself already been expurgated, and may have been a prompt-book.[38]

Most editors, though, come down on the side of 'foul papers' as the basis of F1's text. G. Blakemore Evans concludes that 'there is nothing in the F1 text to suggest that the copy behind Crane's transcript was a 'prompt-book'.[39] Leech argues that Crane's copy 'was in all probability Shakespeare's "foul papers"'.[40] For Schlueter, neither 'prompt book' nor 'foul papers' offer a satisfactory origin for Crane's copy-text. Schlueter notes 'the complete lack of all positive indications' of 'prompt book' origin and, avoiding the term 'foul papers' with its authorial implications, states simply that Crane must have worked from 'an early draft […] an unfinished draft version of the play'.[41]

Overall so far, what seems to be the case in terms of F1 *Two Gentlemen* is that as M. M. Mahood argues on the subject of Crane's transcription of *Measure for Measure*, 'we cannot be sure that we have all words or that those we have are the right ones'.[42] One thing we do know, 'with near certainty', however, [43] is that Kemp played the part of Launce in original performances of the play, and that the role of Launce was added to an extant or working version of the play-script specifically for him. F1,

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[37] William C. Carroll, ed., *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, The Arden Shakespeare 3rd Series (London: A & C Black Publishers Ltd, 2004), p. 123-4.

[38] Gary Taylor, ''Swounds Revisited: Theatrical, Editorial, and Literary Expurgation', in Gary Taylor and John Jowett, eds., *Shakespeare Reshaped, 1606-1623* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 89.

[39] G. Blakemore Evans, ed., *The Riverside Shakespeare* 2nd edn (London: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), p. 172.

[40] Leech, *Two Gentlemen*, p. xxxi.

[41] Schlueter, *Two Gentlemen*, p. 150.

[42] M. M. Mahood, *Playing Bit Parts in Shakespeare* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992; repr. 1998), p. 134.

[43] Carroll, *Two Gentlemen*, p. 130.

therefore, takes us a step closer to the working playwright in terms of the manipulation of his play for the Chamberlain's Men's star clown.

II.   Revising the text and dating the play

In 1943, Oscar James Campbell put forward the theory that Launce was one of the first clown roles Shakespeare designed specifically for Kemp.[44] Editing the New Arden second series edition of *Two Gentlemen* in the late 1960s, Leech built on Campbell's work, basing his theory of Kemp as Launce on two main contentions: first, Leech set out at length the arguments for believing that the text of the play, as we know it, is the product of extensive reworking; and second, that the character of Launce, 'doubtless Kempe's',[45] was not part of the original conception of the play. Leech identifies no fewer than twenty-one 'oddities' in F1's *Two Gentlemen*, ranging from minor irregularities to major narrative contradictions caused, in the main, by the reworking of the play for the actor. These include geographical confusion between locations (at 2.5.1, for example, Launce arrives in Milan rather than Padua). There are also different references to Sylvia's father as a 'Duke' or an 'Emperor', one of which is particularly relevant to Kemp playing Launce, as I will show.

Launce is surrounded, then, by a number of major textual incongruities in F1. But Leech argues further that the general narrative unevenness of the work as a whole can be accounted for by the fact that the play was composed over at least four phases of writing, as noted above. Shakespeare, Leech contends, first contrived the basic elements of the love and friendship plot, based in the main on the story of 'Felix and

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[44] Campbell, *Shakespeare's Satire*.

[45] Leech, *Two Gentlemen*, p. xxvi. For further criticism on Kemp as Launce, see also Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 73-4; Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p.152; and Kathleen Campbell, 'Shakespeare's Actors as Collaborators: Will Kempe and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*', in Schlueter, *Critical Essays*, pp. 179-187.

Felismena' in Jorge de Montemayor's pastoral novel *Diana* (c. 1559).[46] The dramatist

then made various adjustments to the narrative and added other components, and during

stage three of his overall revision, Launce was added to the play.

Wiles concurs with Leech on the addition of Launce for Kemp, but argues that

the entire play was extant when the clown's part was added.[47] Taking his cue from F1,

Wiles points out that in the play's list of 'The names of all the Actors' on page 38 of the

Folio, Speed's part is described as '*a clownish servant to Valentine*'. This is followed

immediately by the entry for Launce who is described as '*the like to Protheus*'. Speed,

though, plays a far less significant part in the play than Launce. Moreover, Wiles

argues further that Launce's character was based on Kemp's known style of

'merriments', and continued to give him the 'freedom to improvise if he cho[se]'. Thus,

if Speed represents the play's original comic part, and Launce an addition as a 'fully

fledged Shakespearean clown',[48] then this provides an explanation for the Folio's

'rather odd classification' which promotes the lesser 'clown' role.[49]

A number of other scholars have followed Wiles in consolidating Launce's links

with the formation of the Lord Chamberlain's Men in 1594. Kathleen Campbell argues

that Shakespeare needed to find new material for the new company, and also needed to

'find a place' for Kemp who came to the troupe as a well-known and popular

entertainer.[50] Other actors working for the company have also been identified. David

Grote, for example, argues that John Heminges and Augustine Philips would have

played Proteus and Valentine, with George Bryan as the Duke of Milan, and Thomas

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[46] For a detailed account of Shakespeare's sources for *Two Gentlemen*, see Schlueter, *Two Gentlemen*, pp. 6-14.
[47] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 73-4. Leech argues that Speed is not a clown role in the traditional sense.
[48] Schlueter, *Two Gentlemen*, p. 15.
[49] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 73.
[50] Campbell, 'Shakespeare's Actors', p. 183.

Pope as either Antonio or Speed.[51] As Carroll points out, such speculations offer little hope of certainty, but they are more plausible in the likelihood of Kemp as Launce.[52]

  Two Gentlemen, then, was very likely made ready for the newly formed company's opening performances, and contained a significant comic role for their 'master merryman', Kemp.[53] As Campbell argues, 'Launce owes his distinctive voice and comic genius to Kempe'.[54] But the part may also be down to timing and a fortuitous collaboration between Shakespeare, his new company and the 'most experienced clown in the troupe', all of whom combined to fashion the role of Launce as a vehicle for the famous Kemp in 1594.[55] If this is the case, then Launce also provides a useful pointer to the play's date of composition – or at least, as Carroll points out, the composition of those sections of the work with Launce in them, and which, presumably, 'post-date 1593'.[56]

  The only tangible piece of evidence relating to the play before its inclusion in the Folio is found in Francis Meres' *Palladis Tamia:Wit's Treasury*, entered in the Stationers' Register on 7 September 1598, and dedicated on 19 October that year. As noted in Chapter One, in his 'comparative discourse of our English Poets', Meres describes Shakespeare as a leading exponent of stage comedy:

> for Comedy witness his *Gentlemen of Verona*, his *Errors*, his *Love labors lost*, his *Love labours wonne*, his *Midsummers night dreame*, & his *Merchant of Venice*.[57]

The only comedy missing from Meres' list that is known to have existed prior to 1598 is *The Taming of the Shrew*. The reference to '*Love labours wonne*', as Carroll notes, is

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[51] David Grote, *The Best Actors in the World: Shakespeare and His Acting Company* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), pp. 23-4.
[52] Carroll, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, p. 83.
[53] John Timpane, '"I am but a foole, looke you": Launce and the Social Functions of Humour', in Schlueter, *Critical Essays*, pp. 189-211 (p. 200).
[54] Campbell, 'Shakespeare's Actors', p. 181.
[55] Timpane, '"I am but a foole"', p. 200.
[56] Carroll, *Two Gentlemen*, p. 130.
[57] Meres, *Palladis Tamia*, in *The Norton Shakespeare*, p. 3325.

'notorious in its own right' as a possible sequel to '*Love labors Lost*'.[58] But Meres' list

does tantalisingly suggest an order of composition for Shakespeare's comedies. Since

the latter five appear to have been produced in the order listed, by implication Meres'

'*Gentlemen of Verona*' would have been the first comedy written.[59] As Carroll admits,

this speculation cannot be confirmed by any clear evidence.[60] Indeed, only two facts

about the dating of the play can be considered absolute – that it was listed by Meres in

1598, and published in the First Folio in 1623. Even though there are no records of

early performances, therefore, *Two Gentlemen* must predate Meres' 1598 list and thus

must have already been in existence by that date, either on stage or in print.

Editors propose a range of dates for the play's composition. One of the earliest

theories relating to the composition of the play is based on the part of Launce, but not in

relation to Kemp. Richard Beadle argues that the presence of Crab perhaps reveals the

fact that Launce was originally written for Tarlton, a performer in the comic tradition

who 'retained the popular entertainer's traditional affinity with dogs'.[61] This suggests

that the play could have been composed by the time of Tarlton's death in 1588.   The

latest dating for the play is also related to Crab. John Peachman argues for a dating of

approximately 1597, citing correlations between Shakespeare's play and a number of

works by Thomas Nashe which are satirised by Crab's appearance in *Two Gentlemen*.[62]

I will return to the subject of Crab, and also Tarlton, later in the chapter. For

now, other theories of the play's dating have a similar range: from Ernst Honigmann's

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[58] On this possibility, see H. R. Woudhuysen, ed. *Love's Labour's Lost* (Walton on Thames: Arden Shakespeare, 1998).
[59] Cf. Carroll, *Two Gentlemen*, p. 130.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Cf. Richard Beadle, 'Crab's Pedigree', in *English Comedy*, eds. Michael Cordner, Peter Holland and John Kerrigan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 12-35 (pp. 12-13).
[62] John Peachman, 'Why a dog? A late date for *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*', *Notes and Queries* (September 2007), 265-272.

proposal of approximately 1587, to Chambers' of 1594-5.[63] Schlueter concurs with

Honigmann, agreeing that it is possible to locate the composition of the play in the late-

1580s.[64] The *Oxford Shakespeare* editors also opt for an early date and propose 1590-

91, claiming that *Two Gentlemen* was Shakespeare's earliest comedy, and one of only

six plays written before the repeated plague-enforced closures of the theatres between

1592 and 1593.[65] Carroll points out that the play's 'internal features', such as frequency

of rhyme or word usage, do not provide sufficient evidence for dating.[66] This may well

be related to the scribal transcription of the play for the Folio's publication. But at the

very least, none of these suggestions rules out the theory that the Launce parts were

added, perhaps even as Kemp took over from Tarlton with a new dog act.

It may be a step too far to suggest that *Two Gentlemen's* prominence in the Folio

is in any way related to Kemp having played the part of Launce. But his undoubted

presence in the play does help to explain how one of Shakespeare's most popular and

enduring comic characters is able to dominate, bibliographically, theatrically and

thematically, a play with such heavyweight literary punch as the second work in

'Shakespeare's Book'.

Duncan-Jones has recently argued that Kemp may still have been alive in 1623,

but there is little doubt that he would not have been seen on stage for a number of

years.[67] However, John Jowett shows how under the headings of 'Comedies',

'Histories' and 'Tragedies', the listing of the Folio's plays reflects little or no

chronological sequence, either of performance or composition. While the 'Histories'

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[63] E. A. J. Honigmann, *Shakespeare's Impact on His Contemporaries* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1983), p. 88; Chambers, *William Shakespeare*, I, 270.
[64] Schlueter, *Two Gentlemen*, p. 2.
[65] See Wells and Taylor, *A Textual Companion*, pp. 97-109. The other plays the Oxford editors include in this list are the *Henry VI* trilogy, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Titus Andronicus*.
[66] Carroll, *Two Gentlemen*, pp. 128-9.
[67] See Katherine Duncan-Jones, 'Shakespeare's Dancing Fool', *Times Literary Supplement* (13 August 2010), pp. 13-15. It is usually assumed that Kemp died in approximately 1603. See Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 41.

are presented in order of the historical events related in the plays, the sequences of 'Comedies' and 'Tragedies' 'see[m] to have been aimed at placing previously unpublished plays written late in Shakespeare's career at the beginning and end of each section'.[68] Eight out of the fourteen Folio comedies were published for the first time in that volume. Along with the plays already listed, these include *The Comedy of Errors*, *As You Like It*, *All's Well that Ends Well* and *Twelfth Night*. As Erne has shown, however, lack of quarto publication does not necessarily point to a play's unpopularity. On the contrary, Erne argues that the Chamberlain's and King's Men may well have actively sought to keep certain plays from print. Henry Chettle's *Tragedy of Hoffmann* (1603) provides a case in point. The play was not printed until 1631, almost two decades after the playwright's death. This is despite evidence of the play's success amongst a broad spectrum of playgoers, and the fact that Henslowe considered it worthy of substantial loans (or advance payments) to Chettle.[69] On a similar note, Mahood argues that *The Tempest* would not now be described as Shakespeare's 'chef-d'oeuvre'. Its pride of place as the opening play in the Folio is more likely down to the fact that it is 'theatrically thrilling', and Shakespeare's 'most persistently captivating play'.[70] The decision to print *Two Gentlemen* as the second play in the volume , therefore, may well have made more sense for the contemporaries of Heminges and Condell as one of what Jowett describes as the numerous 'sales pitch[es]' contained in the Folio overall.[71] If this is the case, then *Two Gentlemen*'s celebrated position suggests the fact that, in its own time, the play was far more popular, and more celebrated, than it is today.

Blayney argues that Jonson's *Works* was the only similarly ambitious project to Shakespeare's Folio that the seventeenth-century publishing industry had seen so far.

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[68] Jowett, *Shakespeare and Text*, pp. 86-7.
[69] Cf. Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, III, 264, cited in Sugg, *Murder After Death*, p. 22.
[70] Mahood, *Bit Parts*, pp. 215-6.
[71] Jowett, *Shakespeare and Text*, pp. 86-88 (p. 88).

Although Jonson's volume included nine plays, its contents were not exclusively dramatic. Moreover, Jonson's book cost considerably less than Shakespeare's, had already been on sale for six years by 1623, and would not be reprinted for another eighteen years. By 1622, Jonson's publishers were likely to have sold less than a quarter of their edition and were still several years away from recovering their initial financial outlay.[72] Jonson's Folio, then, was hardly a publishing success, and would not have tempted Shakespeare's pioneering editors with the prospect of fat returns. Sales of Shakespeare's Folio, however, were relatively successful in comparison to Jonson's *Works*, selling out within nine years. As a result, Blayney considers Hinman's contention that the Folio's publishers needed a guarantee of potential loss speculative - a consideration which has prompted him to generously amend Hinman's initial theory of a print run of 1,200 to 5-6,000.[73]

However, for a book that was a commercial gamble for its time, the publishers of the Folio might well have decided to minimise the considerable financial risk involved in the book's production by including in its opening pages those plays that had enjoyed theatrical popularity and notoriety, as opposed to those which had already been read. If we look at the Folio's list of 'The Names of the Principall Actors/in these Playes', printed as the last of the volume's preliminary features before *The Tempest* begins, the names do seem to be listed in order of importance, or fame, by this time. Shakespeare comes first, followed by Richard Burbage, John Heminges, and Augustine Phillips, all well-known, according to Nungezer's diary as influential actors.[74] 'William Kempe' is fifth in the list. It is possible to see, therefore, how, along with the other actors, Kemp's influence was still at work in a text produced some twenty years after his probable death. In its own time, therefore, and also quite probably during

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[72] Blayney, *First Folio*, p. xxxviii.
[73] Ibid., pp. xxxiv-v.
[74] See Nungezer, *Dictionary of Actors*, pp. 67-81; 179-86; 280-82.

Shakespeare's lifetime, *Two Gentlemen* may well have received a better press than it

has done for the past two hundred years. And that may well have been down to Kemp

playing Launce.

III.   'Enter Launce': the intersection of 2.2 and 2.3

The narrative of *Two Gentlemen* is driven by the interpretation of messages, where

letters and love-tokens in written, inanimate, and even in the animate form of Crab, are

promised and exchanged between lovers, servants and friends. In this 'most epistolary'

of Shakespeare's plays,[75] it is perhaps unsurprising to find Kemp's messenger-clown

once again employed for a star turn. The opening of F1's '*Actus Secundus Scæna*

Tertia', or 2.3, certainly reveals Kemp's comic legacy in the scene's marked

juxtaposition of sentiment and farce. As in the case of the arrival of *Titus*' clown,

however, it is worth taking a brief look at the preceding action which leads up to

Launce's first entrance in the play.

F1's '*Scæna Secunda*', or 2.2, is both emotive and concise. The scene contains

only twenty-two lines of dialogue, and presents the flustered parting of Proteus and

Julia before Proteus embarks on his journey to Milan, to see Valentine. The lovers

pledge their fidelity and 'seale the bargaine with a holy kisse' before Julia, dumb with

grief, flees the scene in a 'tide of teeres' at the prospect of the 'tide' which will carry

Proteus away: 'What gone without a word', Proteus muses, 'I so true love should doe: it

cannot speak,/for truth hath better deeds, than words to grace it' (TLN. 575-86).

Proteus' musings are interrupted by his father's servant Pantino, and even this discreet

interjection is poeticised, as the servant's half-line provides the first six and a half

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[75] Catherine Bates, 'Love and Courtship', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Comedy*, pp. 102-122 (p. 112).

both structurally and strategically crucial in their visible and verbal echoes of the parting lovers. Their arrival, then, is vital in terms of Launce's central and functional comic force identified by Brooks.[78] It also throws the wider action of this early comedy into longer perspective. Already, Launce's presence in the play serves to burlesque, deliberately and consistently, the old-fashioned romance and didacticism which is parodied throughout this early comedy.[79] But Launce's tearful appearance with his dog in full melodramatic mode also provides an abrupt and structural volte-face from the play's love-melancholy motifs to festive comedy and the domain of Tarlton. In Launce's 'pantomime leavetaking' which follows,[80] the melodramatic tone of 2.2 is obliterated further by Launce's dominant comic mode. His centrality in the play is thus anchored further in his functional status as 'comic hero',[81] as 2.3 takes a verbal as well as visual plunge into the lower semantic registers of festive play.

Before considering Launce's monologue, however, I want first to look more closely at F1's entry direction for him at the opening of 2.3. This provides a further revealing intersection not only of the two scenes under discussion, but also between the competing media of stage and page at work in both the Folio text, and in later, modern editions of the play.

As noted, following 2.2's 'Exeunt', F1 immediately prints '*Enter Launce, Panthion*'. Launce's Folio entry, therefore, is coupled with that of Pantino. Bringing Launce on stage with Pantino helps to 'tidy' the clown as part, in Werstine's sense, of Crane's literary presentation of the play. At this particular point, though, what Wells describes as Crane's 'irritating habit'[82] flags up two major problems in relation to

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[78] Brooks, ''Two Clowns in Comedy'.
[79] Ryan argues that Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen* offers a witty critique on 'the outmoded code of courtship and the equally obsolete cult of masculine friendship'. See *Shakespeare's Comedies*, p. 43.
[80] Brooks, 'Two Clowns', p. 71.
[81] Schlueter, *Two Gentlemen*, gloss to 2.3.1-27, p. 77.
[82] Wells, *Re-Editing Shakespeare*, p. 59.

Launce's arrival: first, the 'massed' quality of the direction obscures the vital comic impact of the clown's entry into the play; and second, it points, in this way, neither to Launce's thematic importance, nor, for that matter, to Kemp's popular celebrity. Crane's simultaneous arrival for Launce and Pantino does little to justify scholarly confidence in a 'show-stealing' entrance for the clown. The use of a 'massed' direction at this point might be described as a textual 'accessory', or as an addition.[83] But it is also worth noting Schlueter's contention that Crane 'must have invested some thought' in the construction of his entrances for the play. As Schlueter shows, the order of the characters given in an entry direction follows the approximate order of their taking part in the dialogue. This is also, usually, the order in which they come on stage. Schlueter goes on to suggest that 'groupings within the lists may originally have been indicated by means of punctuation and connectives'. In most scenes in the play which involve only two characters, the names are either connected by 'and' (eg. at 1.2, 2.5 and 2.7), or by a comma, which is easier to print admittedly (eg. at 4.3 and 5.1), as in the case of 2.3. The distinction corresponds in the first case with simultaneous and in the second with successive entrances on to the stage.[84] But there are also a number of inconsistencies in F1. At the opening of 2.2, for example, the text prints '*Enter Proteus, Julia, Panthion*', even though the dialogue suggests that Proteus and Julia enter the scene at the same time, and well before Pantino. The comma which separates 'Enter Launce, Panthion', therefore, is no guarantee that the characters would have entered the scene separately.

Now, most editors, including Schlueter, identify Launce and Pantino's potentially simultaneous arrival in 2.3 as a complication in updating the text, since F1's 'Enter Launce, Panthion' almost certainly misrepresents the entrances of both characters on to the stage. The problem was first identified in Nicholas Rowe's *Works of Mr.*

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[83] R. B. McKerrow, *Prolegomena*, cited in Wells, *Re-Editing Shakespeare*, p. 63.
[84] Schlueter, *Two Gentlemen*, p. 148.

William Shakespear (1709), which marked the beginning of long and influential editorial traditions in Shakespeare's plays.[85] Following Rowe's emendation, editors of *Two Gentlemen* now compensate for F1's lack of theatrical logic at the opening of 2.3, by revalidating Launce's entrance with a singular '*Enter* LAUNCE', and which is usually glossed further by '[*with his dog Crab*]'.[86] Given a more definably solo entrance, Launce is able to perform his opening set-piece alone on stage with Crab, and without the hindering presence of Pantino.

Pantino's entrance at this point, which so flattens the clown's comic force, is also highly problematic and promotes its own substantive changes in modern texts. At the end of 2.2, Pantino's exit from the stage is confirmed by Proteus' command to 'goe' in his closing couplet (TLN. 588-9), and the departure of both characters is covered by the direction 'Exeunt' at TLN. 590. Having only just left the stage with Proteus, Pantino would not have immediately re-entered the action with Launce. Crane's direction, then, breaks the rules of theatre in describing how Pantino exits one scene and then immediately returns to the stage.[87] It also seems unlikely that the puffed-up Pantino, entrusted by Antonio with the task of overseeing Proteus' departure and 'hasten[ing]' his 'expedition', would wait around on stage while Launce, an inferior servant in the household, but presumably a superior actor in Kemp, indulged himself further during the thirty-three line comic address to the audience which follows. An extra entry direction for Pantino, therefore, is also inserted in modern editions at 2.3.30

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[85] Nicholas Rowe's *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear; in six volumes… Revis'd and corrected, with an account of the life and wriitngs of the author. By N. Rowe. Esq* was first published in1709. According to Wells, Rowe is Shakespeare's 'first named editor' and a playwright himself who 'laid the foundations of modern texts'. See Wells, *Re-Editing*, p. 63.

[86] See Schlueter's 'Location' gloss to 2.3, *Two Gentlemen*, p. 77.

[87] At the end of the 'fly-killing' scene in *Titus*, the same group of characters immediately re-enter for 4.1. This unlikely scenario points to the fact that the scene was added later and not part of the original schema for the play.

(TLN. 625), which marks the end of Launce's monologue, and of his dominance of the stage for readers of the play.[88]

As Weimann argues, stage directions, along with other paratextual features such as speech prefixes, represent spaces in a play-script where 'the authorial meets the theatrical, where the writing meets the performer, where the poetics of drama meet with the conventions of the stage' in order to produce the play.[89] Crane's literary presumption at the opening of 2.3, it seems, aids the play's readable flow. However, it is difficult to derive any normative sense of performance at this point in the Folio text, whose classicized features petrify what must have been a mutually responsive and fluctuating line of demarcation between writing and acting around the play's major clown role. The emendations to Pantino's directions made by modern editors, therefore, attempt to reflect Elizabethan playhouse practice in a more clearly expositional presentation of the arrival of comedian and dog.

A further major difference between Crane and editors of *Two Gentlemen* since Rowe, I would argue, is also how they conceptualise and reproduce the dramaturgical functions of Launce and Pantino. McGann's 'double helix' metaphor, which clarifies distinctions between 'a spoken text' and 'its scripted form', helps to elucidate this point:

> Every literary work that descends to us operates through the deployment of a double helix of perceptual codes: the linguistic codes, on the one hand, and the bibliographic codes on the other.[90]

In printed drama, the textual reproductions of speech and action are made to serve the needs of both spectators and readers of a play, as the editions of *Two Gentlemen* reveal. Crane encodes his transcription of the play with a number of literary amendments in order to make the work more readable and appealing in a classicised sense. This instils

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[88] See, for example, the Arden and Norton texts of the play (Cambridge inserts the direction at 2.3.37). In all three texts, the editors use square brackets in order to indicate the uncertainty of the direction.
[89] Weimann, *Author's Pen*, p. 220.
[90] McGann, *The Textual Condition*, p. 77.

the characters of his version of the play with a more literary as opposed to theatrical,

function. The result is that Crane's text, and indeed the whole Folio volume, aligns

itself with the more author-oriented aesthetics of texts such as Jonson's *Works*.

Modern editors, in turn, seek to return their Folio copy-text to performance. In

order to do this, the later editions of the play are re-encoded with arguably more

'linguistic' emendations, several of which, as I have shown, annotate more clearly the

entrances of Launce and Pantino in 2.3 in terms of stage practice. This re-aligns the

play more closely with how editors now believe it might have been performed and the

experience for modern readers is less dramatically dilute. Editors, then, can now justify

their own extensive interventions into Crane's text by redirecting the play back to its

theatrical roots.

There is a case to be made, however, for less editorially dogmatic or literal

readings of F1, and particularly at the intersection of 2.2 and 2.3 outlined above. It is

F1 itself, I would suggest, which allows a more fluid way of interpreting the 'tied'

quality of 2.2 and 2.3, and which deconstructs the layers of textual and editorial

'coding' at work in the scenes. Let us return, then, to F1's 'Enter Launce, Panthion' in

order to consider a more flexible dramatic function for both characters, and one which

reveals what Williams describes as the 'essential unity' of text and performance in

drama.[91] As I will show in the following section, there is more comic potential

surrounding both their 2.3 entries into the play than has previously been explored,

particularly in the light of Kemp.

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[91] Williams, *Drama in Performance*, p. 5.

IV.   'Very tragical mirth'

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, some of the early play's most illuminating moments

spring from the conjunction of distinct and even opposed theatrical modes. As Stephen

Greenblatt notes, such a conjunction is characteristically parodied in the oxymoronic

title of the artisans' play, 'A tedius brief scene of young Pyramus/And his love Thisbe:

very tragical mirth' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 5.1.56-7).[92] Neither *A Midsummer*

Night's Dream nor *Two Gentlemen*, of course, are tragedies. However, the latter play,

as shown, contains a number of melancholic and romantic literary motifs, which Launce

is invited to lampoon at every opportunity. In attempting to establish Launce's impact

on the play, therefore, it is vital to consider the full auditory sense of the clown's first

appearance as a major satirical force, both in terms of his parodic and deflationary

centrality in the play, but also in the light of Kemp's riotous appeal.

Considering Kemp's documented penchant for on-stage 'merrimentes', and his

on-stage capers in *Titus*, it is worth allowing for the fact that the play-script which

originally lay behind Crane's *Two Gentlemen*, regardless of its source, was more

flexible in terms of the clown's arrival. Opening up the static F1 to a more flexible

interpretation in the light of Kemp in this way, scholarly confidence in a 'show-stealing'

entrance for Launce is justifiable. This perspective also allows us to consider a more

ephemeral, and certainly unpredictable, entrance for Launce, Kemp and Crab than either

F1 or later editions of the play record.

Weimann describes Launce's opening speech (TLN. 593-625) as based on the

'conventionally extra-dramatic self-introduction' of the traditional clown role.[93] The

considerable length of the speech also points to its status as what Ryan describes as a

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[92] Stephen Greenblatt, Introduction to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in *The Norton Shakespeare*, p. 809.
[93] Robert Weimann, 'Laughing with the Audience: *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and the Popular
Tradition of Comedy', in Schlueter, *Critical Essays*, pp. 79-89 (p. 82).

'virtuoso monologue'.[94] Launce in all likelihood, therefore, would have delivered his

first speech in the usual style of the Elizabethan soliloquy from the front of the stage.[95]

J. L. Styan argues that speaking to oneself was not a device that Shakespeare, or his

audiences, would yet have recognized (although the technique would later be transposed

into the more internalised self-reflection of the Prince in *Hamlet*). Directly addressing

the audience, however, was a normal and constant activity; it was also 'a convention by

which the actor gave himself completely to the house, putting him in direct touch with

the spectators'.[96] Launce performs his opening monologue, and indeed the rest of his

role, therefore, 'not so much for the audiences as with them', as Weimann argues, and

in the style of the 'truly' comic performative exchange first categorized by Georg Hegel

in the eighteenth century.[97]

True also to the comic traditions from which he emerged, we can assume that

Launce would have made his entrance with Crab, and delivered his speech from the

liminal space of the 'platea'. From this position, the actor-clown would have been able

to merge with the audience in a tightly bound exchange, and in the intimate and

informal style typical of what Bernard Beckerman describes as a normative element of

'comic routine'.[98] Launce's close connection to the audience would have instilled

Kemp's particular brand of anarchic 'clownage' with atavistic links to medieval festive

theatre, and also with 'older comic figure[s] in Tudor drama' such as the Vice. Having

arrived on stage and visually obliterated the romantic tone of the play, the comic

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[94] Ryan, *Shakespeare's Comedies*, p. 45.

[95] Schlueter, *Two Gentlemen*, gloss to 2.3.1-27, p. 77.

[96] J. L. Styan, 'Stage Space and the Shakespearean Experience', in *Shakespeare in Performance*, ed. Robert Shaughnessy (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), pp. 24-41 (p. 27).

[97] Weimann expounds Georg Hegel's nineteenth-century theories of comedy in his *Aesthetics* which draws attention to the fundamental distinction in comedy which marks 'whether the acting characters are for themselves comic or whether they appear so only to the audience'. It is only in the former category, according to Hegel, that they are 'truly' comic. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Ästhetik*, ed. Friedrich Bassenge (Berlin, 1955), cited in Weimann, 'Laughing with the Audience', pp. 80-81.

[98] Bernard Beckerman, *Theatrical Presentation: Performer, Audience and Act*, eds. Gloria Brim Beckerman and William Coco (New York and London: Routledge, 1990), p. 4.

vantage point of the clown's traditional and transitional position would thus have allowed Launce to continue to enrich the connections already made between the stage and yard by his appearance.

As noted, though, in relation to the arrival of *Titus'* clown, the actor playing Launce would have needed time to get on stage and move into the expected, and expectant, position close to the audience for his comic monologue. In terms of performances of the play, there is likely to have been a pause between the exit of Pantino and Proteus at the end of 2.2, and the beginning of the clown's monologue at 2.3. And, very possibly, a considerable one in terms of Launce's physical arrival on stage. Johannes de Witt's famous sketch of the interior of the Swan playhouse (built in 1595), along with Henslowe's Rose, gives an idea of the stage layout of London theatres at the time. Basing calculations on de Witt's sketch, a large, square acting area of some twenty-by-twenty feet, is regarded by scholars as likely to have been the minimum size of most early modern stages, or platforms, erected for theatrical performances.[99] Launce, therefore, would have had quite a walk to the front of the stage, but his entrance may also have been impeded by certain members of the audience. Glynne Wickham describes the 'antics of the rich and leisured gallants' in the crowd. According to Wickham, gentlemen and aristocrats arrived at the theatre and entered the performing space,

> through the tiring house, and chatted up the actors *en route* to the stage, and then set up their stools on either side of the stage, smoking, gossiping and distracting attention from the players towards themselves.[100]

Let us not forget 'the incontinent Crab'.[101] As the film sequence described at the beginning of this chapter shows, the combination of star-actor and dog would have

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[99] Cf. Wickham, *A History of the Theatre*, p. 125. Wickham reproduces de Witt's sketch on the same page.
[100] Wickham, *History of the Theatre*, p. 125.
[101] Ryan, *Shakespeare's Comedies*, p. 39.

proved a potent comic mix on stage for the play's original spectators - assuming, of

course, that Crab was indeed a real dog, and not an actor in Henslowe's 'black dogge'

suit, as Campbell infers.[102] Moreover, Beadle argues that Crab's behaviour in the play

is always akin to

> the unpredictable extempore of a natural and (mostly) silent comedian […]
> given to unscheduled entrances and exits, visits downstage to stare at the
> audience, more or less embarrassing scratchings, sniffings and lickings, and
> maybe worse.

At the very least, he can be 'guaranteed to yawn at some point in the proceedings'.[103]

As Louis Jouvet argues, the inattention of a supernumerary actor (a yawn, for example)

can have a profound effect on weakening or nullifying the staging of a scene, where

body language and expression counts for so much.[104] In the light of such canine

unpredictability during performances, space must have been allowed for the 'what if'

scenario of live theatre, captured so memorably by Kemp's hilarious 'bit with a dog' in

Shakespeare in Love, where the famous clown grapples with Crab, already 'nervous' at

playing Whitehall for the first time, in a bid to win the Queen's favour.[105] While a

protracted entrance would have given Launce, or Kemp, the time to show off on stage, it

would also have allowed the clown to deal with, and indulge, any profitably comic dog-

related difficulties. All grist to the festive mill, of course, and Crab's presence would

have instilled the scene with far more than mere novelty or charm with his links to the

comic traditions of 1594, as it so often does for audiences today. Suffice to say that

coupled with the antics of the self-promoting Kemp, Crab, an unstable stage companion

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[102] See Campbell, 'Shakespeare's Actors', p. 187. A glance at Henslowe's inventory taken at The Rose in 1598 gives an idea of the use of stuffed or artificial animals on stage, in a list which includes 'j lyone skin; j beares skyne …. j dragon in fostes j lyone; ij lyone heads; j great horse with his leages; j black dogge'. See Foakes and Rickert, *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 321.

[103] Beadle, 'Crab's Pedigree', p. 12.

[104] Quoted in Michael Redgrave, *The Actor's Ways and Means* (1935), p. 15, cited in Mahood, *Bit Parts*, p. 15.

[105] This would have been quite normal. Wright notes that dogs often contended with stage players for 'popular favour'. See Wright, 'Animal Actors', p. 656.

at the best of times, must also have ensured that the clown's entrance varied from performance to performance with a feast of 'doggy' delights.

The actor playing Launce, then, Kemp or not, would have had his work cut out in terms of his arrival on stage. But any comedian worth his salt would have been aware of the rich comic opportunities offered by a laborious arrival on stage with Crab in the anxious wake of the parting lovers.[106] As Wright notes, animal acts attracted crowds and often required only a brief interval during the performance.[107] The self-promoting, and by now universally adored Kemp, however, would surely have spiced up Launce's dejected journey to the forestage by playing up to the expectant crowd with the type of leering gestures for which he was so well known. While 'flexible' and 'close', Kemp's clowning relationship with the play's spectators would also have been 'spontaneous'.[108] First, Kemp would have needed to gauge, professionally, the mood and reactions of his audiences and pander to the whims of his fickle followers in the yard. He would also have had to negotiate between his own self-promotion, Crab's popularity, and the unrestrained vanity of the higher members of society seated on stage with him. In this light, we cannot assume that either Wickham's 'gallants' or Hamlet's ' penny stinkards', not to mention Crab, would have allowed Launce to appear on stage seamlessly on cue at every performance of the play.

It was not only in Launce, or Kemp's, interests to make as much as possible of the clown's arrival on stage. A prolonged or awkward entrance could have been turned both to his, and the company's, advantage in this skilfully adapted show-piece for the Chamberlain's Men. Along with the rest of the sharers in the newly formed troupe,

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[106] Mahood also demonstrates the importance of 'dramatic' arrivals, particularly in relation to small roles. Consider the disturbing and prophetic 2.1 in *Macbeth*, where the bleeding 'Captain' has the opportunity of a long and gore-soaked stagger downstage. *Love's Labour's Lost* uses a similar device for Marcade's long entrance, towards the end of the play in 5.2. See Mahood, pp. 120-3, 84.

[107] Wright, 'Animal Actors', pp. 659-60.

[108] Weimann, *Popular Stage*, p. 7.

both Kemp and Shakespeare, whom Wickham describes as 'both […] an actor and […] a provider of plays',[109] would have been aware that a good deal of the impact of the role could be made without speaking a word, as we have seen.

There are, then, a number of stage-related complications around the intersection of 2.2 and 2.3 which F1's forthright stage directions mask. But there is one further possibility to be considered: that the weeping clown and his dumb companion enter the scene during the emotive parting of the lovers, with the result that 2.2 and 2.3 can be read as one dramatic sequence, as opposed to two separate scenes, with exits and entrances overlapping.

Following his arrival, Launce's speech deepens the satirical effect triggered by his physical presence. His opening line, moreover, contains a cheeky lampooning of the melancholy departure of the lovers we have only just witnessed: 'Nay', Launce sobs, 'twill be this howre ere *I* have done weeping' (my emphasis). There is more than just a verbal hint here that Launce has witnessed the tense parting of Proteus and Julia. Also, despite the urgent atmosphere of the previous scene, the embedded stage direction in 'howre' gives Launce further free reign to extemporise. Julia may have been struck 'dumbe' with grief at Proteus' hasty departure. Launce, however, means to take his long-winded time in a self-promoting response to the action he has just witnessed.

Furthermore, if we look ahead to 2.5, when Launce arrives at his destination there is some confusion in the text, as noted, as to whether he is in Milan or Padua. He has followed Proteus to Milan; but he is welcomed to Padua by Speed at TLN. 873. This textual confusion, as catalogued by Leech, is due in part to the rewriting of the play, where the scene with Speed, probably added for Kemp, interrupts Proteus' extensive musings on his love for Sylvia between 2.4 and 2.6. The point to be made,

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[109] Wickham, *History of the Theatre*, p. 133.

however, is that Speed goes on to ask Launce the following question: 'But Sirha, how did thy Master part with Madam Julia?' Launce responds, 'Marry after they clos'd in earnest, they parted/very fairely in jest' (TLN. 881-4). Launce's saucy answer, while pointing to Kemp's penchant for the type of sexual innuendo already seen in *A Knack* and *Titus'* scenes of cuckoldry, clearly suggests that the clown has not only witnessed the parting of the lovers, but also upstaged them with an early arrival in the scene. His lines reveal, therefore, that, as a clown figure, he is fully and self-consciously aware of the deflationary capacity of his potent comic force in the play's central satirical role.

Alan Dessen argues that the type of ambiguous entrances and exits described above allow scenic and thematic 'overlapping' in plays, a feature which was common in late-Elizabethan play-house practice. Crane's 'massed' entry at the opening of *Two Gentlemen's* 2.3, therefore, could well be illustrative of how, in Dessen's terms, a 'post-Elizabethan notion of scene division and "place" […] can blur or eliminate [a] potentially meaningful image'.[110] Kemp as Launce goes some way in illustrating this point and, as we have seen, the style of visual and deflationary humour evident in 2.2 and 2.3 of *Two Gentlemen* was typical of the actor. Such theatrical problematics, if that is what they are in relation to Kemp, continued throughout his career. During Costard's (possibly another of Kemp's roles according to Wiles) gloating speech in Act Four of *Love's Labour's Lost*, for example, the 1598 quarto's directions for the scene are unclear as to whether the clown is alone on stage, or whether he is meant to be overheard by Boyet and Armado.[111] In the following chapter I will show how Kemp's Peter is given ample room to tamper with the tragic progression of *Romeo and Juliet*, through both dialogue and gesture, and how the tragedy is peppered by his servile comedy. At the climax of the tragedy, the grinning clown's ambiguous presence on

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[110] Dessen, *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary*, pp. 65-77.
[111] *Love's Labour's Lost*, 4.1.133.

stage when Romeo enters the Capulet tomb, and which is suggested by evidence of revision in Q2 as Dessen argues, provides a comic parody of the play as a whole.[112] Even the dogmatic Constable Dogberry (discussed in Chapter Six) can be quite lawless in terms of entering and exiting scenes.

Launce enters *Two Gentlemen* in tears, so providing a similar, but more prophetic, structural parody to the graveside clowning at the end of *Romeo*, or indeed of *Hamlet*, the latter of which provides not only a comic retrospective of the play, but also of life. While silent in terms of the play-script during what must have been a somewhat protracted arrival on stage, Launce was still physically voluble in terms of any other auditory action simultaneously on display, providing a strong visual image and a deep 'contrapuntal' effect as part of the onstage 'vocabulary' of the scene .[113] His entrance with Crab in a timed overlap which would thus have provided the brief 2.2 with a visual parody on stage before the clown's virtuouso speech attempted to steal the show completely.

Before that, Pantino, although a smaller role, also has a vital part to play in 'tying' 2.2 and 2.3 together. As in the case of Launce and Crab, we do not know at precisely what point the character would have entered the action, in either 2.2 or 2.3. Modern editions of *Two Gentlemen*, as noted, place Pantino's entry directions immediately prior to his speech in both scenes. Also in both scenes, Pantino has the same role in urging first Proteus and then Launce's departure on the 'tide'. For readers,

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[112] Dessen, *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary*, pp. 176-95. Julia's 2.2 'holy kisse' certainly anticipates Juliet's (*Romeo*, 1.5.97), and Dessen cites several other examples of 'early' entrances or indefinite exits in the play which can be related to the clown's comic function. For example, Romeo's 'early' arrival for his meeting with Friar Laurence in 2.2 heightens the dramatic irony of his words with their chillingly prophetic metaphor of the lovers' early deaths. It is also worth noting here that, in comparison to the Folio's *Two Gentlemen*, the volume's text of *Romeo* descends stemmatically from 'foul papers' via the 1599 second quarto of the play. It is not, therefore, one of the texts transcribed by Crane, and retains the direction '*Enter* Romeo' after line 22 of the scene which is contained in Q2 at E1ᵛ. In this way, the Folio *Romeo* records the dramatic, thematic and structural importance of Romeo's silent entrance at this point in the later, and perhaps more literary, edition of the play.
[113] Dessen, *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary*, p. 33.

then, the direction 'Enter Launce, Panthion' marks the intersection of the scenes under

discussion through the idiomatic shift from verse to prose, a device which often marks a

change in the pace and tempo of the sequence in the printed text.[114] In comparison to

his respectful, and poetic, interruption of Proteus, Pantino's hurrying of Launce at the

end of the clown's 2.3 monologue is in decidedly more earthy prose:

> *Launce*, away, away: a Boord: thy Master is
> ship'd, and thou art to post after with oares; what's the
> matter? Why weep'st thou man? Away asse, you' loose
> the Tide, if you tarry any longer.

Launce replies as follows:

> It is no matter if the tide were lost, for it is the
> Unkindest Tide, that ever any man tide.
>
> (TLN. 626-31)

Unlike his friend Speed, the 'pert page' who shares the semantics of courtly dialect with

his master Valentine, Launce's humour is conveyed in the main through his earthy

prose. Here, his comic presence on stage is reinforced through his banter with Pantino.

Once again, as the dominant slapstick mode takes hold in 2.3, all traces of 2.2's

romantic mood are obliterated and then finally swept away by the extended pun of 'tide'

and 'tied'. The scene gains in comic momentum as the sliding signifier moves from

poetry in 2.2 to verbal comedy and finally ludic visuality in the figures of the literally

'tied' Launce and Crab in 2.3. By the end of 2.3, the abrupt and structural volte-face

from the play's 'love-melancholy' motif to the more vulgar, bodily strata of festive

theatre in these two 'tied' scenes is complete.

The structural positioning of 2.2 and 2.3, I would suggest, therefore implies a

more three dimensional aspect of performance, operating through a combination of

speech, action and imagery, than either F1 or modern texts of the play are able to

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[114] Cf. Stern, *Rehearsals from Shakespeare to Sheridan*, p. 65. On the structural mix of verse and prose in Shakespeare's comedies, see Jonash Barish, 'Mixed Verse and Prose in Shakespearean Comedy', in *English Comedy*, pp. 55-67.

convey fully at this point. Moreover, considering the number of visual and linguistic threads already identified between 2.2 and 2.3, heightened by the clown's arrival, Pantino's perplexing presence in F1's reproduction of both scenes provides a further link between them. Appearing in both scenes in this way, and with the same dramatic device of urging first master and then servant to depart on the 'tide', Pantino's presence would have linked Kemp's comic antics to 2.2 more emphatically. He would have provided, therefore, an important component for the audience as a memorising device in the fast-paced 'two hours'' traffic of Shakespeare's stage, and one which blurred further the conventional romantic ideals of love and friendship presented in the play so far.

While Crane's 'massed' direction for Launce at the opening of 2.3 attempts to hammer the clown into place in the literary text and smooth out the play for readers, it nevertheless preserves the discernible interpolative quality of its clown, and of Kemp. Traces of the actor thus remain in the Folio text Crane play, and are articulated in the tensions apparent in the text between writing, transcribing and performing the clown's scenes. Pantino's presence, though awkward, further links Kemp's melancholy parody to the parting lovers. In this early comedy, it seems that Shakespeare was already using clowning for what Weimann describes as its 'countervailing effect', and before staging its chaotic results in the mechanicals' performance of 'Pyramus and Thisbe' at the end of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* .[115]

V.   Launce's monologue
i.   The 'Crab' effect
Having made the most of his arrival on stage, and from the vantage point of both the physical and functional liminality of the clown's role and position, Launce can proceed

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[115] Weimann and Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance*, p. 114.

directly to address the audience in the clown's monologue which continues the parody

of love achieved wordlessly so far. I now want to look at some of the features of

Launce's opening speech in F1 *Two Gentlemen* which point to further atavistic links

with residual forms of 'clownage' and, by extension, Kemp himself. The first is the

vital presence in the scene of Crab, along with other forms of ancient comedy; the

second is the metatheatrical function of Launce's comic role; and, finally, I will

examine the formal features of Launce's comic prose which point to his role in the play,

not only as clown, but also as 'your old vice still' (3.1.277). For the purposes of clarity,

I reproduce below Launce's monologue in its entirety, following F1's layout as closely

as possible in terms of punctuation and spacing:

> *Launce*, Nay, 'twill bee this howre ere I have done
> weeping : all the kinde of the *Launces* , have this very
> fault: I haue receiv'd my proportion,like the prodigious
> Sonne, and am going with Sir *Protheus* to the Imperialls
> Court : I thinke *Crab* my dog , be the sowrest natured
> dogge that lives : my Mother weeping : my Father
> wayling : my Sister crying : our Maid howling: our
> Catte wringing her hands, and all our house in a great
> perplexitie,yet did not this cruell-hearted Curre shedde
> one teare : he is a stone, a very pebble stone, and has no
> more pitty in him the a dogge :a Jew would have wept
> to have seene our parting : why my Grandam having
> no eyes, looke you, wept her selfe blinde at my parting:
> nay, Ile shew you the manner of it. This shooe is my fa-
> ther : no, this left shooe is my father ; no, no, this left
> shooe is my mother : nay that cannot bee so neyther :
> yes; it is so, it is so : it hath the worser sole : this shooe
> wth the hole in it, is my mother : and this my father :
> a veng'ance on't, there'tis : Now sir, this staffe is my si-
> ster for, looke you, she is as white as a lilly , and as
> small as a wand   : this hat is *Nan* our maid : I am the
> dogge : no, the dogge is himselfe, and I am the dogge:
> oh,the dogge is me, and I am my selfe : I : so,so : now
> come I to my Father ; Father , your blessing : now
> should not the shooe speake a word for weeping :
> now should I kisse my Father ; well, hee weepes on :
> Now come I to my Mother : Oh that she could speake
> now , like a would-woman : well, I kisse her : why
> there'tis ; heere's my mothers breath vp and downe :
> Now come I to my sister ; marke the moane she makes :

> now the dogge all this while sheds not a teare *:* nor
> speakes a word *:* but see how I lay the dust with my
> teares.

<div align="right">(TLN. 593-625)</div>

Campbell argues that, at times in *Two Gentlemen*, it is almost as if Launce and Crab have 'wandered in from another world'.[116] Another world, indeed, the one of the cut and thrust of late-Elizabethan theatre, if we accept that Launce was played by Kemp. In this first monologue, he certainly enters the play 'out of joint' (*Hamlet*, 1.5.188) with the rest of the narrative action. During the monologue, the clown's improvisatory function is activated and works to maintain the continuing popular and anarchic appeal of Kemp's stand-alone comic flair. This enables Launce's role to sit obliquely to the text and, at one and the same time, both inside and outside the play world. As noted, Launce intends to indulge his comic antics with Crab to the full and his opening line confirms both his parodic and deflationary comic role. When Launce goes on to compare, at some length, the silent and 'pibble stone[y]' Crab with the rest of the weeping 'Launces' in his disparate family (TLN. 602, 594), the comic parallel already at work with Proteus's urgent departure on the 'tide' is markedly deepened in terms of the action on stage. It is also the case that the play's fictional time-scheme is now more in line with the actor's, who wants to make the most of his opening set-piece. Launce's festive function, then, combined with Kemp's self-promoting bent, ensures that the normative discrepancy between narrative and 'clownage' is still at work in *Two Gentlemen*. What we see at this particular point in the play, therefore, is how the structural patterns of earlier forms of drama are harnessed thematically in a further tragi-comic nod to the Vice's typical disregard for the unity of time and place.[117]

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[116] Campbell, 'Shakespeare's Actors', p. 180.

[117] On forms of early Tudor and medieval drama which ignored the unities of time and place, see Glynne Wickham, *A History of the Theatre*, p. 131.

In this way, Launce's arrival is comparable to that of the clown in Q1 *Titus*, the anarchic messenger 'from heaven' whose pigeons and Elizabethan comic persona both burlesque and enhance the rhetorical space of Titus' fantasy of revenge. As with the earlier play, the appearance of the comedian Kemp projects a highly significant counterpoint to any symbolic or fictional 'locus' on stage. And as in *Titus*, the 'Kempian' interloper makes a similar entrance accompanied by an animate prop who serves to deepen his links with an earlier stage. The speechless Crab, however, does far more than balance Launce's verbosity. Andrew Sofer argues that 'Shakespeare is the master of the fetishized prop'.[118] *Two Gentlemen*, with its obsessive action around fragments of letters, gloves and other tokens of love, seems to prove this point. But if the synechdochal crown makes the King in *Richard II*, as Sofer suggests, then in the case of Launce and Crab, the dog surely makes the clown.

First, Crab deepens Launce's connections with ancient comic forms and instils both the clown, and the wider play, with a further hearty dose of festive appeal. According to Wright, 'owners of trick horses and dogs roamed early Tudor and Elizabethan England'.[119] When *Two Gentlemen* was new, Beadle argues that

> the clown with a dog walked on to the stage as a familiar image drawn from an everyday world of largely sub-literary popular entertainment, whose roots in medieval and antique comic tradition ran deep.[120]

Crab, then, had his own comic 'pedigree', and one that we can link to the precedent 'clownage' in Kemp's act. As noted, Beadle puts forward the earliest composition date for *Two Gentlemen* in suggesting that the part of Launce was originally written for Tarlton in the late 1580s. Tarlton's unruly 'doggy' acts are recorded in the great clown's book of *Jests*. 'How *Tarltons* Dogge lickt up six pence' is a particularly apt example, where the dog fails to lick up the said sixpence and loses the clown's money

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[118] Andrew Sofer, *The Stage Life of Props* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 26.
[119] Wright, 'Animal Actors', p. 656.
[120] Beadle, 'Crab's Pedigree', pp. 12-13.

as a result.[121] 'A Jest of an Apple hitting *Tarlton* on the face' suggests a further link

between the clown and Crab himself. During one performance of a play in which

Tarlton's character kneels to ask his father's blessing before a journey, a member of the

audience threw an apple at Tarlton. Typically, the offender received the following

acerbic response from the witty clown:

> Gentleman, this fellow, with the face of Mapple,
> Instead of a Pippin hath throwne me an Apple,
> But as for an Apple he hath cast a Crab,
> So in stead of an honest woman God hath sent him a drab.[122]

In this particular 'jest', Tarlton couples his weeping clown with the familiar 'prodigal

son' motif, already quibbled on by Launce as the 'prodigious sonne' (l. 595), and also

evident in Proteus' departure from Verona earlier in the play. Given the biblical

admonishment in *Luke* that the son 'squandered his wealth in wild living',[123] it is not

surprising that the parable offered playwrights a fertile source of creativity in a number

of Renaissance and early modern plays, mostly of an academic or pedagogic character.

The parable was also already ancient in terms of more secular drama, appearing as early

as the thirteenth century in the Old French farce, *Courtois d'Arras*.[124]

In *The Truth of Our Times* (1638) Peacham described another stage episode in

which Tarlton played the prodigal son. Relating the action of the play, Peacham

recounts the following sequence between father and son:

> To the third, which was Tarlton, (who came like a rogue, in a foule shirt without
> a band, and in a blew coat with one sleeve, his stockings out at heels, and his
> head full of straw and feathers) as for you sirrah (quoth he) you know how often
> I have fetched you out of *Newgate* and *Bridewell*, you have beene an ungracious
> villaine, I have nothing to bequeath you but the gallows and a rope: *Tarlton*
> weeping and sobbing upon his knees (as his brothers) said, O Father, I doe not
> desire it, I trust in God you shall live to enjoy it yourselfe.[125]

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[121] *Tarltons Jests*, 1613, C3.
[122] Ibid., B2-B2ᵛ.
[123] *Luke*, 15:11-32 (13).
[124] *Medieval French Plays*, trans. Richard Axton and John Stevens (Oxford, 1971), pp. 137-64, cited in Beadle, p. 20.
[125] Peacham's anecdote in reproduced in Beadle, 'Crab's Pedigree', p. 20

There is a further link here with Launce's monologue, where he describes going to his

father for a 'blessing', which is part of the 'shoe trick':

> I : so,so : now
> come I to my Father ; Father , your blessing : now
> should not the shooe speake a word for weeping :
> now should I kisse my Father ; well, hee weepes on'
>
> <div align="right">(TLN. 615-18)</div>

Along with Crab and the 'prodigal son' motif, Launce's 'shoe trick' was a further

ancient comic device appropriated by Kemp, and at least three-hundred years old by the

time of *Two Gentlemen's* composition.[126]

I will examine Launce's own 'shoe trick' in more detail in the following sub-

section. For now, though, it is worth noting in relation to Kemp's Tarltonesque

inheritance that the 'shoe-trick' also became typical of Kemp's commedia dell'Arte

repertoire.[127] The trade of Jeffrey, the saucy Cobbler, has an obvious comic link with

Kemp's shoes.[128] In the following chapter, I will show how *Romeo's* Peter quibbles on

the 'shoemaker' who meddles bawdily with his 'yard' (1.2.37). Perhaps, then, we can

see how the comic-cobbler role was taken up by both Kemp and Shakespeare as a

'topsy-turvy' device. It appears in other plays, where Shakespeare's composition was

influenced by an earlier festive notoriety. The subversive cobbler at the opening of

Julius Caesar (1599), for example, although unlikely to have been played by Kemp in

1599, provides a case-in-point: 'Truly, sir, in respect of a fine workman I am but, as you

would say, a cobbler' (1.1.10-11). The point to be made is that while the 'shoe trick'

would have been recognised by Tarlton's audiences, eager for comic mayhem on stage,

it would also have been recognised by Kemp's.

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[126] Cf. Beadle, 'Crab's Pedigree', p. 15.
[127] Wright, 'Kemp and Commedia dell'Arte', p. 520.
[128] A further link between *A Knack* and *Two Gentlemen*, as Carroll points out, is the 'friendship material' used in both. See Carroll, *Two Gentlemen*, p. 17.

Crab, then, through Tarlton, provides a festive link to earlier forms of comedy. From the outset of their arrival in *Two Gentlemen*, both clown and 'curre' would have instilled the play with an 'antic disposition' (*Hamlet*, 1.5.172), and been a familiar and welcome sight to playgoers. Moreover, in the fictional portrayal of Shakespeare's Verona, Crab would have evoked the sights and, and more emphatically later on in the play, the smells, not only of Elizabethan London, but also of the play-house. He also leads the way, therefore, to 'Moon's', or Starveling's dog in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a play which unpicks further the dynamics of illusory theatrical realism. Thus, when Quince's 'Prologue' presents the 'tedious brief scene of young Pyramus and his love Thisbe', Starveling's character is introduced as follows: 'This man, with lantern, dog, and bush of thorn,/Presenteth Moonshine' (5.1.56-7; 34-5).

If anything, though, Crab's apparent unwillingness to obey his master in *Two Gentlemen* becomes part of the play's set comic routines, while, at the same time, instilling the clown's act with further disruptive potential. In *Two Gentlemen's* double-act of 'motley and mutt', the liminality of the clown is displaced on to the dog who has his own silent part to play as part of this comic duo. The intensely 'aural' nature of Elizabethan drama meant that mute parts were rare,[129] but their power would later be clearly acknowledged in Brome's *Antipodes*, where it is claimed that, 'a mute is one that acteth speakingly' (5.5.32).[130]

It is Crab's apparently wilful, and therefore human, silence which so comically launches Launce into two of his monologues. In the first, he is personified by Launce in the apotheosis of the clown's twisted courtly devotion:

> now the dogge all this while sheds not a teare *:* nor
> speakes a word *:* but see how I lay the dust with my
> teares.
> (TLN. 623-5)

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[129] Mahood, *Bit Parts*, p. 5.
[130] The full reference from Brome's play can be found above on p. 5.

Launce's 'lover' mode has already been hinted at in the description of his sister, where typically Petrarchan motifs are manipulated for comic, and certainly ironic, effects in her description as 'white as a lilly, and as small as a wand' (TLN. 612-14). The fact that Launce makes such exaggerated and theatrical use of the idiom of courtly romance cannot be unimportant. In this scene, it is Crab who is the subject of Launce's constructed gaze. In other words, it is the clown's silent dog who is described for us through Launce's tearful eyes which comically view their perspective so 'awry' (*Richard II*, 2.2.19).[131] Here, then, Shakespeare uses the Launce and Crab duo in order to cultivate further a comic association with the love scene we have already seen in 2.2 between Julia and Proteus and, as a result, rewrite 'male-female' relations.[132] But the links also anticipate those to come in the play, as Launce reveals his own values of friendship, fidelity and constancy to be similarly inconsistent, when he betrays Crab for the toothless milk-maid, who 'hath more qualities than a water spaniel' (3.1.269).

Crab displays none of the 'slavering eagerness' which is usually associated with dogs.[133] As Michael Dobson argues, 'what is unusual about [Crab] is the way in which Shakespeare draws attention to, and thinks through his sheer lack of performance'.[134] One of Crab's canine contemporaries is Puntarvolo's nameless companion in Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour* (1598), a play in which Shakespeare is documented as acting. Unlike this unfortunate hound who has a 'most rare gift in tobacco', and who apparently smoked on stage at his master's 'pleasure',[135] there is no indication in the

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[131] Bushy's counselling of the Queen in *Richard II* demonstrates the considerable use of the metaphor of visual perspective in the wider play.

[132] Jeffrey Masten, '*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*', in Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard, eds., *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works*, Vol. III: *The Comedies* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 266-88 (p. 275).

[133] Mahood, *Bit Parts*, p. 51.

[134] Michael Dobson, 'A Dog at all Things: The Transformation of the Onstage Canine, 1550-1850', *Performance Research*, 5, 116-24 (118-9).

[135] Ben Jonson, *Every Man Out of His Humour* (London, 1598), I5ʳ, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 10 April, 2013].

text of *Two Gentlemen* that Crab would have performed, or needed to perform, similar

mumming-related tricks. On the contrary, Crab, as Weimann and Bruster argue, evokes

a tension between amateur extempore, represented by the uncontrollable dog, and the

emergent professional stage, represented by Launce, and, in turn, by Kemp himself. In

this way, Crab, who cannot be controlled, does not fit the codes of 'the new regime of

dramatic representation' which were beginning to emerge at this time.[136] He belongs,

therefore, along with Tarlton, to the world before boundaries between page and stage,

actors and audiences, professionals and amateurs.

In a scene so rich in implication and familiarity, it is not surprising to find both

actor and playwright making the most of what Beadle describes as the 'new world of

elaborately scripted professional theatre [and] ancient improvisatory figures'. In so

doing, Beadle argues, Shakespeare 'happened to distil a significant moment in the

history of comic drama'.[137] Crab's silent role, then, counts for a great deal in terms of

2.3's comic potential. But rather than invalidating Launce's distress at leaving his

family, Crab's canine indifference serves to draw attention to it in the most profound

way. Launce's histrionic display, it seems, is, indeed, 'all for nothing' (*Hamlet*,

2.2.514). It is for Crab, the 'cruel-hearted Curre', who has 'no more pity in him than a

dog' (TLN. 601-3). Thus, while Crab serves initially as a comic 'feed' part, or prop, for

Launce,[138] the 'favourite clown-juggler trick' of weeping clown and dog must also have

proved a compelling promise of festive delights to come on stage.[139]

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[136] Weimann and Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance*, p. 106.
[137] Beadle, 'Crab's Pedigree', pp. 12-13.
[138] Mahood uses the term 'feed' part in relation to *Richard III*'s Keeper who encourages Clarence to relate his dream in this and thus launch a principal character into a major speech. See p. 39.
[139] Wright, 'Animal Actors', p. 662.

ii.   'Self-resembled show' or self-conscious comedy?

Launce, whatever his precise point of arrival on stage, does not enter *Two Gentlemen*

subtly. Rather, he enters the play in what might be described as a very 'Hamletian'

moment. 'Like Niobe, all tears' (*Hamlet*, 1.2.149), this 'dull and muddy-mettled

rascal', this 'John-a-dreams' (*Hamlet*, 2.2.554-5) arrives in the play on satirical cue,

'drown[s] the stage in tears' (*Hamlet*, 2.2.539) and continues in his show of sorrow.

Accompanied by the kind of old-fashioned and lexicalised gestures which Hamlet will

later so envy in Elsinore's leading player, 'his visage waned,/Tears in his eyes,

distraction in's aspect', Launce's appearance not only parodies an ideal of love, but also

the idea of acting it. This idea is confirmed later in 4.4 in *Two Gentlemen*. During the

conversation between Sylvia and Julia, disguised, by now, as Sebastian, the latter

parodies the conventions of cross-dressing when she describes how, in a 'pagean[t] of

delight', she played, as a boy, 'the woman's part'. She continues:

> For I did play a lamentable part.
> Madam, 'twas Ariadne passioning
> For Theseus' perjury and unjust flight;
> Which I so lively acted with my tears
> That my poor mistress, movèd therewithal,
> Wept bitterly; and would I might be dead
> If I in thought felt not her very sorrow.
>
>   (4.4.51-2; 59-64)

Shakespeare, it seems, is making a similar point to Hamlet's own about acing – about

'motive[s]' and 'cue[s] for passion' (*Hamlet*, 2.2.538) - first through Launce, and then

Julia. Having so successfully destroyed the sorrowful tone, and 'tide', of *Two*

Gentlemen so far in 2.3, Launce, with his tears, continues to mock the actors who have

just left the stage.

Having cleared the stage, the scene goes on to equip Launce with one of the

most self-conscious and, arguably, funniest scenes in the canon, in which the clown

performs his own tearful 'shoe trick' monologue, which self-consciously critiques the

theatrical trade. The monologue opens with a satisfying insight into the fictional Launce's extra-dramatic 'life', both in terms of his own melancholic character, and those of his family: 'all the kinde of the *Launces*, have this very fault' (TLN. 594-5). The reported style of the speech at this point is a dramaturgical device inherited from the classical repertoire, and used time and again by Shakespeare in order to provide both insight and depth to the action and characters of his plays. Consider, for example, Mistress Quickly's account of Falstaff's death in *Henry V*, or Gertrude's and the ghost's reports of more grisly deaths in *Hamlet*.[140] A similar attempt at illusion is immediately undercut in *Two Gentlemen*, however, in a number of ways, all of which instil the text of the play with traces of Kemp's acting.

Similar to *Titus*' clown, much of Launce's humour comes from his deliberate and low-brow confusion of words, which is also typical of Kemp's on-stage chatter and traditional clownish 'prating'. Thus, malapropisms, quibbles and puns are scattered throughout Launce's monologue. Here, though, Launce declares that he has received his 'proportion, like the prodigious sonne ' (TLN. 595). Coupled with the pun on 'Imperial' for emperor, which is reminiscent of *Titus*' clown's 'emperal', the witty transmutation of 'portion' and 'prodigal' seems highly characteristic of one of Kemp's deliberate verbal mispronunciations. Moreover, as Campbell notes, the use of 'prodigious' may be a comic reference to the actor's size, as Kemp was 'large and slow'.[141]

I would argue that Kemp, having spent most of 'his life in mad jigs and merry jests', and who was known for his leaping and sexually athletic jigs, was probably physically fit. As he claims in his *Nine Daies Wonder*, 'my pace in dancing is not

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[140] See *Henry V* (2.3.9-23), and *Hamlet* (4.7.137-154).
[141] Campell, 'Shakespeare's Actors', p. 35. See also Carroll, *Two Gentlemen*, gloss to 2.3.3, p. 176.

ordinary'. [142] Campbell does have a point, in that a comic portrayal of the ponderous

Launce, who takes an 'howre' to be done 'weeping', may well have been enhanced by

the quibble on 'prodigious', and therefore reveals a vital detail relating to the actor's age

or appearance. Kemp's roles often played linguistically with the actor's physicality, as

with *Titus'* 'young' clown. Dogberry, as we will see, is bigger than Verges in a number

of ways; and *Love's Labour's Lost*'s dim-witted and oversexed clown, Costard, takes

both his name and characterization from a variety of large and knobbly-skinned apple.

In *Love's Labour's Lost*'s play-within-the-play, this is capitalised on further when

Costard plays Pompey the Great with his 'great limb' (*LLL*, 5.1.125).

The second point to note in terms of the monologue's deflationary comic

capacity is that, following Kemp's quibbles, we are returned to the world of Launce

through his description of parting from his lachrymose household:

> my Mother weeping: my Father
> wayling: my Sister crying: our Maid howling: our
> Catte wringing her hands.
>   (TLN. 598-600)

Once again, however, the illusion is nullified when Launce goes on to act out the

parting. 'Ile shew you the manner of it', he says, before beginning his own play-within-

a-play through the 'shoe-trick':

> This shooe is my fa-
> ther : no, this left shooe is my father ; no, no, this left
> shooe is my mother : nay that cannot bee so neyther.
>   (TLN. 606-8).

As Erica Fudge notes, the passage contains 'a confusion of subjects, objects and

identities',[143] where Launce gets into a 'doltish' muddle. But the confusion here is

applicable to the wider themes of identity and recognition at work in the play.   No

doubt, Launce's verbal blundering and muddling during his soliloquy gives the

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[142] Kemp, *Nine Daies Wonder*, ed. Dyce, p. 9.
[143] Erica Fudge '"The dog is himself": Humans, Animals and Self-Control in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*', in *How To Do Things With Shakespeare*, pp. 185-209 (p. 191).

audience a chance mentally to unwind from the high-blown rhetoric of friendship and love displayed in the play so far. At the same time, however, Kemp's self-promoting portrayal of Launce is heightened as he casts a satirical eye over the profession of acting itself. In this light, the speech gives the comedian ample opportunity for extensive gesture and 'comic business' with his 'shoe' props in a self-reflexive display of his own profession.[144]

Both in and out of the play at once, Launce/Kemp is able to poke fun at theatre itself. In particular, Launce and his shoes enact the frustrating, and comical, process of casting a play, later acted out most memorably by Bottom and Peter Quince. 'Let me play the lion too' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1.2.58), Bottom demands, although he has already been cast as Pyramus, with Snug as the lion. Launce pontificates at length over who is to play whom: 'This shoe is my father. No, this left shoe is my father; no, no, this left shoe is my mother.' This is followed by consternation over his own role: 'I am the dog. No, the dog is himself, and I am the dog. O, the dog is me, and I am myself. Ay, so, so'. At this point, the clown's speech alludes to two features of early modern acting. The first is the practice of doubling parts, used extensively in casting small roles which were taken, for the most part, by subservient members of a company or hired men as opposed to professional actors – an obstacle to any meaningful portrayal of such roles, as Mahood argues. [145] It also alludes to the competitive nature of drama. We have already seen, in *Titus'* Q1 clown, the potential to show off on stage. In deliberating over whether to play himself, the dog, or both, Launce and Kemp both reveal a desire to play a number of parts in order to display his 'dauntless versatility' as

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[144] I take the phrase 'comic business' from Mahood, *Bit Parts*, p. 20.

[145] Mahood discusses extensively the issues surrounding the casting and performance of minor roles in Shakespeare's plays. See Mahood, *Bit Parts*, p. 10. Tiffany Stern and Simon Palfrey has also recently written extensively on the practices of casting and doubling. See Tiffany Stern and Simon Palfrey, *Shakespeare in Parts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

an actor.[146] At this point, the play seems to articulate Mahood's contention that all Elizabethan actors loved to show off,[147] as both Kemp and Launce 'act' within their own narrative and functional spaces. Once again, we find a Kempian clown anticipating 'Bottom who, in demanding to play the 'tyrant', 'lover' and 'lion', articulates the mechanicals' perplexity over role and player in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*'s Act Five.

In the 'Crab' scene, then, we are presented with two distinct and competing levels of acting: the first between those of professional and ancient play already at work in the presence of Crab; and the second between the real actor Kemp and the fictional figure of Launce. The result is that a double perspective is at work in the scene, where an interplay of figures allows a process of simultaneous detachment and involvement for both spectators and readers of the play. This also allows for a series of striking shifts of perspective, as the competing layers of symbolic space break apart and become one in the figure of Launce-Kemp. As in the case of *Macbeth's* porter, who, as Mahood points out, can take us anywhere he chooses – 'even to the mouth of Hell'[148] - the clown fashions his own narrative space and action, not only for himself, but also for his motley family. The result in *Two Gentlemen* is that Launce's dramatized leave-taking of his family produces a verbal coup de theatre which not only mirrors, burlesques and encapsulates the wider thematic structures of the play, but also provides a comic vehicle for Kemp with its stand-alone quality of precedent 'clownage'.

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[146] I take the phrase 'dauntless versatility' in relation to Elizabethan acting from David Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 86.

[147] Mahood, *Bit Parts*, p. 13.

[148] Mahood, *Bit Parts*, pp. 83-4.

iii.   Kemp and Shakespeare at work

Recently, Robert Bell has argued that for the part of Launce, 'Shakespeare's script merely precipitated Kemp's bawdy slapstick'.[149] In other words, Launce's written part triggered Kemp's improvisational acting. If we accept Kemp as Launce, therefore, the formal features of the printed text at this point are particularly revealing in relation to the famous actor in terms of both the scene's composition and performance.

As Campbell argues, Launce's role has an idiosyncratic ring and assurance of comic timing that is not matched by the rest of the action.[150] This may well be due to the fact that Launce is detached from the wider play in a lexical sense as his role is written entirely in prose. While this points to the comic validity of this early clown part,[151] it is distinctive in a play where all of the other characters, including the Lylian clown Speed, and even the Act Five 'outlaws', speak in verse.

There is also, as John Timpane argues, plenty going on outside the text itself in the paratextual features surrounding and shaping the dialogue.[152] The lexical details of Launce's comic set-piece appear to reveal the deliberate textual reproduction of Kemp's improvisational prose. For example, a marked characteristic of the clown's opening monologue is that it contains a string of loosely associated phrases and clauses which seem typical of Kemp's energetic style, and which contain a structural similarity to Peter's exasperated attempts to hurry Lady Capulet to the ball in 1.3 of *Romeo*:

> Madam the guests are come, supper serv'd up, you
> called, my young lady asked for, the Nurse cursed in the pantry,
> and everything in extremity.
>
> (1.3.102-4)

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[149] Bell, *Shakespeare's Great Stage of Fools*, p. 10.
[150] See Campbell, 'Shakespeare's Actors', p. 180.
[151] Kermode argues that the use of prose in Shakespeare's early works is essentially a 'comic medium'. See *Shakespeare's Language*, p. 48.
[152] Timpane, '"I am but a foole"', p. 204.

Throughout the monologue, Launce's distress is conveyed in a series of similar short phrases, separated by colons and distinctive spaces in the text, and which aim to reproduce a jagged and breathy lexical rhythm. Timpane identifies a similar pattern of 'statement and pause, statement and pause' in Launce's later monologue in 4.4, and which aims similarly textually to amplify the clown's vocalised distress at the continuing antics of Crab.[153] In this way, the 'elastic' quality of the prose in the clown's opening speech instils his dialogue not only with vocal possibilities, but also with a number of performative options.[154]

Given the format and placing of the extended elisions in Launce's speech, therefore, and the vocal dynamics that they seem intended to reproduce at this point, it might also be worth considering some of the gestures and mannerisms that they are attempting to convey. 'Ile shew you the manner of it', Launce declares, 'this shooe is my fa-/ther : no, this left shooe is my father […]', et cetera. As printed, the spaces in the text appear to accompany the actor, giving him a linguistic space to embellish his comic performance with gesture. Pauses are inserted into Launce's speech, either to be filled with movement, or with extemporal lines, or even, perhaps, with 'scurvey faces', where the experienced Kemp would have fleshed out the detail of the scene on stage with his training in improvisation and expert comic timing. Typically, then, Launce's colloquial language and syntax creates both the illusion and potential for spontaneity, and the resulting printed format of the speech itself provides a guide, not only as to how the lines should be performed, but also as to how they should be read.

Timpane's observations are persuasive. I would argue, however, that we must be careful of avoiding assumptions relating to the compositor's art, or of his attention to

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[153] Ibid., p. 200.
[154] I take the term 'elastic' from Richard Andrews, 'Scripted Theatre and the *Commedia dell'Arte*', in J. R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring, eds., *Theatre of the English and Italian Renaissance* (New York: St. Martin, 1991), cited in Timpane, '"I am but a foole"', p. 201.

the fictive thrust of the play. Launce's justified prose, with its widely spaced punctuation (which is also used for Pantino) might well reveal an attention by the compositor more to the material layout of the text than to the dramatic concerns of plot or narrative. However, Launce's first speech as printed in F1 does appear to contain a deliberate effort to reflect the stilted rhythms of the words spoken on stage. If so, we might read the 2.3 monologue as part of what Helgerson terms the 'improvisation effect' in a Shakespearean script for Kemp.[155] In the light of Kemp as Launce, we could also conclude that the rhythm of the prose suggests the performative possibilities that were written into the dialogue at this point – an example of Shakespeare's precipitative writing for Kemp. This, in turn, reveals an element of alliance between writing and performance, captured in the working play-script, and transposed into the literary Folio text by Crane.

Regardless of such possibilities, there is little doubt, as Beadle suggests, that in the part of Launce we have Shakespeare's first 'fully-fledged attempt to write "the clown's part" – to *write*, that is, a part which had traditionally been largely extemporized'.[156] I would argue that further evidence of such collaboration is also revealed in the 'tide' pun discussed above. Here, this typically Kempian pun provides for a stunning display of wordplay where the sublime and ridiculous are linguistically and semantically fused and contrasted in a number of ways. While all of the words at 'play' are typical of Kemp's subversive and saucy humour, 'tide', with its marked thematic relevance between the two scenes under discussion, does suggest some intervention, or at least encouragement on the part of the playwright. It reflects, in this way, the truly collaborative nature of this witty play-script with its mixture of comic improvisation and written dialogue which was part of the performative discourse

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[155] Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, p. 224.
[156] Beadle, 'Crab's Pedigree', p. 13.

between the dramatist and Kemp: a half-way stage that would be completed by the actor in performance.

Of course, it is difficult to tell, as ever, precisely with whom the punning lines and images originated, clown or dramatist. But if they are authorial, then Shakespeare must have been strongly influenced by the experienced comedian, not only in using him to burlesque the theme of love, but also the ostentatious conventions of romantic poetry. By the time Launce leaves the stage at the end of 2.3, the transposition from what Brooks describes as the play's 'love-melancholy' motif into full comic mode is complete. In this way, the text provides a space for both clown and 'curre' which suits both dramatist and actor in complex and collaborative patterns, demonstrating what J. M. Tobin describes as the 'layered' quality of the play.[157]

VI.   Conclusion

Overall, in the Folio text there are a number of discrepancies between Launce's part in the traditional clowning repertoire still at large in the mid-1590s, and the methodised presentation of his character for readers of the literary text. Put simply, there are literary elements of F1 which dampen, or flatten out, Launce's presence in the play and thus mask his mischievous influence. In *Two Gentlemen*, it seems, we must dig deeper into the text to find traces of Kemp's performances. But what I hope to have shown in this chapter is that, while Crane's scribal text of *Two Gentlemen* clearly attempts to bring the work in line with a reader's experience of printed drama, as opposed to an audience's auditory experience of the play, Kemp's vital comic force shines through. Despite Crane's scribal intervention between performance and text, by looking at and through the Folio's surface print, we can still see the festive and ephemeral stage which

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[157] J. M. M. Tobin, 'Nashe and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*', *Notes and Queries*, April 1981, 122-3 (122).

influenced the remodelling of the play around the figure of Kemp's Launce. Behind the Folio's static textuality, in other words, the transitory and evolving spaces of clown and 'author' can still be glimpsed in a creative and fruitful theatrical environment. There is evidence in *Two Gentlemen*, it seems, that on Shakespeare's stage, as Weimann contends, 'the new learning and writing had not fully supplanted the vitality in the oral communication of the unlettered'.[158] More simply, Launce contains his own unique negotiations between Shakespeare's theatre and 'Shakespeare's book', and, more pertinently in the context of this thesis, between clown and author.

Furthermore, Launce is drenched in the carnivalesque grotesque of the body – tears, feet, farts, sex, and even 'a bit with a dog'. He heaps festivity onto the play in order to satirise its dominant themes of romantic love and friendship. Complicit with the narrative in this way, Launce is more integrated into the wider play than the clowns we have met in *A Knack* and *Titus* so far. In revising the whole play specifically for the character of Launce, I would argue that Shakespeare was already employing the type of complex strategic and structural revisionary methods at work much later in *King Lear*. It is in *Two Gentlemen* for the first time, as Weimann points out, that the liminal status of the clown is used by Shakespeare to organize, control and evaluate the dramatic experience through a wider comic vision and a 'socially much more heterogeneous division of theatrical labour'.[159] Launce marks, therefore, a transition for the clown figure and also for Kemp on the traditional trajectory on which he rose to fame. He may well point the way, in this light, to a new form of authoritative 'clownage', one which contains logic behind its ludic inconsistencies. While Launce retains the stand-alone quality of 'your old vice still' (3.1.279), the playwright, rather than being forced to

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[158] Weimann, *Author's Pen*, p. 7.
[159] Weimann, 'Laughing with the Audience', pp. 79-80.

relinquish narrative authority in the teeth of anarchic extempore, embraces the clown as a potent dramatic tool.

Two Gentlemen illustrates, therefore, how the structural success of the play, and of much early modern drama, as Bevington argues, is not measured by its movement towards 'classical "purity"', but by the 'integration of obverse and alternating textures in a single and multiform art'.[160] As I will show in the third part of this thesis, while Kemp's clowns continued to maintain an independent setting in Shakespeare's plays, they were also subject to what might be described as authorial moves to contain them. In later roles for the Chamberlain's Men, Kemp's clown personas become increasingly incorporated within the plays in which he appeared until, finally, with Dogberry he is 'writ downe as an asse' (Much Ado, 4.2.77-8).

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[160] Bevington, From Mankind to Marlowe, p. 4.

CHAPTER FIVE

ROMEO AND JULIET

So far in this thesis I have examined what I believe to be textual traces of Kemp in the

early editions of the plays studied. It is now time to look at more empirical evidence of

the actor's performances during the latter half of his career with Shakespeare and the

Lord Chamberlain's Men. In order to do this, I turn first to *Romeo and Juliet* and its

famous stage direction, '*Enter Will Kemp*'.

Romeo is not regarded by editors as a play subject to extensive revision, and it

has long been acknowledged that the 1599 second quarto (Q2), which records Kemp's

presence in the play on K3^v (also known by editors as Scene 17[1]) and which appears

also to extend the so-called 'lamentations' scene in Act Four,[2] was set directly from

Shakespeare's working manuscript. Q2, then, is another 'foul paper' text, and, as

Pearlman argues, 'inadvertently preserves evidence of Shakespeare's changes and

corrections' to the work during the process of its composition.[3] 'Enter Will Kemp' thus

reveals two things: first, that Kemp played the part of Peter in early performances of the

play; and second, that the 'lamentations' scene was adapted in some way in order to

accommodate him, as most critics now suggest.[4]

Kemp's Q2 direction, then, can be read as part of complex and fascinating

editorial conundrum surrounding the writing and printing of *Romeo*, which is outlined

briefly below. Indeed, editors and critics have mined Q2's 'lamentations' scene for

what Kemp's direction can tell us both about the play's composition and early

performances. My initial focus in this chapter, however, is not Q2's Kemp direction,

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[1] See, for example, Lukas Erne, ed., *The First Quarto of Romeo and Juliet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[2] The sequence with which I am concerned appears at 4.4.23-126 in modern editions of the play.

[3] Pearlman, 'Shakespeare at Work', p. 317.

[4] I will cover this in more detail below.

since this has received a good deal of scholarly attention. Rather, I want to look first at a scene which appears much earlier in the play at the beginning of Act One Scene Two (glossed as Scene 2 in editions of the quartos[5]), and which records the first arrival in the action of a Capulet servant in the play's main clown role. In the light of Kemp's presence in Q2's 'lamentations', this early scene, which I contend contains further evidence of the actor in the same role, appears so far to have been overlooked.

Harry Levin argues that when *Romeo* was first written and performed, romantic tragedy was a new concept. In order to achieve his own experimental ends in this newly hybrid form, Levin contends, Shakespeare blended the 'proper matter' of serious drama with the 'stuff of the comic stage', [6] part of which, it seems, was Kemp. What I want to show overall in this chapter, though, is that Kemp's presence in *Romeo* is not only down to his reputation as a comic actor. On the contrary, his first arrival in the play, and his seeming influence in the penning of the 'lamentations' scene, points to a more robust and thematic characterisation of his servant role in *Romeo*'s maelstrom of dramatic genres identified by Susan Snyder.[7]

This penultimate chapter, as usual, is divided into two halves. In the first half, I consider the date and textuality of the play. Because of Kemp's documented appearance in Q2, there is less need to connect him with the play than in previous chapters. I will offer an overview, however, of the enigmatic relationship between Q2 and Q1, a shorter, though similar, version of *Romeo*. In the second half of the chapter, I look closely at both Scene Two and Scene 17 in both texts, where Kemp's presence in both versions of the play shed some light on the links between them.

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[5] Again, see Erne, *First Quarto*.

[6] See Harry Levin, 'Form and Formality in *Romeo and Juliet*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*,11:1 (1960), 3-11 (6).   H. B. Charlton first addressed the play's unorthodox treatment of genre in '*Romeo and Juliet* as an Experimental Tragedy', a lecture given in 1939, cited in Levenson, *Romeo*, p. 49.

[7] Cf. Susan Snyder, *The Comic Matrix of Shakespeare's Tragedies: Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Othello, and King Lear* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1979).

I.   Q1: the 'bad' quarto

When published by Danter in 1597, Q1 *Romeo* claimed on its title-page to be:

> *AN* / EXCELLENT / conceited Tragedie / *OF* / Romeo and Juliet. / As it hath
> been often (with great applause) / plaid publiquely, by the right Ho- / nourable
> the L. of *Hunsdon* / his Seruants. / [printer's device] / LONDON, /Printed by
> Iohn Danter. / 1597.[8]

It is highly unlikely that the play was new at this time. Editors propose a range of dates

for the play's composition which place it anywhere from 1593 to 1596, with most

agreeing that it was written at some stage between 1594 and 1596.[9] Kemp's

documented appearance in Q2 has also prompted theories pertaining to the play's date.

Giorgio Melchiori argues that the play was composed in 1593. He also claims that

Shakespeare drafted the first four acts of the play with a courtly audience broadly in

mind, but with no idea of who would act in it, and this explains the changes made to

Kemp's part in Q2's Scene 17.[10] Levenson argues that due to the evidence of Kemp's

appearances in *Romeo*, the play's composition must post-date 1594, and the formation

of the Lord Chamberlain's Men.[11] Erne argues that the play was on stage by 1595 and

performed 'by Shakespeare and his fellow actors' at The Theatre in the Shoreditch

district of London, north-east of the city, and the company's regular playhouse up to

1597.[12]

On the strength of Q1's reference to performances by 'the L. of *Hunsdon* his

Servants', Malone also suggested a later date, claiming that it would have been first

seen on stage between 22 July 1596 and 17 March 1597, the only period when

Shakespeare's company was known as Lord Hunsdon's men. Blakemore Evans notes,

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[8] See Plate 12.

[9] Brian Gibbons has shown that 1593 is the earliest possible date, but also suggests that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Romeo* could also have been written close together, 'between 1594 and 1596'. See Gibbons, *Romeo*, p. 31. G. Blakemore Evans postulates a date of May-June 1596 for the composition of 'substantial parts' of the play. See Blakemore Evans, *Romeo*, p. 4.

[10] Melchiori, 'Peter, Balthasar, and Shakespeare's Art of Doubling', pp. 780-82.

[11] Levenson, *Romeo*, pp. 98-99.

[12] Erne, *The First Quarto*, p. 35.

however, that the reference to Lord Hunsdon on Q1's title-page may have been an attempt by Danter to capitalise on recent performance of the play,[13] and the company's aristocratic links as he did with Q1 *Titus*. Lois Potter argues that 'nearly all the Shakespeare quartos proclaim their status as acting editions', and the most self-advertising is Q1 *Romeo*.[14] It is interesting to note, in this light, that Danter promotes not only the play's connections with Lord Hunsdon and the stage but also with its comic forces in describing his tragedy as both 'excellent' and 'conceited'. As Levenson points out, 'conceited' was a bibliographic term used at the end of the sixteenth century primarily to advertise comedies and to emphasise their wittiness.[15]

Whatever the exact composition date of *Romeo*, Q1's publication in 1597 sets what Blakemore Evans describes as a 'terminal' date for its composition,[16] at a time when Kemp remained at the height of his fame as the leading clown for Shakespeare's troupe. What also seems to be the case is that the play was extremely popular, a point to which I will return in section two. Approximately two years after the play's probable composition, but possibly while it was still on stage, Danter acquired the play-house manuscript of *Romeo* from which his text appears to have been printed.

Despite the fact that Danter must have had his manuscript of *Romeo* licenced (meaning that the Stationers' Company granted him the right to print it), the quarto is not listed in the Stationers' Register.[17] Thus begins Q1's status as a disreputable text. Since the work of the Shakespeare scholar John Payne Collier in the mid-nineteenth century, the absence of a Stationers' entry has been taken as evidence that Danter's

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[13] See Blakemore Evans, *Romeo*, p. 223.
[14] Lois Potter, 'Actors as Editors, Editors as Actors', *Textus* IX (1996), 419-436 (419).
[15] See Levenson, *Romeo*, p. 107.
[16] Blakemore Evans, *Romeo*, p. 1.
[17] Cf. Erne, *The First Quarto*, p. 35.

publication of Q1 was surreptitious.[18] More recently, however, Blayney has shown that while a Stationers' licence was a mandatory requirement, entrance in the Register was more of 'an insurance policy' which 'provided the best possible protection' against any conflict of publishing rights over a play. Registration, therefore, was 'voluntary' and, Blayney argues further, its absence is insufficient reason for 'suspecting anything furtive, dishonest, or illegal' in relation to unregistered texts such as Q1 *Romeo*.[19] Danter, then, was not necessarily acting illegally in failing to register Q1, and Leo Kirschbaum has suggested that scholars have used their knowledge of Danter's documented problems with the law to rationalise Q1's suspicious origins.[20]

Q1's theatrical associations did not help its cause. Actors have always been believed to have had significant agency in the construction of Danter's disreputable text. In 1909, as noted, Q1 *Romeo* was listed by Pollard as one of Shakespeare's 'bad' quartos.[21] Pollard considered the quarto to contain a version of *Romeo* so muddled and confused that he judged it not to have any basis at all in an authoritative manuscript or text.[22] Pollard's theories were quickly compounded by Greg who claimed, the following year in 1910, that the agents behind the copy-text of most of the 'bad' quartos were actors who reconstructed the plays from memory (although this theory was actually first put forward by Tycho Mommsen in 1857).[23] In 1930, the canon of 'bad' quartos was fixed by Chambers' *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*.

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[18] For an overview of Collier's work on Shakespeare, see Samuel Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 332-61.

[19] Blayney, 'The Publication of Playbooks', p. 404.

[20] Leo Kirshbaum, *Shakespeare and the Stationers* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1955), p. 298.

[21] See below, p. 5, n. 25.

[22] Pollard, *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos*, pp. 64-80.

[23] See W. W. Greg, *Shakespeare's 'The Merry Wives of Windsor', 1602* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), pp. xxxvii, xxxviii, xl. The fullest investigation of the provenance of Q1 as memorial reconstruction was H. R. Hoppe's *The Bad Quarto of 'Romeo and Juliet': A Bibliographical and Textual Study* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1948). Hoppe's theories were endorsed by Greg in *The Shakespeare First Folio: Its Bibliographical and Textual History* (Oxford, 1955), pp. 225-28. For a recent detailed account of theories of memorial reconstruction, see Levenson, Barry Gaines, Berger and Proudfoot, eds., *Romeo and Juliet 1597*, The Malone Society Reprints, Vol. 163 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. xi-xii. See also Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*, pp. 227-322.

As a result of Greg's work in particular, a good deal of twentieth-century scholarship in Shakespeare studies was spent in attempting to determine the parts played by the actors who allegedly composed the 'bad' texts. In 1948, Harry Hoppe claimed to have identified the culprits in *Romeo* as the actors who played Romeo and Paris, arguing that their parts were reported with greater accuracy than others. In 1994, Kathleen Irace extended Hoppe's theory in adding Mercutio to the list of reconstructors, arguing that his part, along with that of Paris, could have been doubled.[24] While in favour of the memorial reconstruction theory in relation to Q1, Gibbons refrains from naming any specific actors, or roles. Instead, he argues that the quarto was 'assembled by a group who had been involved in the first authentic production'.[25]

Scholarship since the 1990s has put forward some convincing opposition to theories of memorial reconstruction. Werstine has shown that New Bibliographic narratives effectively followed their own hypothetical course, despite an often tenuous relationship to the more empirical styles of textual analysis they usually followed.[26] In an important redefinition of Pollard's 'bad' quartos which reviews both the contributions and limitations of precedent scholarship on them, Maguire concludes that Q1 is neither an example of memorial reconstruction, nor what she describes as 'the reproduction of a playtext in whole or in part by someone who had at some stage substantial knowledge of the original playtext as written or performed'.[27] The work of both Werstine and Maguire suggests, therefore, that the reconstruction of texts at the hands of specific actors is implausible. It would also, however, be unwise to rule it out completely.

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[24] Kathleen O. Irace, *Reforming the 'Bad' Quartos: Performance and Provenance of Six Shakespearean First Editions*, (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1994), pp. 126-31.
[25] Gibbons, *Romeo*, p. 4.
[26] Werstine, 'A Century of "Bad" Quartos', p. 310-33.
[27] Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*, pp. 224-25.

Blayney argues for the origin of 'bad' quartos as 'performance texts written down by actors who took part in them'. Blayney's argument is based, in this way, on Humphrey Moseley's oft-quoted assertion in the prefatory material to the 1647 'Beaumont and Fletcher' Folio which contends that,

> When these *Comedies* and *Tragedies* were presented on the Stage, the *Actours* omitted some *Scenes* and Passages (with the *Authour's* consent) as occasion led them; and when private friends desir'd a Copy, they then (and justly too) transcribed what they *Acted*.

What Moseley 'has been trying to tell us since 1647', Blayney claims, is that there is a 'commonplace and innocent origin of the kind of text that Pollard called a Bad Quarto – but we have been too busy chasing imaginary pirates to listen'.[28]

The eighteenth-century editor Alexander Pope initiated one less damning assumption on the origin of Q1, which was that it represented an early, and possibly the first draft, of the play.[29] In contrast, and now considered more likely, is another idea, also prevalent during the nineteenth century and supported by scholars during the 1980s, which is that although Q1 was published first, it does not necessarily represent the original version of the play. It contains, rather, a printed transcription of an early performance which was redacted for the stage. In other words, although published first, Q1 contains a later, adapted version of the original play.

The condensing of Q1 from Q2 stems from two possibilities: in the first place, the text was shortened by actors, most probably for the purposes of touring in the provinces, as claimed by David Farley Hills;[30] and in the second, it was abridged by Shakespeare himself. Indeed, Jay Halio argues that Q1 represents an authorially

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[28] Blayney, 'The Publication of Playbooks', p. 394.
[29] Alexander Pope, Preface to his first edition, vol. I, p. viii, cited in Levenson, *Romeo*, p. 120.
[30] David Farley Hills, 'The "bad" quarto of *Romeo and Juliet*', *Shakespeare Survey*, 49 (1996), 27-44 (esp. p. 28).

revised, second draft of the play, from which a 'prompt book' was prepared, and which subsequently became the theatrical copy-text for Danter's first edition of the play.[31]

II.   Q2: the 'good' quarto

Q2 was published in 1599 with the following title page:

> THE / MOST EX- / cellent and lamentable / Tragedie, of Romeo and Juliet. / *Newly corrected, augmented, and* / *amended*: / As it hath bene sundry times publiquely acted, by the / right Honourable the Lord Chamberlaine / his Servants. / LONDON / Printed by Thomas Creede, for Cuthbert Burby, and are to / be sold at his shop neare the Exchange. / 1599.[32]

As Q2 contains a longer and in some ways better text than Q1, scholars have suggested that Shakespeare and his company released the manuscript in order to have the earlier 'bad' quarto supplanted by the 'good' one.[33] For Levenson, Q2 'replaces and/or repudiates Q1', indicated by the more 'authoritative formula' on the later quarto's title-page.[34] As Erne contends, however, cumulative evidence now suggests that the Chamberlain's Men were not unduly troubled by the printing of Q1. Erne argues, in fact, that Q2's publication in 1599 suggests that Q1 had been a commercial success and sold out in two years or less.[35]

Admittedly, Q2 advertises an exclusive connection with theatre, similar to that on Q1's title-page, through the Lord Chamberlain's Men who 'publiquely acted' the play 'sundry' times by the time of its publication in 1599. But the theatrical exclusivity of the play as acted by Shakespeare's company (possibly already resident in the new

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[31] Halio, 'Handy-dandy', p. 137.

[32] See Plate 13.

[33] See, for example, Gibbons, *Romeo*, p. 1. In broad terms, the differences between Q1 and Q2 are as follows: neither a short sequence involving Capulet serving-men in Act One (1.5.1-14), nor the 'Chorus' at the end of Act One (1.5.144-57) is present in Q1. Apart from these two examples, every other sequence of action in Q2 has an equivalent in Q1. Some of these, admittedly, are considerably shorter in Q1 and a number of Q2 speeches are not contained in the earlier quarto. Q1's language also often departs from Q2's. In general, though, the relationship between the two texts is close in the first seven scenes (1.1.2-4) and becomes less so in the remainder of the play. See Erne, *First Quarto*, p. 2.

[34] Levenson, *Romeo*, p. 111.

[35] Erne, *The First Quarto*, p. 42.

Globe at this time), is accompanied by familiar claims that the play-text contained in Q2

is 'newly corrected, augmented, and amended'. In other words, it is made more

appetising for prospective purchasers of the text. Moreover, Q2's title-page also

suggests that the play, by 1599, is more firmly in the realms of tragedy than in 1597.

While the work remains, 'excellent', it is now 'lamentable' as opposed to 'conceited'.

The earlier quarto's reference to applause, and thus possibly to 'clownage', has also

been removed. Q2, it seems, as in the case of *Troilus and Cressida's* second quarto

(1609), is less keen than its earlier counterpart to advertise itself as having been

'clapper-clawed with the palms of the vulgar'.[36]

> For Orgel, Q2's 'augmented' status suggests that the play would have been too
long to have been performed on stage:

> It is a commonplace to remark the discrepancy between the performing time
> always given for Elizabethan plays – "the two hours' traffic of our stage" – and
> the actual length of the texts, but […] no one has ever confronted the
> implications of the obvious conclusion that the plays Shakespeare's company
> performed were shorter than the plays Shakespeare wrote for them. The text,
> then, was not the play.[37]

Since Orgel's pioneering observations, Erne has opened up this debate considerably by

building on Honigmann's earlier contention that scholars should revise the myth of

Shakespeare's indifference to the printing of his plays.[38] One of the main premises on

which Erne's theory of Shakespeare as a literary figure is based is the question of

performance time. As roughly one third of Shakespeare's plays were too long to be

acted, Erne contends, they must also have been written to be read as well as performed.

Where versions of Shakespeare's plays exist in long and short texts, as in the case of

Romeo, the longer text represents a 'literary' version of the play. Erne illustrates his

theories of Shakespeare as a 'literary dramatist' in a detailed examination of Q2 *Romeo*,

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[36] This quotation is taken from the publisher's 'Preface' to *Troilus and Cressida* (1609).
[37] Orgel, 'Acting Scripts, Performing Texts', in *The Authentic Shakespeare*, pp. 21-47 (p. 21).
[38] E. A. J. Honigmann, *The Stability of Shakespeare's Texts* (London: Edward Arnold, 1965).

one of the variant canonical play-texts which, he claims, attests to the fact that

Shakespeare was not only writing for the stage, but also producing longer and more

poetical works for a reading public. Erne argues further, though, that due to its length

the play contained in Q2 may never have been performed on stage, or even intended for

theatrical consumption.[39]

In the case of Q2 *Romeo*, then, size certainly matters. Furthermore, evidence of

what seems to be authorial revision, including a number of repetitive passages which

suggest first and second re-workings during the process of the type of 'currente calamo'

composition contained in Q1 *Titus*, are also preserved in Q2.[40] There is evidence of this

from the very beginning of the play. For example, the swaggering banter between

Sampson and Gregory which opens the action is shortened in Q1 by approximately one

third. But besides some major cuts which point to the text's adaptation for the stage,

there are also minor alterations in the dialogue which hardly affect the sense of the

passage. These are minute and insignificant changes an author might make, but seem

too detailed for any other stage adapter to be concerned with. Such details have

convinced textual scholars that despite being the later text, the quarto derives ultimately

from Shakespeare's originally penned manuscript of the play. The Q2 text thus

provides the copy-text on which modern editions of the play are based.[41]

As touched on in relation to *Titus* in Chapter Three, and as Stern suggests, most

variant texts, whether 'written or acted, […] can still have various different lineages'.[42]

For Erne, in *Romeo* this is down to the fact that Q2, as a long text, functions according

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[39] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*. See in particular Chapter 6, 'Why size matters: "the two hours' traffic of our stage" and the length of Shakespeare's plays', pp. 131-173. The other plays examined in some detail by Erne are *Henry V* and *Hamlet*.

[40] For a list of possible revisions in Q2, see Pearlman, 'Shakespeare at Work', pp. 316-21. See also Grace Ioppolo, *Revising Shakespeare* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991).

[41] Q2 is also the text from which Q3 (1609), Q4 (1622) and the First Folio edition descend. Levenson shows, however, that F1 *Romeo* does not derive exclusively from Q2 but relied as well on Q3 for copy-text. See Levenson, *Romeo*, pp. 113-4.

[42] Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, p. 46.

to a '"literary"' logic, while the short Q1 reflects its 'theatricality'.[43] In the case of Q2

Romeo, however, the assumption that there is an underlying 'authorial' text recoverable

by editors is in itself questionable. Such a view is, of course, antithetical to the practice

and desire of editors, whose endeavours are based upon the assumption that

Shakespeare's original words can be reproduced. Q2, though, as most editors admit, is

a text with a number of textual problems which may well indicate one of Stern's variant

'lineages'.

Four centuries of readers of the play, for example, would be unfamiliar with

Q2's prosaic and badly printed version of Juliet's famous Act Two speech:

> Whats Mountague? it is nor hand nor foote,
> Nor arme nor face, O be some other name
> Belonging to a man.
> Whats in a name that which we call a rose,
> By any other word would smell as sweete.

The more fluent version of the speech we are used to reads as follows:

> What's Montague? It is nor hand nor foot,
> Nor arm nor face, nor any other part
> Belonging to a man. O be some other name!
> What's in a name? That which we call a rose
> By any other name would smell as sweet.

<div align="right">(2.1.83-7)</div>

But these lines are in fact the product of the eighteenth-century editor, Edmond Malone,

one of the earliest editors to conflate different texts in rewriting a passage the vast

majority of readers now believe to be by Shakespeare. The passage proves, in this way,

that in their attempts to provide the fullest, most authorial text, editors do not always

provide an accurate, or indeed authorial, version of the play-script. Sometimes, in fact,

they cannot.

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[43] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p. 244.

IV.   Q1 and Q2: 'both alike in dignity'

The 'good'/'bad' quarto debate, as Werstine notes, looked to 'reduce complex and diverse texts to unitary origins'.[44] There has been, in the last decade or so, however, a distinct critical turn-around in attitudes towards all of Shakespeare's 'bad' quartos which recognises, as the differences between Q1 and Q2 *Romeo* attest, that Shakespeare's processes of composition were affected by theatrical agency. Orgel argues that,

> there is very little evidence that will reveal to us the nature of a performing text in Shakespeare's theatre; but there is a little. There are the 'bad' quartos, whose evidence, in this respect, is not bad but excellent.[45]

In the case of Q1 *Romeo*, critics and editors of the play now generally contend that the text is a valuable theatrical artefact in its own right. Erne certainly describes Q1 in glowing terms as,

> a particularly important publication, with a carefully printed text, exciting stage directions which may well shed light on the play's early modern staging, a shorter, tightened text with considerable pace, and an important number of intelligent alternative readings.[46]

The point to be made in relation to Q1 and Q2 *Romeo*, therefore, is that, ironically enough, it is precisely their similarities which form the vital, and authoritative, links between them. As Erne notes, the texts are particularly close in the first seven scenes of the play (1.1-2.4 in modern editions), before becoming more divergent in the latter half.[47] Despite Q1's brevity, moreover, most of the sequences of action in the shorter text have a corresponding sequence in Q2. In the earlier quarto, some passages are either trimmed or condensed by descriptive stage directions which replace dialogue action in the longer text. For example, the following stage direction early in Q1

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[44] Paul Werstine, 'Narratives About Printed Shakespeare Texts: "Foul Papers" and "Bad" Quartos, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 41:1, Spring 1990, 65-86 (pp. 81-2).
[45] Orgel, 'Acting Scripts, Performing Texts', p. 22.
[46] Erne, *The First Quarto*, p. 1.
[47] See Erne, *The First Quarto*, p. 2.

simplifies action which takes place in Q2 during the servants' opening scuffle, and

where no fewer than nine characters speak in the later quarto:

> *They draw, to them enters* TYBALT, *they fight, to them the* PRINCE, *old* MONTAGUE *and his* WIFE, *old* CAPULET *and his* WIFE, *and other citizens and part them*
>
> (1.48)

Q1's textual cuts, it seems, are efficient, paring down poetic passages, as the direction

cited above illustrates.

Q1, then, most likely represents a streamlined adaptation of Q2, possibly made

by Shakespeare himself, as Halio argues.[48] Randall McLeod (writing as Random

Cloud) suggests, in this context, that the two variant quartos show how Shakespeare

created the play over time and in different phases, 'perhaps in several different

manuscripts, each perhaps with its own characteristic aesthetic, offering together several

finalities'.[49] In both hypotheses, Q1 is a shortened version of the original play which

Q2 contains, possibly adapted for a specific staging or stagings, a view confirmed by a

number of other critics. Gurr considers Q1 as a version of the original play which was

'cut for performance', lending weight to theories that Shakespeare, as a theatrical

author, habitually abridged his plays.[50] Erne's 2007 edition of Q1 for Cambridge is one

of the most recent main contenders to join the critical plea in recognition of the text's

worth as an abridged version of the longer Q2.

It is, of course, impossible to posit any conclusive evidence either about the

manuscripts which lay behind Q1 and Q2, or about the theatrical and literary

relationships between them. As Levenson argues, while the short, 'pacy' Q1, with its

reduced poetry and rhetoric and accelerated action may 'look like' a playhouse copy,

there is no real evidence for associating the earlier quarto with the stage. Similarly, Q2,

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[48] Halio, 'Handy-Dandy'.

[49] Random Cloud, 'The marriage of Good and Bad Quartos', *Shakespeare Quarterly,* 33 (1982), 421-31 (p. 429).

[50] Gurr, *Shakespeare Company*, p. 23.

with its repetitions, revisions and variant stage directions, may 'look like' the author's holograph. Again, though, the quarto is not necessarily based on Shakespeare's 'foul papers', although it may ultimately derive from them. In the case of both quartos, as Levenson contends, 'each hypothetical stemma collapses under the weight of possibilities'.[51]

Released from what Roland Barthes might have described as an 'inhibiting ancestry' of New Bibliographical ideals,[52] both Q1 and Q2 contain a similar worth as rich repositories of meaning with separate and distinct textual voices. Moreover, Erne claims that Q1 is 'in some respects the best witness we have for the dramatic and theatrical practices of Shakespeare and of his company'.[53] Thus, in the 'gap' which separates Q1 and Q2, we can glimpse some of the transformations the play underwent, on both stage and page, in the first years of its existence. In this light, both quartos, and not just Q1, take us close to the play as it would have been performed by Shakespeare's company in the mid 1590s. *Romeo*, therefore, is a work whose theatrical textuality upsets the theatre/literature binary distinction which now dominates so much scholarship on Shakespeare's plays. And Kemp, arguably present in both quartos, as I will show in the second half of this chapter, is revealed, along with the author and other agents, as a notable force of both textual and performative change.

IV.   'Enter the clowne'

Kemp's appearance in Q2's 'lamentations' scene has been the subject of extensive critical and editorial debate. Less attention, however, has been paid to an episode which

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[51] Levenson, *Romeo*, pp. 123-4.
[52] See Roland Barthes, 'From Work to Text' (1971), reprinted in Josué V. Harari, ed. and trans., *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism* (Ithica, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1979), pp. 73-81. In this essay, Barthes displayed some common ground with criticism of the New Bibliography's tendency to define literary texts in terms of sovereign authorship.
[53] Erne, *The First Quarto*, p. 1.

appears much earlier in the play in Scene Two, which also involves 'Peter' as the main Capulet serving man.

Before turning to Scene Two, it is worth noting the relevance of servant roles in the play overall. *Romeo*, which maps the tragic journey of its 'star-crossed lovers' (Prologue, l. 6), is full of teeming, bawdy, earthy life which is represented in a number of servant roles. The popular aesthetic is thus dominant, primarily through Juliet's nurse, who physically embodies elements of the 'carnivalesque' grotesque, as Ronald Knowles argues,[54] but also from the outset of the play, where the 'communitarian spirit' of Samson and Gregory's dialogue presents a deliberate inversion of Veronese society which moves from the brawl to the entrance of Aescylus. As Melchiori shows, *Romeo*'s servant roles are developed in this tragedy far more than in any of the comedies and count for approximately fifteen per cent of the play's dialogue overall.[55] They point, in this way, to Shakespeare's 'experimental ambitiousness' in this early tragedy,[56] but also provide some insight into the complex patterns of tragic and comic motifs around which the play is constructed.[57]

In both Q1 and Q2, Scene Two follows on directly from the play's opening brawl between the Capulet and Montague retainers and sees the first entry into the play of the main Capulet serving man. Also in both texts, the scene begins in medias res, part way through a conversation between Capulet and Paris on the subject of Juliet's betrothal. The structure of the scene suggests, therefore, a crucial moment of action in a private and interior domestic space. There is a striking difference between the texts, however, in the opening stage direction. In Q1, the scene opens with: '*Enter Conntie* Paris, *old* Capulet' (B2ʳ). This initial direction is followed twenty-seven lines later, in

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[54] See Ronald Knowles, 'Carnival and Death in *Romeo and Juliet*', in *Shakespeare and Carnival After Bakhtin*, ed. Ronald Knowles (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 36-60.
[55] Melchiori, 'Peter, Balthasar, and Shakespeare's Art of Doubling', p. 777.
[56] See Brook, *Shakespeare's Early Tragedies*, p. 81.
[57] Ibid., p. 84.

Q1, with '*Enter Servingman*' (B2^r-B2^v). Q2, on the other hand brings on the servant at the opening of the scene, and his functional role in the play is clear: '*Enter* Capulet, *Countie* Paris, *and the Clowne*' (B3^r). In the speech headings which follow, Q2 denotes its 'clowne' simply as 'Seru.' or 'Ser.' for 'Servingman', and Q2 does not use the term 'clowne' again. As Melchiori points out, the use of the definite article 'the' does seem to suggest the requirement of a specific actor.[58] Wiles contends similarly, as noted in Chapter Three, that Q2's 'the' denotes the fact that the company clown, that is Kemp, had been cast as the principal Capulet serving man. According to Wiles, once the role was established in the play for Kemp, there was no need to repeat the term 'clowne' in relation to the same role in the working manuscript.[59]

Furthermore, Wiles also argues that Q1, as well as Q2, contains a trace of Kemp in performance. Q1's evidence of Kemp appears earlier in Scene 17 than Q2's, at the point when Capulet accosts a servant who is bringing on damp logs at line 41:

Goe, goe choose dryer. Will will tell thee where thou shalt fetch them.

(I^r)

Q1's first printed 'Will', Wiles argues, 'can only be Will Kemp, whom the actor or reporter has in a moment's lapse called by his real name'.[60] It is also worth noting here that, in the First Folio text, Q2's Scene 17 'Enter Will Kemp' becomes 'Enter Peter' (TLN. 2680), a variant which stems, according to S. W. Reid, from Q4 in 1622.[61] We can assume, therefore, that both Q1's 'servingman' and Q2's 'Clowne' in Scene 2 refer to the role of Peter which we know was played by Kemp. What I want to show in this section, then, is that, although neither Kemp nor Peter are explicitly named in Scene

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[58] Melchiori, 'Peter, Balthasar, and Shakespeare's Art of Doubling', p. 780.
[59] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 84.
[60] Ibid., p.87.
[61] S. W. Reid, 'The Editing of Folio *Romeo and Juliet*', *Studies in Bibliography: Papers of the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia*, 35 (1982), 43-66, cited in Levenson, *Romeo*, p. 113.

Two in either quarto, there are traces of the actor in both texts which suggest further evidence of the play's revision and adaptation around him.

Beginning with Q1, whether or not the text contains a theatrical adaptation of the longer text as critics now suggest, I would argue that the later appearance of the servant in the scene is significant. It can be read in two possible but opposite ways: first, it initially suggests a deliberate curtailment of the servant's comic function in giving him less stage time; second, however, it might also be interpreted as an augmentation of this comic role, where he is allowed to enter the scene late and disrupt its intimate tone.

From the dominant performance perspective of the adapted Q1, evidence of clowning practice does seem to confirm the latter interpretation. As we have seen in the case of Tarlton, the appearance of a comic actor on stage could have a huge impact on the action of a play, especially if his arrival was precipitated with tantalising peepings betweene the 'tire-house doore and tapestrie'. In the light of Kemp playing the part of Peter in performances of the play, a later entrance in the scene would thus have provided a significant comic interruption in Capulet's meandering speech which talks metaphorically of 'earth-trading stars that make dark heaven light' (l. 18).[62]

The clown's arrival in Q1 provides, therefore, for a thematic interruption in the play. When Capulet admits to Paris that his 'will' to Juliet's 'consent' to marry is 'but a part', he is revealed as a figure lacking in normative patriarchal power (1.2.15). Throughout the action of the rest of the play, moreover, his authority as both a father and husband is constantly undermined. This characteristic weakness is amplified, I would argue, in Q1's Scene One, when the 'servingman' enters the scene at precisely the following point:

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[62] Specific line references in Q1 are taken from Erne, *The First Quarto*.

> Such amongst view of many, myne beeing one,
> May stand in number, though in reckoning none.
>
> *Enter Servingman.*
>
> Where are you sirrah, goe trudge about
> Through faire *Verona* streets, and seeke them out:
> Whose names are written here and to them say
> My house and welcome at their pleasure stay.
>
> *Exeunt.*
> (ll. 25-7)

In editing Q1, Erne emends the lines shown above in order to put the servant's entrance after Capulet's 'Where are you sirrah?' Erne explains his emendation by claiming that, as Capulet's line appears in Q1 after the servant has entered, it points to a compositorial error. The lines are therefore changed in order to allow the servant to enter the scene in response to Capulet's call.

However, although Q1's B2^v is a page crowded with print, there is nothing else to suggest print-house confusion at the point of the servant's entry. Rather, the fact that the servant enters the scene before Capulet calls him serves, I would argue, deliberately to enhance the comic moment in the text. Despite the fact that the servant is already on stage – perhaps Kemp made one of his 'early' entrances again - Capulet must still demand 'where are you, sirrah'. Q1, then, rather than simply confining the clown to a shorter period of stage time, which may have been the original intention behind the adaptation of this fast-paced text, actually intensifies his impact in his untimely response to his 'master's' call, presumably to the gratification of both actor and audience. Overall, the point to be made is that while Q1's clown is pared down in terms of stage time, his appearance also confirms the important comic function of the role in the short performance text. And if Q1 does derive from Shakespeare's own redaction of the play, then it is also reasonable to suppose that Q1's variant entry is down to the

playwright's adaptation of the scene for a reduced cast, including Kemp, as Wiles suggests.[63]

It should be acknowledged at this point, however, that there is some doubt amongst scholars as to whether all of Q1's stage directions are in fact Shakespearean. Jowett argues, for example, that they 'often owe their presence and their distinctive quality neither to the theatre nor to Shakespeare as dramatic author'.[64] Jowett identifies Henry Chettle, Danter's former partner, as Q1's annotator. If Chettle, as opposed to Shakespeare, was behind Q1's direction in Scene Two, we might assume, therefore, that some of Q1's stage directions may indeed derive from the printing process, as Erne suggests. Chettle, however, was also a dramatist in his own right, and one of the playwrights, along with Shakespeare, listed by Meres as 'best for Comedy'. Chettle, therefore, would have been well qualified, and well placed in terms of his knowledge of both performance and print in the mid-1590s, to appreciate and evaluate the impact of Kemp's first appearance in the play on stage.

If Q2, as most scholars now accept, was set from Shakespeare's manuscript as opposed to a 'prompt-book' or 'fair copy',[65] then in the context of printing practices, we might read Q2's 'Enter Capulet, Countie Paris, and the Clowne' (B3ʳ) as a more graceful group entrance than that contained in Q1, and an anticipation of the classicised 'massed' directions to come in the First Folio. But I believe that there is more to *Romeo*'s direction at this point in Q2 than mere literary convention, and that, as in the case of Q1, the later quarto also records the working stage at this point in the play, though in a different version of the scene.

[63] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 83.
[64] John Jowett, 'Henry Chettle and the First Quarto of *Romeo and Juliet*', *Publications of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 92 (1998), 53-74 (p. 54).
[65] See, for example, Cloud, 'The marriage of Good and Bad Quartos'.

Q2's 'massed' style of direction can also be read in two ways: first, it suggests that Q2's 'clowne', while brought on stage at the same time as Capulet and Paris, has to wait silently until the end of the dialogue between Capulet and Paris before he has the chance to speak; second, though, as I have shown elsewhere, actors speak visibly as well as verbally. If it was Kemp playing the part in the play as Q2 later records, then the latter scenario again seems more likely: Kemp standing silent would indeed have been a remarkable spectacle.

If Q2, based on 'foul papers', does record an authorial direction at this point, it is the dramatist himself who originally brings Kemp on at the beginning of the scene. Shakespeare, though, must have been well aware by now that Kemp, or any comic actor worth his salt, would not have stood stock-still until his own speaking part began at line 36. Kemp in particular was, quite simply, too famous to be ignored. It may bethe case, then, as Melchiori claims of Q2's Scene 17, that the role of the clown was augmented at this earlier point in the play in order to accommodate the actor's demands, and that this is reflected in the longer and original script of the performance which is captured in Q2. Once again, it seems that the part was 'sweeten[ed]', quite possibly for Kemp, as Pearlman argues similarly in relation to the quarto's extension of Scene 17.

Bringing on 'the Clowne' at the same time as Capulet and Paris would certainly have given the actor more stage time to play up to the audience, perhaps with 'scurvey faces', during the conversation between the other two characters. As recorded in Q2, Capulet is more dithering and indecisive than his leaner Q1 counterpart. His tedious and long-winded speech would thus have been even more fair game for the 'clowne' in Q2's Scene Two. Moreover, Stern shows how the requirement for emotion or frustration in a particular role was often conveyed to an actor through repetition in his

'part'.[66] If, as Q2 suggests, the clown has been on stage all along, then Capulet's

repetitions in 'come go with me, go sirrah trudge about' (B3^v), which echo his seeming

impatience with Q1's servingman, imply similar difficulty in employing the servant's

attention in the embedded directions of the text. There is an implicit suggestion at this

point in both texts, therefore, that Capulet's servant is less attentive than he should be,

and certainly not eager to obey his master. Both Q1 and Q2, it seems, give Kemp his

space in Scene Two: whereas in Q1 he makes a sudden disruptive appearance half-way

through Capulet's speech, in Q2 he has the chance to ruin the whole thing.

V.   The 'clowne's' monologue

Following the brief episode between Capulet and his servant outlined above, in both Q1

and Q2 the servant is given the stage to himself for a comic monologue on his

instructions from Capulet regarding the guest list for the evening's revelry. I reproduce

both versions of the speech below as printed in Q1 and Q2 respectively:

> Seeke them out whose names are written here,
> and yet I knowe not who are written here : I must to
> the learned to learne of them, that's as much to say , as
> the Taylor must meddle with his Laste, the Shoomaker
> with his needle, the Painter with his nets, and the Fisher
> with his Pensill, I must to the learned.
>
> (Q1, B2^v-B3^r)

> Find them out whose names are written. Here it is writ-
> ten, that the shoo-maker should meddle with his yard, and the
> tayler with his last, the fisher with his pensill, & the painter with
> his nets. But I am sent to find those persons whose names are
> here writ , and can neuer find what names the writing person
> hath here writ (I must to the learned) in good time.
>
> (Q2, B3^r)

The similarity between the speeches suggests that, in both quartos, the purpose of the

clown at this point in the play is to continue to develop the festive comedy contained in

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[66] See Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, p. 81. See, for example, Leontes' repetition of 'Too hot, too hot:/To mingle friendship farre, is mingling bloods./I have *tremor cordis* on me. My heart dances,/But not for joy, not joy' (*The Winter's Tale*, 1.2.110-13).

the play so far. What I also want to show, however, is that the content of both versions

of the clown's speech reveals the vital interweaving of acting and writing on

Shakespeare's stage. In my analysis, therefore, I address the speech in the following

ways: first from the point of view of the actor, second, from the point of view of the

dramatist; and third, from the fruitful combination of both.

Beginning with the actor, if we accept Kemp as the 'clowne' in this scene, and

hence as Peter, the first point to note is that we find him cast in *Romeo*, once again, in

the familiar stage persona of inept messenger-servant. In both quartos, Capulet

assumes, in leaving him in charge of the guest list, that his servant can read. The

obvious comedy of the servant's monologue, however, stems from the fact that he is

illiterate. This is made clear in Q1 in the line, 'I knowe not who are written here', and

in Q2 where the servant states that he 'can neuer find what names the writing person'.

Both speeches thus end with a decision to go 'to the learned' for help in reading the list.

When the servant happens upon Romeo and Benvolio immediately afterwards, his

illiteracy is confirmed in the following conversation which is almost identical in both

texts:

Peter:	God gi'good e'en. I pray, sir, can you read?
Romeo:	Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.
Peter:	Perhaps you have learned it without book. But I pray, can you read anything you see?
Romeo:	Ay, if I know the letters and the language.
Peter:	You say honestly. Rest you merry.
Romeo:	Stay, fellow, I can read.

(1.2.56-62).[67]

There is a further hint of illiteracy, or 'doltishness' at least, in the servant's reference to

Romeo's learning to read 'without book', the first of many direct and figurative

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[67] As the quartos print the text almost identically at this point, I reproduce the quotation from the Norton text.

references to books in the play.[68] Here, though, the scene seems self-consciously to align itself with issues about actors and acting.

We know from the work of Marcus that some performers in the early stages of professional theatre were semi-literate.[69] There are also a number of plays, written and produced at around the same time as *Romeo*, which contain similarly self-conscious pointers to actors of limited ability or learning. We have the early example of the insufficiently educated actor in the highly metatheatrical *The Taming of A Shrew* (c. 1591), who cannot get his tongue around the latinate word 'comedy'. As Marcus points out, if applied to the play they are about to present, the label 'comedy' would elevate it above the status of a mere 'commodity'.[70] In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, described by Kermode as the 'twin' play to *Romeo*,[71] the mechanicals comically reveal their theatrical amateurism through a seeming inability to learn individual parts to the despair of Quince. Flute speaks 'all [his] part at once, 'cues and all' (3.1.86-87). This suggests that he has learnt his part 'without book', by ear, or rote, as opposed to from his script or 'role'. In later plays, this type of threat to authorial hegemony becomes more obvious. In Marston's satirical *Histrio-Mastix* (1599), for example, there are actors who claim that they 'can read nothing but riddles'.[72] This throws some light on memorial reconstruction – clearly, actors had to memorise and improvise their parts, often for the purposes of comic excess. As Hamlet complains, there are actors, and particularly clowns,

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[68] See, for example, Juliet's mother's description of Paris: 'Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face/And find delight writ there with beauty's pen' (1.3.83-4). Reading matter proliferates on stage in Shakespeare's plays: not only letters and books, but 'proclamations, indictments, guest lists, inventories, notebooks, broadsides, funerary monuments'. See Hackel, 'The "Great Variety" of Readers', p. 145.

[69] Leah Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton* (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 157-9.

[70] Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance*, p. 157.

[71] Kermode, *Shakespeare's Language*, p. 53.

[72] John Marston, *Histrio-Mastix. Or, The Player Whipt* (London, 1610), C1ᵛ, cited in Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance*, pp. 157-8.

> that will themselves laugh to set on some quantity of
> barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some
> necessary question of the play be then to be considered.
>
> (*Hamlet* 3.2.36-8).

In 1607, John Day dramatised Kemp's meeting with Sir Anthony Shirley in Rome in *The Travails of the Three English Brothers*. Kemp is presented as characteristically blunt: 'He calls himself Kemp', and prefers improvisation in plays, claiming to be 'somewhat hard of study'. His audiences also expect nothing too refined in his act:

> We neither look for scholarship nor art
> But harmless mirth, for that's thy usual part.[73]

Moreover, according to Anthony Burgess, Kemp 'would not learn lines',[74] even if he could. While Burgess' idea must be regarded as anecdocal, If *Romeo*'s clown was played by the experienced comic Kemp, the play's nod to learning a script 'without book' addresses the 'villainous' (*Hamlet* 3.2.39) practices of interpolation, and is thus more illuminating than it first seems.

The servant's supposed illiteracy in *Romeo* is heightened by his guest-list prop. Faced with Capulet's list, the servant fervently and repeatedly demonstrates his inability to read it. The actor, however, brandishes a generic prop on which anything, or perhaps nothing at all is actually written. In both quartos, moreover, the speech appears to be written and reproduced in a way which allows the actor to draw attention to this piece of theatrical artifice. Q1 repeats the words 'written here' twice. The Q1 serving man also twice repeats his intention to go 'to the learned' for help. This is augmented in Q2: first, in the reference to 'the writing person', who is quite explicitly demarcated from 'the learned'; and second, in the clown's emphatic 'Here it is written'.

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[73] Cited in Nungezer, *Dictionary of Actors*, pp. 221-2.

[74] Anthony Burgess, Introduction to *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed., Peter Alexander, (London: Collins, 1994), p. xviii.

The passage contains some evidence of what Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Korda describe as a playscript's 'investment' in the visual element of performance, which is aided and abetted by the text itself.[75] Q2's quasi-biblical style 'Here it is written' suggests the clown's questioning, not only of his master, but also a higher order of authority which once again, perhaps, points to Kemp's anti-puritan tendencies. Ironically enough, the language of the speech itself also questions the authority of the written script, and thus the dramatist in this 'authoritative' version of the play. Rank, this play suggests, either fictional or theatrical, does not necessarily dictate a level of learnedness.[76]

At the point of the clown's monologue, then, the question of illiteracy is even more profound in that it promotes the clown's ability to tamper with the play-script. With the stage to himself, he is able to move to the downstage position where interaction with spectators is more direct, as we have seen. In this less mimetically restricted space, outside the locus of the stage, the action has the potential to become independent of the plot and more in line, as Weimann suggests, with popular comic traditions.[77] Positioned in this way, in a more Vice-like capacity, the clown can further undermine the author's script not only to draw attention to the materiality of the penned play, but also his ability to operate outside it.

In both versions of the monologue, then, I would argue that the prankster Kemp, as a successful and well-known player, is clearly visible beneath his servant-persona's veneer of servile ignorance. He is able, in other words, to project a 'permeable identity'

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[75] Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Korda, *Staged Properties in Early Modern English Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 3.

[76] The references to writing and 'the learned' also demonstrate how the work aligns itself in relation to social and cultural concerns of the day by articulating particular anxieties and social tensions surrounding questions of literacy, a major site of social conflict in the early modern period, as Hackel shows. *2 Henry VI* is a play which deals more extremely with social anxiety surrounding questions of class and literacy. During Cade's rebellion, a clerk is hanged by the rebel leader for being able to read: 'Away with him, I say! hang him with his pen and ink-horn about his neck' 4.2.96-7).

[77] As already shown, the clown's command of the front of the stage platform is analogous to the medieval Vice's use of the platea. See Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition*, p. 213.

as Peter.[78] At one and the same time, like Launce, he is linked to the audience through his own known persona, but also distinct from them in his fictional status. In this moment of spatial freedom offered by the monologue, Kemp is able to set up a complex dialectic by laughing at the character he plays, himself, and the author, as he comically discounts the written text.

Thomson suggests that Kemp was 'fobbed off' with the part of Peter.[79] But what also seems to be the case in this early scene in the play is that a space was created in the tragedy for the actor's autonomous style of 'merrimentes', where he is able directly to address the audience as himself.   Whether Kemp appears at the beginning of the Capulet/Paris dialogue, or during it, both the short and long versions of the play attest to the fact that the clown is still potentially uncontainable on stage, despite the more structured confines of the play-script. However, as I will show in the remainder of this section, rooted in comic expectation in this way, the clown's violation of the play's boundaries between reality and illusion becomes a dramatic convention in itself, and one which the author can use to his own advantage as the text comes to trick the fool at a point of comic transition.

Peter's 1.2 monologue, of course, is not as ad hoc as it first appears. As editors note, the speech is actually a play on a passage from John Lyly's 1578 *Euphues, the Antomie of Wit* which contains an explicit hierarchical regulation of society:

> The shoemaker must not go above his latchet, nor the hedger meddle with anything but his bill. It is unseemly for the painter to feather a shaft, or the fletcher to handle the pencil.[80]

Lyly's work created a literary sensation in England and had a profound influence on Elizabethan writers.[81] Some ten years Shakespeare's senior, Lyly was one of the

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[78] Johnson, *The Actor as Playwright*, p. 5.

[79] Thomson, 'Rogues and Rhetoricians', p. 334.

[80] John Lyly, *Euphues, the Anatomie of Wit* (1578), in R. W. Bond (ed.), *The Complete Works of John Lyly*, 3 Vols. (Oxford, 1902), I, 180.

younger dramatist's principal forebears, and there are a number of allusions to Lyly's works throughout the canon. However, Lyly's plays were also famous for rhetorical excess, and for their cultivation of the pun in particular. As Kermode argues, the classical authors of Greece and Rome provide the best models for Lyly's style of playwriting which then, as now, were considered artificial.[82] The pert 'Lylian' page Speed, [83] for example, who provides a witty alternative to Launce's more earthy 'clownage' in *Two Gentlemen*, owes his creation, as Schlueter's epithet suggests, to Lyly's work. Also in this early comedy, the behaviour of Valentine and Proteus satirises the ideals of Lyly's young Euphues. In turn, and as shown in the previous chapter, Launce and Crab themselves provide a comic distortion of the ungentlemenly behaviour of their social betters.

A similar distortion of Lyly is found in *Romeo*, when an apparently illiterate servant performs a parody of Lyly's *Euphues*.[84] The interesting question here is why we find such material in the mouth a clown we know was played by Kemp. More interesting again in the context of dramatic authority, though, is to ask who is responsible for the parody of Lyly: Kemp or Shakespeare? It is obviously not Peter, who cannot read.

The first and perhaps most obvious point to note is that Lyly's decorative prose lends itself to bawdy misinterpretation. The clown repeats and recasts Lyly's lines, but also comically inverts them with indecent 'meddling' quibbles on 'yards', 'lasts', 'pencils' and 'needles', all of which, according to Levenson, can be read as phallic synonyms, and which echo the bawdy street banter of the servant clowns in 1.1.[85]

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[81] On Shakespeare's extensive use of Lyly, see Leah Scragg, ed., *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* and *Euphues and His England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).
[82] Kermode, *Shakespeare's Language*, p. 19.
[83] Cf. Schlueter, *Two Gentlemen*, p. 15.
[84] See Gibbons, *Romeo*, gloss to 1.2.39-42, p. 96; Levenson, *Romeo*, gloss to 1.2.39-42, p. 165.
[85] See Levenson, *Romeo*, gloss to 1.2.39-42, Oxford, p. 165.

Kemp, of course, was famous for quibbling. Moreover, in his own words, Kemp described himself as a 'plain' man and emphatically rejected the more high-flown elements of language, as the following extract from *Nine Daies Wonder* reveals:

> Congruity, said I? how came that strange language into my mouth? I think scarcely that it is any Christen word, and yet it may be a good word for aught I know, though I never made it, nor do very well understand it; yet I am sure I have bought it at the word-mongers, at as dear a rate, as I could have had a whole 100 of Bavins at the wood-mongers. Farewell Congruity, for I mean now to be more precise, and stand upon evener bases.[86]

Kemp, then, is likely to have rejected, or at least attempted to undermine, the excesses of Lyly's prose. But the clown's speech both celebrates and mocks the cultural values and conventions it invokes through the parody of Lyly as it not only deflates writing in the style of *Euphues*, but also seems to burlesque *Romeo's* own poetic content through the corruption of a known rhetorical work.

We might also read the monologue, therefore, as a technique of bathetic reversal which parallels Bottom's muddled biblical 'dream' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 4.1.211-14). Writing specifically on biblical allusions in early modern literature, Julie Maxwell describes 'misquotation' as a form of literary 'art'.[87] From this perspective, *Romeo's* word-muddling clown is revealed as one of the 'topsy-turvy' elements in the play used to saturate the work with an inexhaustible comic edge. In verbally upsetting the 'Euphuistic' social hierarchy, Lyly's didactic trades are ridiculed by Scene Two's clown in a way which underpins the play's dominant citizen values. The reference to the 'shoomaker', in both Q1 and Q2, is particularly revealing in this light in the context of Kemp's subversive 'clownage'. We have already met Kemp's cobbler in *A Knack*, and his shoes in *Two Gentlemen*. But the 'cobbler' who mends 'soles' is also the most vocal member of the Roman rabble in the opening scene of *Julius Caesar*, a play which

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[86] Kemp, *Nine Daies Wonder*, ed. Dyce, p. 4.
[87] Julie Maxwell, 'How the Renaissance (Mis)Used Sources: The Art of Misquotation', in *How to Do Things with Shakespeare: New Approaches, New Essays*, ed. Laurie Maguire, pp. 54-76 (p. 56).

comes to invert its own fictional hierarchy in a far more brutal way than *Romeo's*
servants. In Thomas Dekker's *Shoemaker's Holiday* (also 1599), there is a similar
celebration of public ideals. This type of dramatic assertion of social mobility follows
the tradition of such plays as Robert Greene's earlier *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (c.
1589), Thomas Heywood's *Four Prentices of London* (1592), or even Shakespeare's
own *Merry Wives of Windsor* (1597-8).[88]

Capulet's disrespectful servant in *Romeo* is thus able to make caustic use of
'shoes', as did Launce before him, both in the context of Shakespeare's unruly Verona,
and in the more intimate space of Capulet's own house, where the illiterate servant
mocks his master. But in what also seems to be a deliberate and artful misquotation of
Lyly, Scene Two reflects upon its own dramatic artifice. It might also be argued, then,
that Shakespeare's pointed satirizing of Lyly upsets the hierarchy of literary drama itself
in that the scene disassociates itself from associations of reading, disregarding them for
the sake of a comic narrative which continually undercuts the romantic bent of the play.

This returns us to the subject of the clown's anarchic force, in underlining how
the comic power of the monologue is not only verbal, but also clearly depends upon the
artistry and timing of the comedian who performs it. In both quartos, the nonsensical
and improvisational quality of the clown's monologue is heightened by punctuation and
space, where pauses are written into the printed texts. The final line in Q2 in particular,
with its parenthesized '(I must to the learned)', possibly even an aside to the audience at
the arrival of Romeo and Benvolio as the Norton edition of the play suggests, reveals a
further seemingly deliberate reproduction of the style of 'elastic' comic timing familiar
from the Folio's reproduction of Launce's prose in *Two Gentlemen*.

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[88] Cf. Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, p. 15.

As Williams argues, if properly read within the context prescribed by the conditions of performance, a dramatic text reveals 'its own language of physical action and gesture'.[89] Through the construction of Peter's monologue, therefore, we can see how the clown's comic function is presented to the audience in a way which appears deliberately to probe the essential boundaries between reality and illusion which seem to be continually at work throughout the play.

Paradoxically, then, in the space of interpolative clowning in this scene, we also find the dominance of the author. If it is Shakespeare as opposed to Kemp behind the Lyly allusion, the similarities between the two versions of the clown's monologue in Q1 and Q2 do seem to affirm authorial control as opposed to extemporal content. The textual parallels between the quartos' Scene Two, moreover, also suggest a strategic revision of the shorter version in Q1 which ensures, in the adapted version of the play, that Kemp's character remains consistent. In both editions of Scene Two, the monologue gives the actor all he requires to play up to his audience, and once again, perhaps, steal the show. But the parody of Lyly gives Shakespeare ultimate jurisdiction over the play-script – a valuable asset in the infinitely transient medium of performance. The only way the dramatist can control his clown is at the level of language itself, backed by the weighty, didactic and literary authority of Lyly. Through a combination of the two, Lyly's conservative prose can be moulded into the type of disruptive and bawdy improvisation expected of Kemp in a way which suits both actor and playwright.

As in *Hamlet*'s 'antic disposition', which seems continually to probe the demarcation between actor and player, at this point in *Romeo*, an earlier play, Shakespeare also appears deliberately to explore the boundaries of authority between clown and dramatist, revealing his attempts both to accommodate and control Kemp's

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[89] Wiliams, *Drama in Action*, p. 4.

disorderly appeal. At one and the same time, he gives the audience the kind of bawdy

comic banter they expect; he gives his leading clown and one of the Chamberlain's

Men's master-actors the stage and the opportunity to self-promote. Yet, he retains a

subtle control over the play-script while remaining within the space of Kemp's

extemporal acting. Kemp is able to deliver what appears to be a traditional clowning

monologue, connect with the audience as himself, and extemporize, but all within the

confines of the Lyly parody. The result, to an audience without access to a script, or

indeed to modern readers without the benefit of editorial glossing, appears to be a

particularly disruptive kind of comic improvisation. The point to be made, however, is

that both quartos' presentations of the monologue retain the subversive edge so apparent

in the dialogue of Samson and Gregory at the opening of the play, with its bawdy,

down-to-earth vocabulary familiar from earlier forms of theatre and, as we have seen in

other plays, still integral to the residual festivity of late-Elizabethan 'clownage'.[90]

VI.   *'Enter Will Kemp'*: Q2's 'lamentations' scene

Romeo's 'mingling' of clown and dramatist is reinforced by Kemp's documented

presence in the 'lamentations' scene in Q2 - the later, longer, literary text - where we

find traces of both Shakespeare and Kemp at work in the play once more. As a number

of critics argue, the appearance of Kemp's direction at this particular point in Q2 points

to Shakespeare's adaptation of the scene, in order to accommodate the famous Kemp.[91]

For the purposes of clarity, I outline briefly below the content of the scene up to the

point of Kemp's entry in Q2.

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[90] For example, while *Twelfth Night*'s Feste might be described as more of a 'licenced fool' than the
clowns which precede him, his relationship with his mistress challenges Olivia's aristocratic superiority.
[91] See, for example, Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 88-9; see also Paul Werstine, 'The Marriage of
Good and Bad Quartos', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 33:4 (1982), 421-31 (p. 426).

When it is believed in Act Four that Juliet has died on the night before her wedding to Paris, her mother and father, along with the Nurse and Paris, join to chant a dirge so excessively mournful (4.4.44-90) that, as Pearlman argues, there is yet to be agreement amongst critics as to 'whether Shakespeare has failed as a poet or has composed a hilarious parody of true grief'.[92] Of course, audiences would have been aware that Juliet is not actually dead so the scene contains a good deal of dramatic irony at this point. It might also be interpreted as deliberately comic. The Nurse's repetitions of 'woeful' and 'day' in particular as printed on Q2's K2^v, suggest that the lines are scripted in order to deliberately provide what Stern describes as 'false cues', and which would have invited comic interruptions from the other characters on stage.[93]

At this point in the play, then, there seems to be a move into self-conscious comedy, where acted expressions of grief serve to burlesque the tragic content of the acted play. The result in *Romeo* is that, once again, generic conventions are upset as we are presented with a scene which is analogous with the medieval 'Dance of Death', as Ronald Knowles suggests.[94] But this scene of 'mirth in funeral' upstages even that of Elsinore's royal court (*Hamlet*, 1.2.12), as expectations of comedy are deliberately set up in a scene of dramatic irony. This may explain, to an extent, the action which follows the 'lamentations' in both quartos.

Beginning with Q2, in what Snyder describes as one of the drama's 'familiar comic patterns',[95] the play contains a distinctive topple into the lower theatrical strata of comedy play immediately after the 'lamentations' and before even Kemp enters the scene. After the direction '*Exeunt manet*' towards the bottom of K3^r, and which

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[92] Pearlman, 'Shakespeare at Work', p. 327.
[93] Stern and Palfrey show a similar device in relation to the Nurse conversation with Juliet's mother at 1.3.1-81. See *Shakespeare in Parts*, pp. 103-4.
[94] Cf. Knowles, Carnival and Death, p. 52.
[95] Susan Snyder, '*Romeo and Juliet*: Comedy into Tragedy', *Essays in Criticism*, XX:4 (1970), 391-402 (p. 391).

partially clears the stage, there is a short sequence of banter between Juliet's Nurse and the musicians hired to perform at her wedding to Paris. The musicians have no specific entry direction but are presumably apparent from the direction '*Play musicke*' which appears earlier in the scene on K1^v, indicating that they have probably been on stage through the 'lamentations' scene. If this is the case, the following conversation between them and the Nurse contains a strong bathetic tone:

> *Musi.* Faith we may put up our pipes and be gone.
> *Nur.* Honest goodfellowes, ah put up, put up,
>   For well you know, this is a pitifull case.
> *Fid.* I by my troath, the case may be amended.

There are two important points to note here. The first is that both texts retain the important quibble on 'case', a slang term for vagina, which is also used in the slightly later comedy *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. In Act Four Scene One of *Merry Wives*, when Mistress Quickly overhears Sir Hugh Evans drilling William Page during his Latin lesson, she mistakes grammatical terms for bawdy English, concluding that the parson has been teaching the youth the details of 'Jenny's case', as opposed to the 'genitive case' (*Merry Wives*, 4.1.50-54). Quickly goes on to quiz the parson on what de Grazia describes as the 'ins-and-outs or "hick and hack" of copulation rather than the basics (the *hic* and *haec*) of declension'.[96] In *Romeo*, I would suggest, the word 'case' is used in a similarly comic way. Moreover, coupled with 'put up', both terms are explicitly sexual, and bawdily sum up the fading charms of the Nurse in a way which echoes the play's opening 'clownage' between Samson and Gregory.

The second thing worth pointing out is the musician's final line in Q2: 'I by my troath, the case may be amended'. Not only can the Nurse's 'case' be amended, or improved by extension – presumably through vigorous sexual activity - but so too, it

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[96] Margreta de Grazia, 'Shakespeare and the Craft of Language', in The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare, eds. Wells and de Graz, pp. 49-64.

seems, can the scene. A definitive stage direction, '*Exit omnes*' ('*Exit*' was corrected to '*Exeunt*' in Q3[97]) which is printed in Q2 at the bottom of K3ʳ may well indicate the original end of the scene. It is immediately followed by a compositor's flag for Kemp's entry with '*Enter*' on the last line of the page.[98] '*Enter Will Kemp*' is printed at the top of K3ᵛ, just before Peter's first lines in the scene: 'Musitions, oh musitions, harts ease, harts ease/O and you will have me live, play harts ease' (K3ᵛ). As Mahood argues, the function of the musicians in the scene is to act as 'feeds' for the clown which draw out his chief characteristics.[99] Kemp's entrance which follows immediately on from their banter with the Nurse certainly initiates a lengthy comic sequence. His entrance also suggests that the scene was 'amended' for him, primarily because of the puzzling direction 'Exit omnes' before his arrival. If this is the case, then we might also assume that Shakespeare's amendment of the scene through the addition of the quibbling Kemp, is punningly announced through the quibble on 'amended'.

The musicians, however, are still on stage at the point of Kemp's entry, suggesting that they have remained in order to engage in more quips with the famous clown. The scene, therefore, did not end with 'Exit omnes' and this points to the fact that the direction here may well be due to 'currente calamo' writing, or a compositor's error. Nonetheless, editors and critics have mined Q2's 'Enter Will Kemp' for what the direction reveals about the writing and staging of the play. Some have even apologised for it. Dover Wilson, for example, argued that this 'feeble' scene was an addition to the play, perhaps by Nashe.[100] There is also the 'comic relief' theory. Granville Barker suggested that the scene 'eases the strain before tragedy gets its grip on us'.[101] T. J. B.

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[97] Cf. Pearlman, *Shakespeare at Work*, p. 328.
[98] See Plate 10.
[99] Mahood, *Playing Bit Parts*, p. 39.
[100] John Dover Wilson and G. I. Duthie, eds., *Romeo and Juliet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p. 209.
[101] H. Granville Barker, *Prefaces to Shakespeare*, 2 vols (London: Batsford, 1958), II, 64.

Spencer argued similarly that the probable addition of Kemp provided 'an extra comic scene to take off the edge of lamentation for Juliet's supposed death'.[102]

More recently, the revision of the scene, indicated in the main by 'Exit omnes' has been linked more closely to Kemp. Most notably, Pearlman suggests that the contents of the latter half of the scene can be compared to Kemp's interpolative 'triumphs' in *A Knack*. While the 'lamentations' scene is 'intrinsic' to the plot, Peter's scene is 'extrinsic and there is good reason to consider it to be an interpolation'. If as Pearlman also contends, the scene was extended in order to 'sweeten' Peter's brief servant part for the actor, then the appearance of 'Exit omnes' may point to the fact that Shakespeare wrote the scene, then added Kemp to it. For Pearlman, overall, Kemp's arrival in Q2 *Romeo*, like his 'merrimentes' in the earlier play, is 'merely a pretext for clowning'.[103] Melchiori argues similarly that, if Q2 represents the original performance script of the play as performed (despite its length), then the extended 'lamentations' scene reflects Kemp's demands to be on stage for longer. Melchiori even goes on to suggest that Kemp's scene may have been penned by the actor himself.[104]

Admittedly, Q2 contains a good deal of material which is not printed in Q1, especially in the latter half of the play, as noted. But there are some striking similarities between Q2's 'Kemp' part and Q1's 'Servingman' in Scene 17. If Q1 represents a shortened acting version of the play, as outlined above, the equivalent of Q2's Scene 17 in the earlier text retains the essential comic ingredient initiated by Kemp's arrival in Q2. Q1's version is slightly different, however, in that it clarifies both action and entrances and exits in the scene. For example, rather than the Nurse's repetitions, the shorter text prints: '*All at once cry out and wring their hands*'(I2^r) which preserves the

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[102] T. J. B. Spencer, ed., *Romeo and Juliet* (London: Penguin, 1967), p. 266.
[103] See Pearlman, 'Shakespeare at Work', pp. 327-8. For Pearlman on *A Knack*, see below, p. 82.
[104] Refs.

farcical element of Q2's scene. Also, at the end of the 'lamentations', the following, typically descriptive, stage direction is printed:

> *They all but the Nurse goe foorth, casting Rosemary on her and shutting the Curtens.*
> *Enter Musitions.*
>
> (I2^v)

This shows that in Q1, the musicians enter the scene after the Capulets have left the stage. Immediately after their arrival, the Nurse exits with the following line: 'Put up, put up, this is a wofull case', suggesting that they have already started to play. Musician '1' responds: 'I by my trothe Mistress it is, it had need be mended'. His line is followed by '*Enter Servingman*' (I2^v), which is the equivalent of Q2's 'Enter Will Kemp'.

The similarities between the texts continue. In both, the clown's ensuing banter with the musicians contains a sense of improvisation, although Q2 contains more explicit examples of Kemp's particular brand of 'clownage'. For example, on entering Scene 17, Kemp as Peter begs the musicians to play 'harts ease', claiming that his 'hart is full' (K3^v). Most editors follow the eighteenth-century editor George Steevens in glossing this line as a reference to a song called 'Ballad of Two Lovers', of which the last line of the first stanza was 'Hey, ho! My heart is full of woe' (Q4 *Romeo* prints Peter's line as 'My heart is full of woe').[105] However, Baskervill notes that 'My heart is full of woe' is also the second line of 'Rowland's Jig' which was entered in the Stationers' Register in 1591 as 'Kemp's jig'.[106] In other words, Kemp here refers to his own handiwork as a jig-maker. This was not the only time Kemp did this. In the late summer of 1592, while the theatres were closed with plague, Nashe and Greene's play *Summer's Last Will and Testament* was performed for Archbishop Whitgift at his

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[105] See Blakemore Evans, *Romeo*, gloss to 4.5.103, p. 188; Levenson, *Romeo*, gloss to 4.4.129-30, p. 327; Gibbons, *Romeo*, gloss to 4.5.104-5, p. 188.
[106] Baskervill, *Elizabethan Jig*, p. 229.

Croydon palace. Duncan Jones argues persuasively that the company performing was

Strange's Men, and included Kemp (as Summers), Edward Alleyn, and Shakespeare

himself.[107]

In both *Romeo* quartos, moreover, Peter goes on to call for a 'merrie dumpe'

which Levenson describes as an oxymoron. The term 'dump', Levenson argues, could

refer to any tune, but it also denotes 'a mournful or plaintive melody or song'.[108] Also

in both texts, Peter sings lines from the same song, Richard Edwards' 'In commendation

of Musick' printed in the popular miscellany *The Paradyse of Daynty Devices* in

1596.[109] The lines are almost identical, before Peter interrupts himself with a question.

Q1 prints the lines in iambic tetrameter verse as follows:

> When griping griefe the heart doth wound,
> And dolefull dumps the minde oppresse:
> Then musique with her silver sound,
> Why silver sound? Why silver sound?

In comparison, the longer Q2 prints the lines in prose and omits Q1's second line:

> When griping griefs the hart doth wound, then musique with her silver sound.
> Why silver sound, why musique, with her silver sound.

Peter also exits Q2's scene after completing Q1's rhyme:

> Then Musique with her silver sound with speedy help doth lend redresse.
>   *Exit.*

Peter's song is a site of some contention for modern editors and critics, particularly as

the short Q1 paradoxically contains the longer version and none of the later quartos or

Folio edition of the play reprints Q1's second line. A number of editors, including

Gibbons and Blakemore Evans, follow Capell in conflating Q1 and Q2 at this point,

thus incorporating the Q1 line into the longer version of the play. But in terms of

Kemp's performance, and his reputation as a jig-maker, the differences between Q1 and

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[107] Duncan-Jones, 'Shakespeare, the Motley Player'.
[108] Levenson, *Romeo*, gloss to 4.4.130, p. 397.
[109] Richard Edwards, *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* (1576), ed. H. E. Rollins (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Princeton University Press, 1927), p. 63.

Q2 are important as the song would have been well-known to contemporary

audiences,[110] and perfect material for the clown to adapt as part of an occasional or local

performance. As Stern shows, songs were extractable units in plays and could be kept

on sheets separate to the play-script itself. For example, Desdemona's 'willow song',

while part of the authoritative Folio text of *Othello*, is not contained in the 1622 quarto

of the play. A different song could thus also have been used, or suggested, every time

the play was performed.[111]

The extra line in the song in *Romeo* Q1, I would argue though, confirms Kemp's

comedy, like the Nurse's, as a vital ingredient in this scene. In both quartos, the jesting

about 'music with her silver sound' depends upon the artistry and comic ability and

timing of the comedian who performs it. Q1's extra song-line perhaps adds weight to

the evidence of Kemp's presence in the first quarto text through its hints of theatrical

improvisation which are removed from the longer text. According to F. W. Sternfeld,

the theatrical context of Q1 certainly implies that Peter sings rather than speaks the

song's lines.[112] In contrast, the longer quarto may well omit the verse and Q1's second

line deliberately in order to show Peter, or rather Kemp, muddling the song as well as

interrupting it. However these lines are interpreted, what seems clear is that the

similarities and differences between the versions of the song suggest its flexible

adaptation between the texts. This proves its farcical but also intrinsic worth to this

perplexingly comic scene, where both Q1's and Q2's version maintain Kemp's comic

intrusions.

In the light of the similarities between Q1 and Q2, I would argue that both texts

contain evidence of the play as performed. There is, therefore, more to the revision of

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[110] Gibbons, *Romeo*, gloss to 4.5.123-5, p. 215.

[111] On the variable use of songs in Shakespeare's plays, see Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, pp. 70-71.

[112] F. W. Sternfeld, *Music in Shakespearean Tragedy* (New York: Routlege and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 103.

Q2's Scene 17 than Kemp merely being allowed to steal the show at this point in a celebrity star-turn. Even if the scene did originally end at Q2's 'Exit omnes', the 'death' of Juliet is still upstaged by the banter between the Nurse and the musicians just before the stage direction, an essential comic element of the scene which is maintained in both quartos.

Q2's 'Enter Will Kemp' thus reveals far more than a scrap of performance, or a 'left-over' from the production system as it might be described by Stern.[113] Rather, the sequence the direction initiates is what Bevington describes as one of the 'intentional irregularit[ies]' of the play's comic intrusions.[114] As in the case of Scene Two, therefore, there is far more to be gleaned from Scene 17 than initially meets the eye. Scene 17 is Peter's, and therefore Kemp's, most important scene in the play, and this is reflected in both Q1 and Q2.

We have already seen Shakespeare use Kemp in order to 'mingl[e] kings, 'clowns', and 'emperals'. In *Romeo* it seems, Kemp's Scene 17 antics produce a further startling thematic blend, this time of 'hornpipes and funerals', in the play, revealing it as 'neither right tragedi[e] nor right comedi[e]' and, in this context, one of Sidney's 'gross absurdities'.[115] Overall, Kemp's Q2 Scene 17 is retained in Q1, where many other moments involving the banter of servants are excised from the shorter play. This suggests that Kemp's half of the scene in Q2, while perhaps not part of the original make-up of the play, became an indispensable feature in both versions of the work.

The 'lamentations' scene is also neither marginal nor trivial. There is a crucial element to this scene, which keeps the main concerns of the play alive. As in the case of *Two Gentlemen's* Launce, all of the servant figures contained in the play help to

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[113] Stern, *Making Shakespeare*, p. 2.
[114] David Bevington, *Shakespeare's Ideas: More things in Heaven and Earth* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), p. 3.
[115] Sidney, *Apologie for Poetrie*, K2^r.

promote an integral comic vision which presents a complex dramatic expression of life – one of realism as opposed to mythical romance. As Mahood argues, Peter's mock quarrel with the musicians mirrors the earlier jesting in 3.1 which leads to the deaths of both Mercutio and Tybalt, and thus further underlines the futility of the feud between the families. This reveals what she calls the 'double-function' of clowning in tragedy: while offering a respite from the action the play's hold is reinforced, achieved by a deliberate alteration in dramatic tempo. In *Macbeth*, for example the Porter's fantasies about hell's gate become a wilful extension of the evil of the murder, brought to an end only when the door is opened and the play picks up its natural rhythm once more.[116] In *Macbeth*, Mahood argues that the time discrepancy between the ambling porter and the tension of the preceding scene provides an 'astonishing revitalization' of an over-worn comic routine, where he enters the play (as does Launce) 'with all the time in the world'.[117] In this light, Peter's appearance in the 'lamentations' scene, although perhaps not part of the original plan for the play, may have suited the dramatist admirably as the script is adapted to incorporate interpolation by the famous Kemp.

The variants around Kemp's Peter, both in Scene Two and Scene 17, offer some insight into the composition and adaptation of the play, and to how it was originally staged. The textual evidence of the changes made to Kemp's part also seem to reveal the play's generic experimentalism, where its main clown figure is adjusted in order to maximise its comic content. The textually variant Peter is thus not only revealed as an agent of change in *Romeo*, but also as a character who establishes a vital lineage between its different versions. Both versions of Scene Two and Scene 17 show, therefore, how a play could be enriched by the relationship between dramatist and actor. As Weimann suggests, 'the full meaning of drama may be defined as an image of this

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[116] See *Macbeth*, 2.3.1-19.
[117] Cf. Mahood, *Shakespeare's Bit Parts*, pp. 83-4.

relationship on the performed text'.[118] The result, in the *Romeo* quartos is that, both versions of the play are revealed as dependent upon the conditions of performance as 'an open-ended medium with endless variables',[119] revealed through what McGann describes as the 'social conditions of textual production'.[120]

VII.   Conclusion

What I hope to have shown in this chapter are that the apparent tensions between 'author's pen' and 'actor's voice' in *Romeo* also seem to illustrate how the authority of Shakespeare's dramatic scripts was dispersed by a process of socialisation which took place within the dominating theatrical nexus of the day. Kemp's presence in *Romeo* reveals the work as one which enacts the movable generic boundaries of comedy and tragedy, as he opens up new discursive limits in Shakespeare's experimental drama. Throughout the play, servants in general are used to punctuate the poetic surface of the play's narrative drive. In this way, theatrical practice is allowed constantly to infect the romantic text. It is the amalgamation of these seemingly incompatible generic elements which reveals Shakespeare's dramatic experimentalism, in which intrinsic comedy contained in the play throws the wider tragedy into relief. In this hybridised narrative, a new space for the clown function is created, one which underpins the necessity of comic play in the dominant tragi-romantic aesthetic of the work, and amplified or reduced as necessary throughout the texts. More than anything, Kemp's 'clownage' in the role of Peter, which I believe is captured in both texts, reveals *Romeo's* 'fearful passage of […] death-marked love' ('Prologue', l. 9) as dependent to a great extent upon comic as well as tragic forces.

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[118] Weimann, *Popular Tradition*, p. 7.
[119] Rose Lee Goldberg, *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1988), p. 9, cited in Weimann, *Author's Pen*, p. 11.
[120] McGann, *The Textual Condition*, p. 21.

This, in turn, complicates accounts of the early quartos as 'bad' or 'good', or to use more up-to-date terms, theatrical or literary.   While critics still try to contain the problem of *Romeo*'s variant textuality by confining it within the competing arenas of 'page-to-stage' or 'stage-to-page', the play itself resists this restriction. Peter not only muddies considerably Q2's 'literary' origins identified by Erne, but also points to the validity of Q1 as a canonical text in its own right. There are indeed 'two households' of cultural identity at work in *Romeo*, 'both alike in dignity' ('Prologue', l. 1), between the competing authorities of theatrical and literary agents behind the production of the play. The resulting multiplicity, traditionally read as corruption in Q1, is in fact a rich textual archipelago of versions of the work containing competing authorial and non-authorial agencies which mark out the boundaries of authority in an early Shakespearean play, one which is best described by Jacques Derrida's phrase, a 'still living palimpsest'.[121]

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[121] Jonathan Goldberg translates the phrase in '"What? In a names that which we call a Rose": The Desired Texts of *Romeo and Juliet*', in *Crisis in Editing:Texts of the English Renaissance*, ed. Randall McLeod (New York, 1994), 173-201 (p. 191).

CHAPTER SIX

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

I turn now to the only other of Shakespeare's plays whose theatrical textuality also documents Kemp's performances, namely *Much Ado About Nothing*, in which he took the role of Dogberry, the bumbling and pompous role as the head of Messina's Watch. Dogberry only just saves the day, and the play, in terms of its eventual comic ending. At the same time, however, it seems that his character provides the playwright with a satirical tool with which to expose a 'natural' fool. It is in Dogberry, then, that Kemp's extemporal star does finally begin to wane as the clown is engulfed by the character he plays in Shakespeare's brilliant and stereotypical presentation of social and dramatic fooldom.

As in the case of *Romeo's* second quarto, the first quarto of *Much Ado* published in 1600 (Q1) contains textual evidence of Kemp which perhaps reflects his on-going fame. Gaw describes the play as the 'most interesting' of such cases, as both the quarto and Folio texts of *Much Ado* contain the names of both '*Kemp*' and '*Cowley*' (Richard Cowley) for Dogberry and Verges respectively in 4.2. Specifically, the scene contains twelve printed references to 'Kemp' between lines 10-75.[1] Dogberry appears in three other scenes in the play. He first appears at the opening of 3.3, where, as the bumptious constable of the Watch, he takes up half of the scene in giving instructions to his men. In Q1, the opening stage direction for the scene reads, '*Enter Dogbery and his compartner with the Watch*', and the speech headings are uniformly '*Dogbery*' and '*Verges*' or their abbreviations. In 3.5, the two meet with Leonato, where the opening stage direction is '*Enter Leonato, and the constable, and the Headborough*'. The

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[1] Cf. Gaw, 'Actors' Names', p. 532.

subsequent speech headings for Dogberry are '*Const. Dogbery*' (eight times), '*Const.*',

and, at the very end of the scene, '*Dogbery*', and '*Dogb*'. In 4.2, Dogberry, Verges and

the Sexton examine Borachio and Conrade. Here the names are highly confused and

include more references to Kemp. The stage direction reads, '*Enter the Constables,*

Borachio, and the Towne clearke in gownes'. The speech headings for Dogberry are

Keeper, *Andrew*, *Kemp* (eight times), *Ke.*, *Kem.*, *Const.*, and *Constable*, but never

Dogbery. By Act Five, the speech headings are more uniformly *Const.* for Dogberry.[2]

We know, then, that Dogberry can be added to Kemp's list of hits. As the

linguistically challenged constable, Dogberry leads Messina's men of the Watch to

victory over the play's more villainous forces. However, Dogberry's part is not

confined to the play's comic thrust. On the contrary, Dogberry is strategically

positioned in the narrative's generic twists and turns which hinge, as does *Romeo*, on a

turbulent mix of comedy and tragedy. My aim in this final chapter, therefore, is to offer

further exploration of some of the comparatively untraveled and uncharted textuality of

Q1 surrounding the role of Dogberry in order to analyse and evaluate any further

evidence which points to the composition of the role for Kemp. There are also a

number of theories, now seemingly out of date, which suggest that Dogberry's printed

part contains evidence of revision. The work of Gaw, for example, reinforced the

earlier Cambridge theory put forward by John Dover Wilson and Arthur Quiller-Couch

in 1923,[3] that 3.3, a key scene in terms of the play's comic resolution and the one which

sees Dogberry enter the play, was subject to alteration and rewriting.

If Gaw and the New Cambridge editors are correct in their contentions, then the

implications for the study of Kemp in the role of Dogberry are manifold, not the least in

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[2] For full details, see ibid., pp. 543-4.

[3] Arthur Quiller-Couch and John Dover Wilson, eds., *Much Ado About Nothing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923; repr. 1953), pp. 102-8. Allison Gaw gives a succinct account of the reasons for such theories of revision in 'Is Shakespeare's *Much Ado* a Revised Earlier Play', *Publications of the Modern Language Assocation*, 50:3 (1935), 715-38.

that they reveal the fact that a substantial sequence of *Much Ado* was composed and revised by Shakespeare for his leading clown, perhaps in order to make the play work better, as I will show. While the possibility of the revision of Dogberry sheds light on the compositional processes behind the creation of this gloriously comic figure, it also suggests some repercussions of his mutable characterization on the wider play. While Kemp is materially apparent in this later comedy, his traditional comic function is markedly reduced. Despite his centrality, Dogberry always functions within either a pair or group of comedians and never appears in the play alone. More tellingly again, the term 'clown' is never applied to Dogberry in either stage directions or speech prefixes.[4] My contention, therefore, is that Kemp's comic force is diffused in *Much Ado*, and his typically independent style is no longer perceptible in this play where his familiar own stage personality is moulded into a more narrative 'role'.

My focus, primarily, is on Kemp's first appearance in the play in order to investigate ideas about the revision of the work at this point, and also for comparisons to be made with the Kempian clown roles investigated so far. Despite Shakespeare's continuing to write satisfying comic roles for Kemp, a decline can be mapped between the actor's extemporal and self-aggrandizing part in *A Knack* and the much rounder characterization of Dogberry, whose 'clownage' is more artfully bound within the fictitious world of the play. There is a trajectory in Kemp's career, therefore, which sees a shift from the dynamic juxtaposition of modes of acting and writing apparent so far, to a new, more integrated style of drama.

In the first half of this chapter, I will consider *Much Ado*'s early textuality and how the dating of the play's composition and revision can be linked to Kemp's performances as Dogberry. In the second half, I will examine evidence of revision to

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[4] The character is never referred to as 'clown' in the stage directions or speech prefixes of the play. See Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 75-6.

the role of Dogberry in 3.3, and its impact on the wider play where a more thematic

festive aesthetic displaces Kemp's conventional act.

I.   Shakespeare, Kemp and the publication of *Much Ado*

1598, most scholars believe, was the year that Shakespeare composed *Much Ado About*

Nothing. The first official mention of *Much Ado* did not occur, however, until 4 August

1600, where it is listed in the Stationers' Register along with four other plays belonging

to the Lord Chamberlain's Company:

> as yo^w like yt: / a booke Henry the ffift: / a booke Euery
> man in his humo^r.: / a booke The Commedie of muche
> A doo about nothinge. / a booke to be staied.

The play was registered for publication only nineteen days later on 23 August where,

for the first time, the Stationers included Shakespeare's name as author:

> Andrewe Wyse Willm Aspley Entred for their copies
> vnder the / handes of the wardens. Twoo bookes.
> the one called: Much a Doo / about nothinge. The other
> the second pte of the history of kinge henry / the
> iiijth wth the humo^{r}s of Sr Iohn fallstaff': Wrytten by mr
> Shakespeare / xij^d. [5]

Much disputed by scholars, the meaning of 'to be staied' in the initial entry has ensured

that *Much Ado*'s bibliographic history remains enveloped by questions surrounding the

vexed late-Elizabethan publishing industry, and still remains unclear.[6] One of the most

thorough considerations of the problem of 'staied' entries is given by Richard Knowles

in his edition of *The New Variorum As You Like It*. Knowles suggests that the entries

reveal an attempt by the Lord Chamberlain's Men to ensure that the company was paid

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[5] Reproduced in W.W. Greg, *A Bibliography of English Printed Drama to the Restoration*, 2 vols (1962), I.15, I.274, cited in Claire McEachern, ed. *Much Ado About Nothing*, The Arden Shakespeare Third Series (London: A&C Black, 2007), p. 126,
[6] See McEachern, *Much Ado*, p. 126. See also Sheldon P. Zitner, ed., *Much Ado About Nothing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993; reissued 2008), p. 79. See also Quiller Couch and Dover Wilson, *Much Ado*, p. 92.

for any plays which were printed.[7] *Much Ado*'s Stationers' entry may well represent,

therefore, an attempt to protect the plays it listed from unauthorized publication. This is

despite the fact that, as Sheldon Zitner notes, the operations of 'piratical' printers are

now increasingly doubted.[8]

As discussed in Chapter Three, it was unusual for an acting company to publish

its texts, and far more lucrative to disseminate them in performance to which admission

was paid, rather than in exchange for the publishing fee (approximately forty shillings,

according to McEachern[9]) that a publisher would pay for the rights of a play. However,

the first quarto of *Much Ado* (Q1) appeared later in the same year (1600). Its title-page

reads as follows:

> [ornament] / Much adoe about/Nothing. / *As it hath been sundrie times publikely*
> / acted by the right honourable, the Lord Chamberlaine his servants. / *Written by*
> *William Shakespeare*. / [ornament] / LONDON / Printed by V.S. for Andrew
> Wise, and / William Aspley. / 1600.[10]

As Erne shows, a number of play manuscripts belonging to Shakespeare's company

were sold and published in authorized editions at this time.[11] These included, along

with those listed by the Stationers above, Q2 *Romeo*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The*

Merchant of Venice, and the anonymous *A Warning for Fair Women*, most of which are

probably Kemp plays. A number of reasons which may account for these publications

have been put forward by scholars. Erne, for example, cites a systematic policy of

publication two years on from performances by the Lord Chamberlain's Men.[12] The

sales of the play-texts may well have been prompted by the company's move to The

Globe theatre in late 1599, which would have required cash and publicity.[13] Relevant

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[7] Richard Knowles, *The New Variorum As You Like It* (New York: *Modern Language Association of America*, 1977), pp. 353-64.
[8] See Zitner, *Much Ado*, p. 79.
[9] Cf. McEachern, *Much Ado*, p. 127.
[10] 'V.S' stands for Valentine Simmes.
[11] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, pp. 115-28.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Gary Taylor, 'General Introduction', *A Textual Companion*, p. 86.

here, too, is the Privy Council's order of 22 June 1600 which limited the number of the capital's playhouses to two, and restricted their performances to twice a week, causing a shortfall in box office income.[14]

The bibliographical detail of 'to be staied' perhaps also accounts for the fact that no further printed editions of the plays mentioned in the list, except for Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour* (published in 1601), were produced between 1600 and 1623. The only other extant early edition of *Much Ado* is contained in the 1623 First Folio (F1). It certainly seems, then, that *Much Ado*'s early popularity on stage contributed to its lack of subsequent publication, as the players held on to at least the performance rights over Shakespeare's play-text. But we might also link the play's 1600 publication to the emergence of Shakespeare as a dramatic author in the final years of the sixteenth century. As noted, a number of plays were published from 1598, naming Shakespeare as their author on title pages. As Erne argues, associating Shakespeare's plays with a more singular source of authority may have helped this process of dramatic legitimation 'by disassociating them from the disreputable commercial playhouses.'[15]

It has been accepted for some time by scholars that the only authoritative text of *Much Ado* is contained in Q1, as '*Written by William Shakespeare*'.[16] Further textual evidence also points to the fact that the play-text lies close to its author. Since Wells' extensive editorial consideration of Q1, it is now accepted by most scholars as being based directly on Shakespeare's working draft of the play, or 'foul papers', and not, as previously assumed, on a 'fair copy' or a play-script as was 'sundrie times publikely acted'.[17] Bibliographers thus now imagine the genesis of Q1 *Much Ado* in the following

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[14] Blayney, 'The publication of playbooks', p. 386.
[15] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p. 63.
[16] F. H. Mares, ed., *Much Ado About Nothing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988; reissued 2003; repr. 2010), p. 41.
[17] Stanley Wells, 'Editorial Treatment of Foul-Paper Texts', pp. 1-16. The term 'fair copy', according to Wells, describes an early and usually scribal complete draft of the play which had not as yet 'undergone

terms: Shakespeare's draft was available and considered serviceable for a printer's use. Copying was costly and took time. It was then set into type, unusually for a text of this time, by one typesetter, Simmes' 'Compositor A'.[18] While the Q1 text does depart in some ways from what must have been its 'foul paper' copy, this is mainly at the level of insignificant detail and errors of typesetting and have no bearing on the play's few verbal cruces - 'mere gnats to vex editors', as Zitner describes them.[19]

We have already seen that 'foul paper' texts can be highly revealing in terms of both compositional and revisionary practice. Q1 *Much Ado* contains the usual 'foul paper' oddities: 'inadequate, inaccurate, and vague stage directions, inconsistent speech prefixes, the presence of "ghost" characters, inconsistencies in the dialogue, and so on'.[20] In this light, the text, as in Q1 *Titus*, stands witness to Shakespeare's composition where he often changed his mind or had second thoughts during the normative processes of writing. Such 'marks of composition',[21] for Wells, leave 'imperfections' in *Much Ado*'s Q1 text that have survived the printing process: compositors, then, as we have seen in *Titus*' speech prefixes, and more particularly with *Romeo's* 'Enter Will Kemp', could often transcribe such 'slips' of writing into print.[22]

Traditionally, scholarship has considered that the appearances of Kemp in *Much Ado* were the result of theatrical annotations made to Shakespeare's manuscript. Chambers' theory was later passed into the annals of critical lore by Greg's insistence that, 'if ever there was a text printed from foul papers that still needed a good deal of

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such polishing as might have been necessary before it could be held to represent a satisfactory performance',

[18] On the setting of Q1, see John Hazel Smith, 'The composition of the Quarto of *Much Ado About Nothing'*, *Studies in Bibliography*, 16 (1963), 9-26.

[19] See Zitner, *Much Ado*, p. 80.

[20] Wells, 'Editorial Treatment of Foul-Paper Texts', p. 1.

[21] McEachern, *Much Ado*, p. 128.

[22] I take the term 'slips' from James Shapiro, *Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?* (London: Faber and Faber, 2010), p. 260.

corrections to fit them for use in the theatre it is Q [*Much Ado*]'.[23] Scholars tended to

believe that, had Q1 indeed been a record of what Wells describes as a 'satisfactory

performance', it would most probably have been annotated for performance by a 'book-

keeper', who would have regularized the text with respect to stage directions and speech

prefixes.[24] In such instances, for example, a book-keeper would have noted the names

of individual actors in the script, especially those in minor roles.

More recently, the work of William B. Long suggests that so-called 'book-

keepers', a term which he considers anachronistic, actually made very few changes to

either extant authorial or scribal manuscripts. The equally suspect category of 'prompt-

books' were also not regularized as Greg had previously claimed.[25] The speculative

standardization of the play's prompt-book, therefore, which provided the basis for the

theory that Q1's '*Kemp*' meant that the text derived from a performance or

performances of the play, is now dismissed as implausible.

Recent studies have also shown that inconsistent speech headings and stage

directions in the early quartos of Shakespeare's plays can throw light on casting

decisions, providing intriguing evidence of the working practices of Shakespeare's

theatre, and of the dramatist himself.[26] As early as 1925, though, Gaw had already

argued that in the three Shakespearean scenes in which John Sincler (also spelled

Sincklo or Sinklo) is mentioned, the entries of the name were made by Shakespeare

himself and subsequently set out her reasons for believing that Shakespeare's hand and

not that of a book-keeper or 'prompter' were behind the majority of actors' names found

in the early texts. The First Folio edition of the early history play, *The Third Part of*

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[23] W. W. Greg, *The Shakespeare First Folio*, p. 279.

[24] For the New Bibliographical theories regarding the theatrical annotation of *Much Ado* Q1, see F. P. Wilson, *Shakespeare and the New Bibliography*, rev. and ed. Helen Gardner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 67-8.

[25] William B. Long, '"Precious Few": English Manuscript Playbooks', in *A Companion to Shakespeare*, pp. 414-33 (p. 417).

[26] See, for example, Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*, and Bradley, *From Text to Performance*.

King Henry the Sixth, for example, contains the stage direction, 'Enter Sincklo and

Humphrey'. Similarly, *2 Henry IV* contains the stage direction 'Enter Sincklo and three

or four officers'. As is clear from the text itself, the scene was obviously written as a

vehicle for Sincklo as he is brought on stage in order to be teased about his thinness,

where the other characters take turns calling him names: 'nut-hook'; 'starved

bloodhound'; and, in case the point is missed, 'thin thing'.[27]

The presence of '*Kemp'* in Q1 *Much Ado*, which Gaw describes as the 'most

interesting' example of an actor's name contained in an early Shakespearean text, is

now attributed in the main to Shakespeare's own workings on the script of the play.[28]

Wells argues that there is no evidence that the copy for Q1 was annotated or altered by

any hand other than Shakespeare's own.[29] Wells also contends that the speech prefixes

relating to Kemp could only have been written by the author, rejecting earlier editorial

assumptions of theatrical variants.[30] Kemp's textual and nomenclatorial substitution of

Dogberry in Q1 *Much Ado* thus provide a direct line of communication between the

composition of the play, and the company for which it was written. This opens up, as

Weil notes, a 'stimulating imaginary dialogue with casting decisions' for the play which

involves the dramatist directly, as it is Shakespeare himself and not a mythical book-

keeper who annotated his working draft with Kemp's name. As a result, we can assume

that the part of Dogberry, as in the case of Peter, was very probably written by

Shakespeare with Kemp in mind. *Much Ado*, then, perhaps more than any other play in

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[27] John Sincklo was a regular hired-man for whom Shakespeare wrote a number of parts, all of which relate to his size. Thomson claims that Sincklo played Verges to Kemp's Dogberry, suggesting that he was a physical foil to the powerfully built Kemp. See Thomson, *Shakespeare's Theatre*, p. 9. For more on Sincklo, see Gaw, 'Actor's Names', p. 539.

[28] See F. P. Wilson, *Shakespeare and the New Bibliography*, revised and ed. Helen Gardner (Oxford, 1970), pp. 67-8. See also Wells, 'Editorial Treatment', p. 2.

[29] Cf. Wells, 'Foul-paper Texts', p. 3.

[30] As Herbert Weil notes, Wells' contention on this point has prompted a mixed response. See Weil Herbert, '"Be vigitant, I beseech you,": A Fantasia on Dogberry and Doubling in *Much Ado About Nothing'*, *Ben Jonson Journal: Literary Contexts in the Age of Elizabeth, James and Charles*, 6 (1999), 307-17 (p. 311).

the canon, offers a tantalizing glimpse of the elusive playwright at work: composing, writing, and rewriting the part of Dogberry for his own professional 'compartner', Will Kemp.

The Lord Chamberlain's Men may well have taken the opportunity to promote their association with Shakespeare by publishing Q1 *Much Ado* in 1600, as Erne suggests.[31] But it also seems pertinent to note that the company would have needed to augment some of the capital tied up in performances of the play, particularly so, perhaps, in the face of expected losses as a result of Kemp's departure from the company in the early months of 1599. Other plays published at the same time seem to prove this point. Valentine Simmes (V.S.) also printed a quarto edition of the vastly popular *2 Henry IV* in the same run as *Much Ado* in 1600, and the latter's title-page reuses the type set for the former text. The text explicitly advertises its 'humours' of 'Sir John Falstaff' and the '*swaggering* Pistoll', both of which are reminiscent of Kemp's 'merrimentes', although notably characters' names here, and not those of the actors are used.[32] As noted, there is some evidence to suggest that Kemp played Falstaff. The 1600 quarto of *2 Henry IV* includes the stage direction 'Enter Will' at 2.4, which Wiles has persuasively linked to his argument that Falstaff was a Kemp part. Kemp is also thought to have been the actor who speaks at least some of the play's 'Epilogue', which refers three times to dancing and includes mention of the jig to follow: 'My tongue is weary; when my legs are too, I will bid you good night' (31-2).[33]

There are also plausible links to Kemp in the more successfully 'staied' *As You Like It*, which remained unpublished until 1623. The play has long been thought of as one of Robert Armin's early Lord Chamberlain's plays, with the new clown playing

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[31] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, pp. 58-63.
[32] William Shakespeare, *The second part of Henrie the fourth continuing to his death, and coronation of Henrie the fift. VVith the humours of sir Iohn Falstaffe, and swaggering Pistoll* (London, 1600), in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 18 April, 2013].
[33] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 116-135.

Touchstone.[34] Juliet Dusinberre's third Arden edition of the play, however, identifies a

performance at court on Shrove Tuesday 1599. Dusinberre claims, as a result, that

Touchstone may well have been originally written for the robustly comic Kemp,[35] as

opposed to the 'more intellectual' Armin.[36] According to Gaw, the 'writing, staging,

and popularising' of *As You Like It* intervened between that of *Much Ado* and 4 August

1600.[37] Perhaps the Stationers' 1600 'staying' order on *As You Like It* gave time for

Touchstone to be amended in order to suit the strengths of Kemp's successor. While

this is admittedly speculative, *As You Like It* may not have been the only case of

'patching' a play to fill a particular clown's shoes, as I have already shown in the case

of *Sir Thomas More* in Chapter One.

The only play in the Stationers' order which is unlikely to have involved Kemp,

Henry V, was published in an inferior text in 1600. But it should also be recalled that

Summer's Last Will and Testament was also printed, for the first and only time in 1600,

reproducing a clown part which, for Weimann and Douglas Bruster is 'arguably […] the

most articulate jester in the Elizabethan period'.[38] Perhaps this play was also cashing in

on the popularity of Kemp as both the jester and author of his own *Nine Daies Wonder*.

Moreover, three more Shakespeare quartos went on sale that year: Q2 of *The*

Contention (Kemp's role being Jack Cade) and Q2 of *Titus*. Late 1600 would also see

the publication of Q1 *Merchant*, following a reassignment from the original publisher

who had acquired the text in 1598.

Of course, by 1600 Kemp was no longer available for any of his Shakespearean

roles. This may also have prompted the publication of certain of the plays listed above,

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[34] See, for example, Andrew Gurr, 'The Condition of Theatre in England in 1599', in *The Cambridge History of British Theatre Volume I: Origins to 1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 273.
[35] Dusinbere, *As You Like It*, pp. 365-7.
[36] Wells, *Shakespeare and Co.*, p. 36.
[37] Cf. Gaw, 'Is *Much Ado* a Revised Earlier Play?', p. 715.
[38] Weimann and Bruster, *Power of Performance*, p. 99.

as they were no longer able to be performed without the actor. A similar effect can be seen on the repertory of the Admiral's Men's on the retirement of Alleyn in 1597, where some of the plays performed contained signature roles so strongly identified with him that they became, temporarily at least, unplayable. Chillington Rutter notes that 'into retirement with Alleyn went a group of plays he had made famous: *Tamar Cham*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Faustus*. This meant that the new Admiral's Men had to replace not just a player but a repertoire'. The parallel between Alleyn and Kemp is not exact in that, as Chillington Rutter notes, Alleyn himself owned the playbooks mentioned above.[39] But if Kemp was as much of a star as contemporary accounts suggest, his signature roles may have become similarly, if also temporarily, unplayable. As a result, while the company could no longer perform certain plays without Kemp, income from publication, though limited, would in some way compensate for the expected decline in box office revenue caused by the actor's untimely departure early in 1599.

We know that the early stage history of *Much Ado* did not end with Kemp's departure. As the title-page of Q1 states, the play was 'sundrie times publikely acted' by Shakespeare's company. Further evidence of the play's staging is provided in the following examples: there are echoes of both Dogberry and Benedick in Thomas Heywood's *Fair Maid of the Exchange* (1607); the dedication to *The Italian Tailor* (1609), by Armin, who Zitner claims also played Dogberry, mentions a beggar who 'hath been writ downe for an Asse'; and, finally, in a 1640 edition of Shakespeare's poems, Leonard Digges equates the popularity of *Much Ado* with that of the *Henry IV* plays: 'let but Beatrice/And Benedice be seene, loe in a trice/The Cockpit[,] Galleries, Boxes, all are full'.[40] By the middle of the seventeenth century, it seems, the appearance of characters such as Beatrice and Benedick can be equated with the earlier

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[39] Carol Chillington Rutter, *Documents of The Rose Playhouse*, 2nd edn (Manchester: Manchester Univeristy Press, 1999), p. 124.

[40] For a stage history of *Much Ado*, see Zitner, pp. 58-70 (esp. 58-59).

popularity of Tarlton's peeping face. In Kemp's own time, we can similarly assume

that *Much Ado* was highly appealing to contemporary audiences.[41] But while this may

have been down to Kemp's appearances as Dogberry to an extent, the play's reputation

was also undoubtedly enhanced by the promise of Shakespeare's verbal fireworks

between Beatrice and Benedict.

Q1, then, is the first and most authoritative text of *Much Ado* which relies, for

marketing purposes, both on its performative and literary rank: as performed by the

Lord Chamberlain's Men and 'Written by William Shakespeare'. For the final play

examined in this thesis, and in comparison to its first, *A Knack to Know a Knave*, we

have moved some way, culturally speaking, from *Knack*'s explicit promotion of

'Kemp's merriments' and now stand face to face with the author himself. It is now

Shakespeare's name, and not Kemp's, which contributes to the literary worth, and

indeed selling power, of the printed play. By 1600, the author, it seems, has ousted his

clown.

II.   Shakespeare, Kemp and revising the play

Stylistically, internal compositional patterns date *Much Ado* in what McEachern

describes as Shakespeare's 'prosy phase', closely following *1 and 2 Henry IV* (1596-

98). However, as the title of *Much Ado* does not appear in Francis Meres' *Palladis

Tamia*, the play is largely assumed not to have been composed before the Stationers'

entry for Meres' publication on 7 September 1598. As Zitner notes, it seems unlikely

that Meres would have omitted mention of a current comedy by Shakespeare, one of the

playwrights he describes as 'best for' plays of that genre, in a list of literary

achievements which names the 'slighter Shakespearean comedies' *The Two Gentlemen*

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[41] Cf. Mares, *Much Ado*, p. 42.

of Verona and *Love's Labour's Lost*.[42] Evidently, it seems, Meres aimed to ensure that

his *Wit's Treasury* was up to date as he went to the trouble of including Guilpin's

satirical work *Skialethia*, which had been registered by the Stationers only eight days

after his own.[43] This may also point to Meres' desire to be part of a 'learned literary

culture' in listing a work where an observer denigrates 'clownage' so aggressively.[44]

    If *Much Ado* was going through a process of modification prior to September

1598, then that might suggest a reason for the absence of its title from Meres' list. It

may well also allude to the fact that Meres' 'Loves Labours wonne' represents an earlier

version of the play.[45] Either way, as Mares contends, *Much Ado*'s absence from Meres

is in 'no way conclusive that [the play] was not in existence' by that time.[46] We have

already seen, from the recent controversy over the 'lost' *Cardenio*, or *Double

Falsehood*, that plays could be lost or renamed.[47] Jonson was also listed by Meres as

one of 'our best in tragedy', despite the fact that no known tragedy of Jonson's prior to

1598 survives.[48]

    As Stern contends, plays were put on only when they were ready, and not

before.[49] *Much Ado* was very likely written, therefore, or at the very least completed,

after the publication of Meres' catalogue in September 1598. The completion of the

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[42] Scholars have debated in the past as to whether any identification can be made between *Much Ado* and Meres' mention of another comedy by Shakespeare entitled '*Love labours wonne*'. In 1860, A. E. Brae argued in *Collier, Coleridge, and Shakespeare* (p. 131) that *Much Ado* was in fact the mysterious *Love's Labour's Won* of Meres' list, cited in Gaw, 'Is Shakespeare's *Much Ado* a Revised Earlier Play?', p. 716. Gaw suggested in her own article that questions remain unanswered as to whether any identification can be made between *Much Ado* and *Love's Labour's Won*. Since the discovery in 1953 of a list dating from 1603 of the stock of the London bookseller Christopher Hunt, however, this theory has become less tenable as Hunt's list includes *Love's Labour's Won* three years after the publication of *Much Ado About Nothing*. On this point, see also Mares, *Much Ado*, pp. 8-10.

[43] Cf. Zitner, *Much Ado*, p. 5.

[44] Cf. Weimann and Bruster, *Power of Performance*, p. 111.

[45] Cf. Brae, cied in Gaw, 'Is *Much Ado* a Revised Earlier Play?', p. 716.

[46] Mares, *Much Ado*, p. 8.

[47] For a succinct account, see Ruth Morse's review of Roger Chartier's recently published monograph, *Cardenio entre Cervantes, et Shakespeare: Histoire d'une pièce perdue* (Paris: Gallimard, 2011), in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 13 January 2012, p. 9.

[48] Cf. Felix E. Schelling, ed., *Ben Jonson: The Complete Plays* (London: J. M. Dent, 1920; repr. 1964), p. xii.

[49] Cf. Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan*, p. 18.

play as contained in Q1 is also usually assumed to be no later than early August 1600, and obviously preceded the initial Stationers' entry on the fourth of that month. That it was not written immediately before the latter date is evident from the inclusion of *As You Like It* in the same Stationers' listing with *Much Ado*, as 'to be staied'.

As in the case of Kemp's Launce, the actor's presence in Q1 *Much Ado* may well allow a more accurate dating of the play. *Much Ado* must have been in performance by the time of Kemp's departure from the Lord Chamberlain's company. Indeed, as Weil notes, Kemp's presence in the play has been used by Zitner and other editors as primary external evidence for dating the composition of the play as late as 1598, and most scholars now agree that the play was composed most likely during the last third of that year.[50] Due to the fact that Kemp signed a lease for a fifth actors' share in The Globe in February 1599, it is usually assumed that he left the company at some point during the autumn of the same year in order to pursue his freelance career.[51] While Kemp's name is listed, along with Shakespeare's, as one of the principal actors in Jonson's *Every Man In His Humour* in 1598, the cast list for the original 1599 production of *Every Man Out of His Humour* lists neither. Also, according to Wiles, 'there is no obvious clown part in *Julius Caesar*' for Kemp. As we know from Thomas Platter's account of his visit to London in 1599, however, while the play was on the stage by then, it also ended with a jig.[52] At some point between September 1598 and August 1600, we might thus assume, *Much Ado* was composed, performed and registered for publication, with Kemp's appearances as Dogberry recorded in the 1600 quarto of the play. It also seems, however, that the play may well have been revised.

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[50] Cf. Weil, '"Be vigilant"', p. 311. See also Zitner, *Much Ado*, p. 5.
[51] Cf. Wells, *Shakespeare and Co.*, p. 34.
[52] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. 35-6.

During the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, critics and editors of *Much Ado* tended to consider the play as the revision of an earlier work.[53] Their theories were based on the following facts: first, an entry for a court performance of a play called *Benedicte and Betteris* appears in the Lord Treasurer's account for 1613, and this has been interpreted as possibly a 'Benedick-and-Beatrice' play antecedent to the play as we know it; second, an entry in the Revels Accounts of a 'matter of Panecia', as rehearsed by Leicester's Men on 18 December 1574 in preparation for a court performance, has been considered a scribal error for 'a matter of Fenicia', and therefore an early dramatization of the plot of *Much Ado* from its primary source, Mateo Bandello's story of 'Timbreo de Cardona and Fenicia Lionato', the twenty-second narrative in Bandello's *Nouvelle* (1554);[54] third, a 'historie of Ariodante and Geneuora', performed at court on 12 February 1583, is also almost certainly a dramatization from a probably secondary source of *Much Ado*, the tale of Ginevra in the Fifth Book of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*;[55] and finally, as noted above, that Meres' reference to the mysterious *Love's Labour's Won* actually referred to *Much Ado*.

Theories relating to the revision of *Much Ado* came to a head early in the twentieth century with the publication of the *New Shakespeare* edition of the play for Cambridge University Press, edited by Dover Wilson and Quiller-Couch, who argued at length that the play contained in Q1 *Much Ado* was the reworking of 'an early play by Shakespeare himself'.[56] Primarily, the editors believed that the Claudio/Hero scenes in *Much Ado* form the main plot of an early Shakespearean verse play in which there are two further subplots, the one dealing with Benedick and Beatrice, and the other

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[53] Gaw gives a succinct account of the reasons for such theories of revision in 'Is Shakespeare's *Much Ado* a Revised Earlier Play?'.

[54] As McEachern notes, the tale of the unjustly slandered woman was popular in Renaissance literature. See p. 5. McEachern also gives a broad-ranging account of *Much Ado*'s sources on pp. 4-50.

[55] Cf. Gaw, 'Is *Much Ado* a Revised Earlier Play?', p. 716.

[56] Quiller Couch and Dover Wilson, *Much Ado*, p. 103.

concerned with Margaret and Borachio. In the current *Much Ado*, over three-quarters of the 'received text' is in prose which amplifies the Benedick-Beatrice scenes in order to 'foreground' and 'expand' their 'high' comic roles.[57] The play's verse scenes, in contrast, are almost entirely concerned with the literarily-sourced Hero/Claudio main plot-line which is based primarily on Bandello's story.[58]

For the Cambridge editors, then, the revision of the play overall was concerned with abridging and compressing an unfashionable verse play with passages of newly scripted comic prose, and took place 'somewhere towards the end of 1598 or the beginning of 1599'.[59] The date of the play's possible revision thus corresponds with Kemp's final months with Shakespeare's company. More interesting in relation to the actor, however, are Gaw's conclusions in her re-evaluation of theories of the play's revision, published some twelve years after the Cambridge edition of the play in 1935. Overall, Gaw concludes that, either directly or indirectly, Bandello's story provided Shakespeare with the primary source for the play. In Bandello, Girondo (Shakespeare's Don John) convinces Fenicia's (Hero's) lover of her infidelity by staging her deception at her window on the eve of the wedding. Up to the equivalent point of action in Shakespeare's play, at the end of 3.2, the narrative sequence is identical. Shakespeare, however, makes two major modifications to his source material: the first is the development of the 'high' comedy intrigue, by which Benedick and Beatrice are lured into matrimony; and the second, more pertinently, is the conception of Dogberry and the Watch, who have no precedent literary source,[60] and whose blundering intervention into the main plot ensure that Don John's schemes are indeed brought to 'nothing'.

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[57] Ibid., pp. 102-8.
[58] Gaw, 'Is *Much Ado* a Revised Earlier Play?', p. 719. See also Kenneth Muir, *Shakespeare's Sources* (London: Methuen, 1965), I, 52-55.
[59] Quiller Couch and Dover Wilson, *Much Ado*, p. 109.
[60] Gaw, 'Is *Much Ado* a Revised Earlier Play?', pp. 719-20.

In order for this to happen, at the opening of 2.3, Shakespeare made a vital alteration in curtailing the prominence of Bandello's chamber scene. While the scene forms the crux of Sir Girondo's (Don John's equivalent) stratagem of plotting in Bandello's story, Shakespeare decided not to present the scene but to report it instead during the second half of Act Three Scene Three. As Geoffrey Bullough notes, Shakespeare may have taken the idea not to reproduce the scene on stage, usually an incident in most of the play's sources, either from Ludovico Ariosto's 'Ariodante and Ginevra' story in *Orlando Furioso* Book V (translated into English by Sir John Harington in 1591), or from Spenser's narrative of 'Claribell and Phedon' in *The Faerie Queene* (II.IV).[61] The manipulation of Shakespeare's sources in the reporting of the chamber scene in 3.3, then, affords the introduction and augmentation of the members of the Watch. In contrast, the decision to stage Claudio's denunciation of Hero at the altar presents a sequence of action in Act Four Scene One which is usually told or effected through other agents in the source material.

Regarding 3.3, as Gaw contends, Shakespeare achieves a number of things: first, he skilfully suppresses any unnecessary 'melodrama' contained in Bandello's window scene; second, as the scene is necessarily referred to five times in other scenes of the play (and in three at some length), the depiction of the scene in addition would make all its repetitions anticlimactic; and third, in reporting the scene via the antics of the Watch and the drunken Borachio and Conrade, Shakespeare keeps the 'comedy atmosphere' of the play dominant, as Gaw argues. 'Common sense and good dramaturgy', Gaw concludes, 'united in demanding that Shakespeare treat the incident as he did in 1599'[62] – that is, by replacing, or at least updating, Bandello's window scene with the arrival of Dogberry and the Watch.

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[61] See also Geoffrey Bullough, ed., *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, Volume II, The Comedies,1597-1603* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 117.
[62] Gaw, 'Is *Much Ado* a Revised Earlier Play?', p. 727.

There is, therefore, distinct textual evidence of Shakespeare's decision significantly to alter material contained in the play's sources. While this is not unusual in itself, the alteration certainly confirms the play's comic genre, and the structural and thematic importance of Dogberry and the Watch at this crucial moment in the play. Dogberry and the Watch are thus not merely comic figures. On the contrary, they are crucial to Shakespeare's artful narrative trajectory for the play which negotiates constantly between the comic and tragic realms. From the outset of the scene, the malapropising Dogberry, while highly characteristic of the famously punning Kemp, underpins Shakespeare's own thematic and structural 'play' on the effects of mistaken language and identity which provides an over-arching framework for the work as a whole. Dogberry's opening and perhaps extemporal show, therefore, represents far more than what Zitner describes as 'high comedy's obligatory lower-orders turn'.[63]

Both the similarities and differences between the source and the play at the point of the Watch's entrance have some repercussions for a consideration of Dogberry's impact on, or even addition to, the play. Despite this, the New Cambridge revisionist stance is now largely ignored by critics and editors of *Much Ado*.[64] Mares still contends, however, that the textual problems the former revisionist theories of an '"old play"' were devised to explain, still need to be accounted for.[65] My own emphasis in the rest of this chapter, therefore, lies with 3.3 and the arrival of the Watch, a key pivotal moment in the narrative action of the play, where Don John's potentially tragic machinations are exposed and thwarted by Dogberry's comic team.

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[63] Zitner, *Much Ado*, p. 2.

[64] Surprisingly, except for the current New Cambridge edition of the play edited by Mares, the former New Cambridge theories are not covered in modern editions of the plays.

[65] Mares, *Much Ado*, p. 42.

III.   'Enter *Dogbery*'

i.   The intersection of 3.2 and 3.3

In the light of the potential reworking of the play around the introduction of the Watch, this section will consider further the impact of Dogberry's arrival, both on 3.3, and on the wider play itself. As we saw in Chapter Four, Launce's opening scene in *Two Gentlemen* thematically and structurally links the arrival of the clown with the departure and later duplicity of Proteus. Similarly, Dogberry's entrance into *Much Ado* is both linguistically and visually linked to the action which immediately precedes him. In order to open my line of argument, therefore, it is helpful to describe and reproduce the intersection of scenes 3.2 and 3.3.

By the end of Act Three Scene Two, the play's major structural plot-lines have been set up. Hero and Claudio are betrothed, and Beatrice and Benedick have been duped into mutual love. More importantly, the villainous Don John has cocked the play's tragic mechanism in his attempted deceiving of Claudio in relation to Hero's innocence: 'The lady is disloyal', states Don John in slanderous accusation of Claudio's bride, she is 'every man's Hero' (3.2.85-6). When Don John promises to prove Hero's guilt that very night, the eve of the wedding, Claudio declares that at the altar the following morning, 'where I should wed, there will I shame her'. Don Pedro is similarly tricked and joins forces with the outraged Claudio: 'And as I wooed for thee to obtaine her, I will joyne/with thee, to disgrace her' (3.2. 88-9,104-6). Both men, it seems, feel that they have already been cuckolded by Hero prior to the production of any evidence of her inconstancy, and both unanimously condemn her.

Dealing first with linguistic idiosyncrasies, the scene which is printed entirely in prose so far ends on an awkward poetic note in both the early extant texts of the play. Q1 prints the intersection of 3.2 and 3.3 as follows:

Bastard.	I will disparage her no farther, till you are my wit-nesses,beare it coldely but til midnight, and let the issue shew it self.
Prince.	O day untowardly turned!
Claud.	O mischefe strangely thwarting!
Bastard.	O plague right well prevented ! So will you say, when you have scene the sequel.

Enter Dogberry and his compartner with the Watch.

Dog.	Are you good men and true?
Verges	Yea, or else it were pitty but they should suffer salvation body and soule.
Dog.	Nay, that were a punishment too good for them , if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the Princes watch.
Verges	Well, give them their charge , neighbour Dog-bery.

(Q1, E3ᵛ)

In F1, the text follows Q1 almost exactly, but prints the stage direction '*Exit*' at the close of 3.2:

Bastard.	O plague right well prevented ! So will you say,when you have seene the sequele. *Exit*.

Enter Dogbery and his compartner with the watch.

(TLN. 1323-1339)

The closing lines of 3.2 chime harshly with the prose-filled plotting of the action up to

this point, a contrapuntal effect which seems deliberately enhanced through old-

fashioned poetics. First, the use of rhetorical stichomythia between the characters is

conspicuous and reminiscent of the 'choral' quality of the earliest phases of

Shakespeare's work.[66] Also, in the first two declamatory lines, and the first half of Don

John's closing line, the seven-syllable iambic rhythm recalls the doggerel and thumping

beat of the older mystery plays' 'old-fourteener'-style. 3.2's ending, therefore, is not

what we might expect the dramatist to have been writing towards the end of the century

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[66] See, for example, the 'chorus' in *Richard III* (2.2.66-79).

in a work which Kermode describes as containing an 'extraordinary' range of prose styles in line with the later comedies.[67] In a similar vein, Dover Wilson and Quiller-Couch listed reasons for believing that the verse scenes of the play are metrically of an earlier type than Shakespeare was writing in 1599.

Older types of verse, though, were also often satirised by Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Falstaff's witty bantering with Prince Hal and satirical use of extravagant language, for example, produces a similar parodic semantic to the structure of *I Henry IV*. When wishing to sound more 'royal', Falstaff explicitly recalls the morality play when stating that he will 'speak in passion […] in King Cambyses' vein' (*1 Henry IV*, 2.4.386-7).[68] In this light, the end of 3.2 is reminiscent of the literary satire of earlier plays, such as *Romeo* and *Two Gentlemen*, where romance is often bathetically upstaged by Petrarchan pretensions. Consider, for example, Romeo's early claim that 'love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs,/Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes' (1.1.183-4), or Valentine's lady, who held her lover's eyes 'locked in her crystal looks' (2.4.81-2). Such similar poetical affectations at the close of *Much Ado*'s 3.2 allow, I think, a sardonic nip at the irony of the affected aristocratic pomposity on display. They also serve as an appropriate linguistic counterfoil to the arrival of the Watch in that they herald a swift descent from the rhetorical potential of tragedy to a lower comic realm.

John Allen contends that, as Don John's 'opposite number', Dogberry provides the dramatist with a comically apposite foil to his villain.[69] But the oppositional semantics which separate Dogberry and Don John also ironically refract them back upon each other.   In this play which is so concerned with appearance and social

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[67] Kermode, *Shakespeare's Language*, p. 77. On how the play is stylistically in line with Shakespeare's later comedies, see Mares, *Much Ado*, p. 8.
[68] On Falstaff's deliberate use of extravagant verse, see Kermode, *Shakespeare's Language*, p. 48.
[69] Throughout his seminal article on 'Dogberry', John Allen contends that the character cannot be examined in isolation. See John Allen, 'Dogberry', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 24:1 (1973), 35-53.

pretence, it is notable that the three alternate closing lines in 3.2 are delivered in turn, and in order of rank, or legitimacy, by 'Prince', 'Claudio' and 'Bastard'. Don John's bastardy provides dramatic links between his character and the bitter familial inadequacy of Edmund in *King Lear* (c. 1608). As Claire McEachern notes, 'the subtle pressures of social hierarchy and rivalry' account for the unique nature of Don John as the bastard brother of Don Pedro.[70] In *Much Ado*, however, Don John's aristocratic snobbery ensures that his twisted machinations are not aimed at his own brother. Despite his own bastardy, Don John's matrimonial standards are made clear in 2.1 when he rejects off-handedly the supposed match between Don Pedro and Hero: 'she is no equal for his birth' (2.1.142-3).

It is even more ironic that the idiomatic affectation on display at the end of 3.2 precedes the arrival of Dogberry whose self-important pretensions are immediately disclosed in his own particular brand of distorted vocabulary. At the very outset of their exchange, Dogberry and Verges' use of language places them in a semantic space which is both verbally and socially far below that of the characters encountered so far. Their opening erroneous quibbles on 'salvation' and 'punishment' (3.3.2-3) precede similar wordy mistakes by *Hamlet*'s grave digging clowns in Act Five who rephrase Ophelia's death in what Weimann and Bruster describe as 'the language of quibbling ignorance'.[71] At 5.1.2, for example, *Hamlet*'s clowns substitute 'salvation' for 'damnation'. In similar veins, both Dogberry and Verges immediately reveal their own comically linguistic deficiencies.

Typically, as Barbara Everett points out, Dogberry's linguistic abstractions are often confused with their antonyms, especially when questions of morality hang in the

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[70] McEachern, *Much Ado*, p. 17.
[71] Weimann and Bruster, *Power of Performance*, p. 113.

balance.[72] As far as both Dogberry and Verges are concerned, however, their conversation is rational and meaningful and their self-opinionated stance unleashes a deluge of what John Draper identifies as Kemp-related malapropisms which dominate the 'low' comic flavour of the latter half of the play.[73] Even when with his social betters, Dogberry's unshaken confidence remains intact. For example, in the next scene in which they appear, Leonato describes Dogberry's long-winded malapropising 'tedious' (3.5.17). Dogberry, however, is flattered, assuming it to be a compliment from a genteel source: 'if I were as tedious as a king I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship' (3.5.18-19). As Evans argues, 'the honourable people of the play, amused or annoyed though they may be by Dogberry's verbosity, never belittle him in a form plain enough for him to have to recognize the rebuke'. The irony in 3.5, of course, is that it is Dogberry's very tediousness that stops him from warning Leonato of Don John's plan. As a result, the comic and tragic strands of the play are fundamentally unsettled further and the resolution of the play is thrown into question once more. Kemp's plain clown, it seems, is too plain in this play for him to recognize his status as a target of abuse and derision, or his use as a dramatic tool. Later, in *Measure for Measure*, Elbow's less obvious abuses of language (see, for example, 2.1) also clearly interfere with his effectiveness as a constable, as Shakespeare comments more explicitly on the English's Watch's inadequacy.

Perhaps, then, Kemp's habit of 'mistak[ing]' 'word[s]' as 'your old vice still', as Speed complains of Launce (*Two Gentlemen*, 3.1.277) still served to intensify the comic effects of both Dogberry and Verges' verbal and social affectations to come, as familiar comic conventions, therefore, are moulded into strategic narrative action. At the same time, they allow the dramatist to ridicule the actual 'upward' mobility of the 'artless and

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[72] Barbara Everett, '*Much Ado About Nothing*: the unsociable comedy', in *English Comedy*, pp. 66-84.
[73] John W. Draper, 'Dogberry's Due Process of Law', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 42 (1943), 563-78.

inadequate' members of local and rural English constabularies who were regular targets of mockery and satire on the late-Elizabethan stage.[74] Arrogant and inept members of the Elizabethan Watch were regularly portrayed on stage as 'fools, knaves, or both'.[75] Shakespeare created three such officers: Dull in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Elbow in *Measure for Measure* and, most memorably, Dogberry. All three characters, two of which were most likely played by Kemp, are depicted as naïve and prosaic men who bumble through their official duties, often with surprisingly effective results. But not just these. At the arrival of the Watch, the immediately precedent dialogue of 3.2 is refracted back on to its aristocratic characters, as the arrogance and gullibility of Claudio and Don Pedro is mirrored by the Watch's own masterful self-belief. Dogberry and Verges, it seems, are not the only fools in this ambitious and influential comedy.

The counterpointing of 3.2 and 3.3 certainly suggests an abrupt dramatic volte-face in the timbre of the action taking place on stage, as the scenes satirically mirror each other through the deliberate juxtapositions of poetry and humour through rhetoric and comic prose. The contrapuntal power in the juxtaposition of these two scenes resides, in the texts, in this dialogic formulation as the play is deliberately nudged beyond its expected generic boundaries. At the very moment of Don John's attempted redirection of the narrative thrust - comic so far - into his tragic 'sequele', the Watch arrive and blunder into his plans, switching the play back into the comic vein. The deliberate intersection of 3.2 and 3.3 suggests, therefore, in both texts, that the scenes are notably and deliberately contrasted in semantically strategic counterpoints of action. The question to be asked, however, is where exactly does 3.2 end and 3.3 begin?

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[74] Hugh C. Evans, 'Comic Constables – Fictional and Historical', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 20 (1969), 427-433 (p. 427). On this subject, see also Phoebe S. Spinrad, 'Dogberry Hero: Shakespeare's Comic Constables in their Communal Context', *Studies in Philology*, 89:2 (1992) 161-178.
[75] Draper, 'Dogberry's Due Process of Law', p. 565.

ii.   Q1 versus F1

In the light of the potential reworking of the play around the introduction of the Watch

in 3.3, there is a notable textual fluidity at this point between the Q1 and F1 texts of the

play. The sequence of action which sees the arrival of Dogberry and his men is almost

identical in both texts. But there are some differences which suggest that it is necessary

to consider the visual as well as verbal action on stage at the point of their entry.

Primarily, there is a variant between the texts at the key point of the intersection

between scenes 3.2 and 3.3. This reveals, I believe, some uncertainty around the precise

moment of Dogberry's, and Kemp's, important entry into the play.

Dealing with Q1 first, the quarto's lack of exit direction at the end of 3.2 is the

only difference between the texts. 'Hazy' stage directions in Shakespeare's plays are

consistent with the setting of 'foul paper' copy, as Wells acknowledges.[76] Exit

directions are missing from the end of five of the quarto's seventeen scenes. Some

'mid-exit' scenes are also inconsistently indicated. There are no mid-scene exit

directions for either Dogberry or Verges in 5.1, for example, despite the fact that both

characters presumably leave the stage following the directive cue in Dogberry's 'Come,

neighbour' (5.1.308).[77]

The work of textual scholars such as Long and Howard-Hill shows that this type

of authorial inaccuracy is well-documented in surviving play-texts. Long cites a

particular incident in the manuscript of the anonymous play *Thomas of Woodstock* (also

known as *1 Richard II*) which is attributed by some scholars to Shakespeare.[78]

According to Long, *Woodstock's* inaccurate stage directions indicate that the author of

the play was confused in anticipating certain scenes. 'When the book went to the

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[76] Wells, 'Editorial Treatment of Foul-Paper Texts', pp. 3-6.
[77] Zitner, *Much Ado*, p. 85.
[78] See, for example, Peter Corbin and Douglas Sedge, *Thomas of Woodstock: or, Richard II, Part One* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p. 4; and Michael Egan, ed, *The Tragedy of Richard II: A Newly Authenticated Play by William Shakespeare* (London: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006).

company', Long argues, the players restored the correct directions, thus 'avoiding the chaos on stage that would have resulted if they had played as the playwright had indicated'. Long concludes that 'among the many cautions in dealing with texts must be added that of playwrights being subject to *lapsus calami* in fair-copying their own work'.[79] Howard-Hill describes Thomas Middleton's own transcriptions of *A Game at Chess* (first staged in 1624) in a similar way, claiming that Middleton's 'cavalier treatment of his own play' created a manuscript that was 'error-ridden and deliberately defective at just that point where the author was most closely involved'.[80]

As noted, Q1 *Much Ado* is now thought to be based on 'foul papers' as opposed to a transcribed 'fair copy' of the play-script. Faced with a lack of or number of confusing exit directions, as Wells notes, any editor would have been certain that in adding them he was 'merely fulfilling his author's intentions by correcting an obvious oversight'.[81] As Werstine argues, however, stage directions can be a 'valuable indication of performance traditions in Shakespeare's own day', specifically because there was commonly no attempt to present on stage a series of scenes with definite localities.[82]

I would argue, in this light, that there is every reason to be less editorially dogmatic in assuming that the text's lack of 'Exit' direction at the end of 3.2 ignores the needs and conventions of either performance or print in producing a 'readerly' text. Moreover, while there is no formal direction to indicate the close of 3.2, the opening of 3.3 is indicated by a precisely worded, and indeed unique, stage direction which is replicated word for word in F1. As Zitner points out, both texts' use of 'compartner' is

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[79] William B. Long, '"A bed/for Woodstock": A Warning for the Unwary', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 2 (1985), 91-118.

[80] Trevor Howard-Hill, 'The Author as Scribe or Reviser? Middleton's Intentions in *A Game at Chess*', *Text: Transactions of the Society for Textual Scholarship*, 3 (1987), 305-18.

[81] Wells, 'Editorial Treatment of Foul-Paper Texts', p. 6.

[82] Paul Werstine, 'Touring and the Construction of Shakespeare Textual Criticism', in *Textual Formations and Reformations*, eds., Laurie and Berger, pp. 45-66 (p. 45).

the only time the word appears in the entire Shakespearean canon.[83] It seems unlikely, then, that immediately prior to this seemingly important stage cue, Shakespeare would have overlooked or forgotten to formally close 3.2. The lack of direction, then, is not necessarily what Wells might describe as an 'accidental omission' on the part of either the author or Q1's compositor. On the contrary, it may very well open up the text at this point to the multiple meanings conveyed by the fluid juxtaposition of the scenes, and to the agencies of dramatic art behind them.

Dealing with Kemp first, one can only imagine the effect on the audience of the appearance of the actor in the guise of Dogberry, a truly 'self-misformed lout',[84] at the point of the play's prophetic topple into the tragic realm. If the stage was not completely cleared before Dogberry's arrival, as Q1's lack of direction to close 3.2 suggests, then the potential for Kemp's gestural upstaging once again seems obvious. We know for sure from 3.3's entry direction that Dogberry is explicitly denied a solo entrance into the play, and continues to function throughout the action within the group of comedians who make up Shakespeare's Watch. Kemp, however, could have compensated for this by arriving on stage with his men while 3.2's actors were closing the scene with their rhetorical exclamations. This would have provided him with boundless opportunities for comic upstaging through gestures 'far unmeet for the matter'.[85]

Kemp arriving on stage as the pompous Dogberry can only have added to the fun for the 'tag-rag' members of the audience, whom we know from *Julius Caesar* were still at large in 1599 when Cassius describes a typical Elizabethan audience in speaking of the affectations of Caesar:

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[83] See Zitner, *Much Ado*, gloss to 3.3.0. See also David Crystal and Ben Crystal, *Shakespeare's Words: A Glossary and Language Companion* (London: Penguin, 2002), p. 87.

[84] Hall, *Virgidemiarum*. See above, p. 118.

[85] Jones, Preface to *Tamburlaine*.

> If the tag-rag people did not clap him and hiss him,
> according as he pleased and displeased them, as they use to
> do the players in the theatre, I am no true man.
>
> (1.2.256-7)

In order to please his own 'tag-rag followers', the puffed-up Kemp, arriving either during or hot on the heels of 3.2, would surely have attempted to dominate the stage space available and, in his own inimitable way, hilariously send up the aristocratic pretensions of Don Pedro, Claudio and Don John.

Any on-stage confusion caused by the early arrival of the Watch, regardless of whether or not 3.2's characters had finished speaking, would have been comically heightened by the stage logistics of both scenes. At this point in performances of the play, up to seven actors might have been struggling to get on or off an already crowded stage through separate doors (three characters exiting from 3.2 and four members of the Watch entering for 3.3), which only adds to the potential of Kemp's extemporal anarchy at the crucial point of cross-over. 3.2's performative, and bibliographical, stumble into 'low' comedy in Q1, therefore, augmented by any on-stage confusion at the point of the scene's conjunction with 3.3, would have suited Kemp very well.

The pathos and melodrama of 3.2's closure, in this light, also seems to be deliberately obliterated. We have seen the dramatic and thematic advantage of an 'early' arrival for Launce at the end of *Two Gentlemen's* brief 2.2. What might be described as an 'early' arrival for Dogberry in the light of Allan Dessen's work cited in Chapter Three, therefore, could also be seen as 'emblematic' in that it fulfils a number of dramaturgical requirements in Dogberry's bumptious characterisation. As Claire McEachern notes,

> the improvisational and extemporal abilities of the actor Will Kemp […] may have suggested to Shakespeare a role that would accommodate and even satirize the desire to upstage his fellows. Dogberry's own desire for the spotlight […]

stems from a desire for social importance and apes the clown's stage charisma and notoriety.[86]

This desire for the 'spotlight' is, of course, reminiscent of the demands of Bully Bottom. In *Much Ado*, though, confusion at the point of the conjunction of 3.2 and 3.3 would have worked to the benefit of the playwright as well as the actor in the scenes' fluid and porous juxtaposition of comic and tragic motifs. Dogberry's arrival at this precise point in *Much Ado* certainly reveals the extent of what Allen describes as the character's 'service to [Shakespeare's] dramatic strategy'. As Don John's 'opposite number', Dogberry's strategically timed antics with the Watch 'strangely thwart' the plot with Kemp's own brand of malapropising 'mischief'. In this way, Dogberry's blundering arrival into 3.2 as the head of the Watch, then, would have both replicated and anticipated the effects of the 'fat-headed' watchman on the play overall.

This leads me to the slight but crucial difference at this point in F1, the text which divides the work into five acts.[87] As noted, there is little doubt that the F1 text of *Much Ado* was set from a copy of Q1. F1 contains some sparse substantive variants described by Mares as 'of theatrical provenance',[88] and which most editors believe are attempts to annotate the play-script reflected in Q1 for later performances of the play. We find, for example, the name of 'Jacke Wilson' in the Folio text at the equivalent entry direction for 2.3.28, instead of Q1's 'Balthasar'. As McEachern notes, this Folio variant is presumed to derive from a theatrical document and refers to an actor cast in the role.[89] We cannot tell at what point between 1600 and 1623 F1's copy-text was emended, but any changes to the text in all likelihood represent 'the practice of

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[86] McEachern, *Much Ado*, p. 25.
[87] Editors generally follow Edward Capell (1713-1781) in dividing the play further into seventeen scenes. Cf. Zitner, *Much Ado*, p. 50.
[88] Mares, *Much Ado*, p. 41.
[89] Cf. McEachern, *Much Ado*, p. 130.

Shakespeare's company', as Wells contends, [90] and even, perhaps, those of the

playwright himself. But whoever was responsible for the updating of the copy-text

which lies behind F1, if we consider his role as the original editor of the play, then the

emendation of Q1's copy-text, either for the purposes of performance, or for inclusion

in the Folio volume, would presumably have been to present the text in a workable form

which tidied up Q1's numerous loose ends.

At the close of 3.2, however, F1's 'Exit' is as ambiguous as the quarto's lack of

direction. In recently reconfirming F1's theatrical status, Sonia Massai argues that,

> overall, the Folio variants in *Much Ado About Nothing* are more likely to have
> originated from the annotator's patchy recollection of the play in performance
> than from the annotator's sporadic consultation of a theatrical manuscript.[91]

We know that by the time of the publication of Q1 in 1600, Kemp had left the Lord

Chamberlain's Men. If the play was performed between that date and its inclusion in

the First Folio, as seems likely from F1's annotations, Dogberry would have been

played by a different actor. F1's 'Exit', then, might reflect Kemp's absence from

Shakespeare's troupe in that without him, the arrival of the Watch was less likely to

intrude, or was more easily prevented from intruding, into the action of the previous

scene.   From this perspective, if there was any continuing on-stage confusion at the

intersection of 3.2 and 3.3, then F1's 'Exit' may be an attempt, possibly by Shakespeare

himself, to gain some further control over performances of the play and clarify the

intersection of the scenes.

However, if this is the case, and F1's 'Exit' does indeed mark the formal closure

of 3.2, the direction is still problematic in that it replaces the more normative direction

of '*Exeunt*' which usually marks the departure of more than one character at the end of a

given scene. Admittedly, F1's stage directions, and particularly the exits of characters,

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[90] Wells, 'Editorial Treatment of Foul-Paper Texts', p. 6.
[91] Massai, *Shakespeare and the Rise of the Editor*, pp. 156-7.

are sporadic. As Hinman points out, throughout the Folio's comedies, and particularly after page 31 (which records, interestingly enough, the majority of the hilarious Act Three banter between Launce and Speed on the subject of the former's betrothal to his toothless milk-maid (TLN. 1346-1443)), proofing of the Folio text was 'both desultory and superficial'.[92] This may well account for the use of 'Exit' as opposed to 'Exeunt' at the point under discussion in F1 in *Much Ado*, where the play is printed between Folio pages 101-21. Throughout F1 *Much Ado*, however, the use of 'Exit' generally occurs when single characters quit the stage or action. For example, at the end of the first scene in F1's *Actus Tertius*, Beatrice and Benedict leave the stage separately as the direction 'Exit' appears for both characters at TLN. 1198 and 1207 respectively. Another example occurs at the close of *Actus Quartus*, where 'Kemp' is given a singular 'Exit' at TLN. 2076. As Dogberry's penultimate speech in the play is given after Conrade has told him 'Away, you are an asse, you are an asse' (TLN. 2063), we might assume that Kemp, at this point, is on stage alone.

I would also suggest, however, that, coupled with the rhetorically charged closing of 3.2, F1's singular 'Exit' may also indicate that Don John is alone on stage when he delivers the final line:

> *Bastard.*   O plague right well prevented ! So will you
> say, when you have seene the sequel.   *Exit.*

The latter half of the line has a conspicuous air of dramatic self-reflexivity in the use of a metatheatrical device with which to hold the audience's attention with the reference to the promised 'sequel'.[93] In this way, Don John's evil attempt to hoodwink Claudio also points to his ability to redirect the action of the play in the style of the Vice-like Aaron,

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[92] Hinman, Introduction, *First Folio*, p. xxv.
[93] William Empson notes that Shakespeare uses a similar device in *Hamlet* where the audience are invited to wonder 'who is crawling under the trestles' when they hear 'Swear' repeated from the 'cellarage' below the stage. See William Empson, *Essays on Shakespeare*, ed. David B. Pirie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 85.

the 'chief architect and plotter' of the Andronici 'woes' (5.3.3) in *Titus*. As the Vice, Aaron is not confined to the fictional plot-line of *Titus*. Rather, he is able to announce evil intentions to the audience as he simultaneously manipulates and augments the layers of revenge at work in the earlier play. In a similar way, a good deal of *Much Ado*'s intentional irony at this point is dependent upon the dramatic potential of Don John's own liminality between stage and yard. By the end of the scene, at least according to Don John, the play so far is effectively over. In his tragic 'sequele', Claudio and the Prince will be duped by the meeting between Borachio and Margaret, and Hero will be denounced at the altar, leading to her death.

At this point, therefore, Don John's closing words contain a prophetic quality of the action to come under his own mischievous influence. And in this light, there is every reason to ask to whom this line is addressed. If, by this point, Claudio and the Prince have already exited the stage as F1's singular 'Exit' suggests, then Don John can direct his dramatically ambivalent line alone to the audience, in the traditionally liminal capacity of the Vice. As Catherine Bates notes, through Don John

> Shakespeare unveils the potentially evil consequences of theatrical power. The manipulative, coercive power of theatrical illusion – the ability to move, persuade, and initiate action – is demonstrated before our eyes.[94]

In this way, he offers a further development of Shakespeare's anarchic gamesters which anticipates Iago's psychological destruction of Othello.

The villain's cynical moment alone with audience serves further as an appropriate dramatic precursor to the bumptious Constable's arrival, whether or not he is played by Kemp. It is the decidedly self-conscious note to the closing lines of 3.2, however, which allows a further ironic twist to the Watch's sequence to come. In a complex volte-face of dramatic expectation, Don John's 'plague' in his melancholic

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[94] Bates, 'Love and Courtship', p. 113.

Vice-like infection of the play will most certainly be 'right well prevented' by the stunning inefficiency of the Watch under Dogberry's command. But it is not until Dogberry leaves the stage half way through 3.3 that his men go on to obliterate the serious and potentially tragic tone of the end of the preceding scene. This ensures that Don John's promised 'sequel', and thus the rest of the play, is 'strangely thwarted' by their collective brand of upstaging 'mischefe'. But it operates on a level without Dogberry and, indeed, without Kemp.

The above example of textual irregularity between Q1 and F1 in terms of entrances and exits, could be dismissed as a sign of print-house corruption in texts which descend from 'foul papers'. As noted above, the New Cambridge editors partly based their theories of the revision of *Much Ado* on textual inconsistencies contained in Q1, claiming that certain stage directions in the play were 'left in some confusion during the time of revision'.[95] This is particularly the case, it seems, at the intersection of the scenes outlined above: a moment in the play which may well have been difficult to transcribe precisely at the point relating to the entrance of the Watch and, more particularly, Kemp as Dogberry.

But we also need to look beyond the text, and hence beyond the author, to appreciate the full impact of this particular variant in terms of acted drama as well as printed literature. In this light, Q1's lack of exit direction at the end of 3.2 may well point to the actor's upstaging antics. Moreover, the nebulous textual quality of both Q1 and F1 suggests that the juxtaposition of 3.2 and 3.3, dominated by verbal liminality of Don John and the visible liminality of Kemp's Dogberry at the helm of several comedians, must have varied greatly. It is more likely, then, that the changeable nature of the texts surrounding the entrance of Dogberry and the Watch points to a collective

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[95] Cited in Wells, 'Editorial Treatment of Foul-Paper Texts', p. 5.

as opposed to singular authority over performance. And this leads, in turn, to the question of whether the play was remoulded more fully for Kemp at this point in the action.

IV.   The Dogberry effect

Depending on how we read Dogberry, opinions of his, and Kemp's, comic force will differ. In comparison to *Two Gentlemen's* Launce and *Romeo's* Peter, Dogberry, as a relatively major protagonist, arrives with the Watch late-on in the action of *Much Ado*. In this way, Dogberry is reminiscent, to an extent, of *A Knack*'s bawdy Jeffrey who also arrives late in the play, within a group of comedians, and on a similar fragmentary note of comic misogyny. Comparisons with Jeffrey, however, end there. *A Knack*'s comic episode, driven by Kemp's peculiar brand of 'merriments' belonging to the earlier years of the decade, seems extraneous to the rest of the play and is marked by a conspicuous lack both of direction and dialogue which suggests the extent of extempore in performance which the printed text cannot convey.

The extensive first half of *Much Ado*'s 3.3 at first seems to point to the fact that Kemp was given a similarly hefty dose of freedom by the playwright. Dogberry first enters *Much Ado* at the opening of Q1's 3.3, arriving in the company of the 'good men' of the Watch (E3^v-F^v). The contents of the scene can be divided into two distinct halves: the first half contains the lengthy introduction of the pompous and verbose 'constable', where he holds forth, despite interjections from the other Watchmen, for 83 lines before his exit from the stage at 3.3.83 in modern editions. In the second half of the scene, Borachio and Conrade enter the action at 3.3.84 and their conversation, which describes the duping of Claudio at Hero's window and which is misinterpreted by the remaining watchmen, results in their arrest. According to Gaw, Dogberry's domination

of the opening of 3.3 where he issues his inadequate instructions to his men is 'inessential', as it adds nothing to the narrative action at this point. It is only the second half of 3.3, therefore, which is 'essential' to the play, [96] in that it allows the Watch to blunder into the main plot. Gaw goes on to contend that Dogberry's instructions may well have been 'interpolated *in toto*' by Kemp and his fellow comedians during the reworking of the scene. Both of these points suggest that if the scene was reworked at this point, it was done so specifically as a vehicle for Kemp. We might, in this light, consider Dogberry's verbose first half of the scene as another 'sweetened' part for the demanding actor.

I would argue otherwise. One of the most noticeable features of this last of Kemp's clowns for Shakespeare is that, despite the fact that the actor is given four extensive scenes which effectively dominate the latter half of the play, he never performs on stage alone. Even Kemp's Peter, one of the finely-tuned 'bit part' servant roles, whose liminal presence in *Romeo* heightens the social integrity of Verona, is given the opportunity of a one-off monologue which retains the stand-alone quality of Launce. In *Much Ado*, however, as F1's 3.2 '*Exit*' suggests, it is the Vice and not the clown who is rewarded with a moment on stage alone with the audience. There are no similar opportunities for Dogberry until his penultimate appearance in the play, where he demands to be 'writ down an asse' (5.1.86), a point to which I shall return.

At the opening of 3.3, we know that Dogberry does not arrive on stage alone, regardless of any confusion between the scenes captured in Q1. Rather, as noted, he is given a precise, and unique, entry direction which is the same in both the Q1 and F1 texts: 'Enter Dogbery and his compartner with the watch'. Dogberry, then, is required to interact continually with the other characters, and comedians, who appear on stage

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[96] Gaw, 'Actors' Names', p. 545.

with him. Admittedly, Dogberry bossily opens 3.3 with his officious 'Are you good men and true?' While this line might point, on one level, to Kemp's immediate attempt to dominate the stage space available, it also serves to heighten the ironic juxtaposition of the blunderingly comic Watch and Don John's unjust plotting, providing a valuable insight into Dogberry's domineering and bumptious nature. Dogberry's brief opening line, therefore, effectively fixes his character for the rest of the play. But the brevity of the line is enlightening in a number of other ways.

Before any of the Watch have the opportunity of answering Dogberry's opening question, Verges interrupts him. This is followed by the sequence of dialogue, as laid out above, which serves, more than anything, to reveal the self-important and deluded verbosity of them both. This is also the case further on in the scene. Having warned 'George Sea-cole' against 'vanity' in his ability to read and write, Dogberry goes on to admit unwittingly that Sea-cole is the most 'senslesse and fit man for the Constable of the watch' in his absence. He continues as follows:

	therefore beare you the lanthorne : this is your charge , You shall comprehend all vagrom men ; you are to bidde any man stand, in the Princes name.
Watch 2	How if a will not stand?
Dogbery	Why then take no note of him , but let him goe, and presently call the rest of the watch together , and thanke god you are ridde of a knave.
Verges	If he will not stand when he is bidden,he is noe of the Princes subjects.
Dogbery	True, and they are to meddle with none but the Princes subjects : you shall also make no noise in the streetes: for, for the watch to babble and to talke, is most tolerable, and not to be indured.

Talking of 'standing' and 'meddling' is reminiscent, once again, of *Romeo* in its echoes of the earlier play's Act One 'clownage', in the first case between Samson and Gregory in 1.1 and in the second in Peter's monologue in 1.2. Here, though, Verges'

interruption also echoes one of Tarlton's briefer jests, entitled 'How *Tarlton* deceived

the Watch in Fleetstreet':

> Tarlton having bin late at court, & coming homewards thorow Fleetstreet, he
> espied the Watch, and not knowing how to passe them, hee went very fast,
> thinking by that meanes to goe unexamined: But the Watchmen perceiving that
> hee shunned them, stept to him, & commanded him in the Queenes name to
> stand. Stand, quoth *Tarlton*? Let them stand that can, for I cannot. So falling
> downe, as though he had beene drunke, they helpt him up, and so let him passe.
> (A2^r)

The *Jest* comically reveals the stunning inefficiency of the actual London Watch. The

echo in *Much Ado* thus signals to the audience the extent of the social satire operating

around Shakespeare's fictional portrayal of Messina's equivalent constabulary.

Tarlton's words, though, in the mouth of Verges, or Cowley, also underpin the fact that

Kemp is not the only famous comedian on stage as Dogberry. The Watch themselves

can dominate the action as much as Dogberry in 3.3, revealing the fact that there are

other rival comic figures at work in the scene. If anything, Kemp's comic force at this

point is not only diffused but also completely bypassed by the comic 'dialogue' between

his fellow actors.

As the dialogue continues, Verges' interruptions become more frequent,

suggesting not only that he has some authority over Dogberry, but also that he wants to

compound his own influence within the Watch. When Dogberry advises his men that

the 'most peaceable way' to deal with a thief is to let him go', Verges responds

approvingly but also flatters Dogberry: 'You have beene always called a mercifull

manne, partner'. While Dogberry pauses to preen, however, 'Truly I would not hange a

dogge by my will, much/ more a man who hath anie honestie in him', Verges

immediately takes up the baton of the instructions: 'If you heare a child crie in the night

you must call to/the nurse and bid her stil it', he commands, displaying the character's

own equally ineffective grasp on authority.

Dogberry's pedantic instructions, then, are presented in the form of a dialogue with other members of the comic team on stage. This is markedly the case with his elderly side-kick, or 'compartner', Verges. While the meaning of 'compartner' in this context is unclear due to its sole use, it is not too far to speculate that the term might be an abbreviation of 'comic partner'. In other words, Cowley, whom we know played Verges to Kemp's Dogberry, might have been considered Kemp's equal on stage by now. Cowley is certainly named as a 'joint-payee' for performances at Court by the Lord Chamberlain's Men in March 1601.[97] From the outset of 3.3, Dogberry and Verges' malaprop-loaded language works in comic tandem as the opening references to 'salvation' and 'punishment' immediately convey. It might also be suggested that Verges has some authority over Dogberry both in terms of the comedy itself and in terms of his fictional status. Verges, for example, is given the first dogmatic quibble on 'salvation' which is compounded by Dogberry's 'punishment'. Verges' authority is further revealed in the following lines where he not only appears to instruct Dogberry to carry on with his instructions, but at the same time cuts off any unnecessary pontificating (I follow the layout of the quarto in the following quotations):

> *Dog*.　Nay, that were a punishment too good for them ， if
> 　　　　they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the
> 　　　　Princes watch.
> *Verges* Well, give them their charge ， neighbour Dogbery.
> 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(E3ʳ)

Dogberry's instructions in 3.3, it seems, also provide the other characters on stage with the opportunity of interrupting him. They also, presumably, would have taken the opportunity of making gestures and facial expressions in the way that we have seen Kemp do before. Verges immediately responds to Dogberry's opening line by butting in with a similarly officious and condescending tone: 'Well, give them their charge ，

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[97] Cf. Nungezer, *Dictionary of Actors*, p. 105.

neighbour Dogberry,' he commands. As in the case with Launce, the spaces which

seem built into the printed line may well reflect more on-stage 'frivolous gestures'.

This time, however, they are not confined to Kemp's character, and Verges' line

contains space, perhaps, for some impatient eye-rolling aimed at the audience in the

face of Dogberry's, and Kemp's, pomposity.

Once Dogberry regains command, his instructions must be drawn to a close.

But his competitiveness with Verges is revealed as his strictures grow in their censorial

ambition (the following sequences of dialogue are all printed on E4[r]):

> This is the end of the charge : you constable are to
> present the princes owne person, if you meete the prince in the
> night, you may stay him.

When Verges contradicts this unlikely occurrence with, 'Nay birlady that I thinke a

cannot', Dogberry lets his superior visor slip, and in his desperation to prove Verges

wrong, resorts to the more commercial language of the streets before reigning himself in

once more:

> Five shillings to one on't with any man that knows
> the statutes, he may stay him, mary not without the prince be
> willing,for indeed the watch ought to offend no man, and it is
> an office to stay a man against his will.
>
> (E4[r])

Verges approves this time: 'Birlady I thinke it be so', but Dogberry has the last laugh

and in leaving his men to their charge urges them to him send for him before leaving the

stage with a marked condescension to the elderly Verges:

> Ha ah ha , wel masters good night, and there be any
> matter of weight chaunces , cal up me , keep your fellowes
> counsailes , and your owne, and good night , come neigh-
> bour.

Again, the obvious spaces in Dogberry's lines at this point, if they do reflect the play-

script's acknowledgment of performative gesture, still suggest that any action from

Dogberry on stage would again have been aimed at the Watch themselves, and not at the

audience. Moreover, while it could be argued that the spaces around the punctuation are a result of the printed justification of the quarto's lines, Dogberry's final line could have been more condensed if necessary on this already crowded page by removing some spaces in order to fully lineate, as opposed to split, 'neighbour'.

One final important point to note is that Verges names Dogberry early on in the scene. Coupled with the use of Dogberry's name in the stage direction, this serves to compound the suggestion that Dogberry is marked out for a deeper characterization than the other figures presented at this point. Watch 1's identification of 'Hugh Ote-cake' and 'George Sea-cole' (E3^r), characters whom we do not meet again in the play, does little more than align them with the oafish and homespun characteristics of the yeoman English constables they are intended to emulate in Shakespeare's deliberate use of 'character types' from his own society.[98] Verges himself is not named at any point in the sequence, and is only once referred to by Dogberry as 'neighbour' before they both exit the stage mid-way through the scene. The audience is thus given no indication of the identity of Verges at this point the play, and he is not named in dialogue as 'GoodmanVerges' until later in the action on F2^v (3.5.9).

Dogberry and Verges' names contain their own comically semantic overtones. Used for the character's name, and tag of identification for audiences, 'Dogberry' instils the constable with a typically low degree of social status, and suggests the humble rustic origins which grate against his own aspirations to gentility. As Draper notes, 'Dogberry' was the proper name for the wild cornel or corn tree, a 'common rustic shrub' in Shakespeare's time.[99] Zitner observes that the name can also refer to the Dogwood tree or its berry. But there is a far grosser connection to be made in the name's comically metaphoric visualization of canine ordure. This is compounded by

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[98] Cf. Evans, 'Comic Constables – Fictional and Historical', p. 427.
[99] Draper, 'Dogberry's Due Process of Law', p. 565.

Verges' name which, as Zitner notes further, stems etymologically from the word 'verge', meaning staff or badge of office, or from the Latin term '*verger*', meaning small rod.[100] While this may well refer to Verges' diminutive stature (both in terms of size and actor in comparison with Kemp), the carnivalesque penile connotations should not be ignored. The name may also be a derivative of 'verjuice', the sour tasting juice of unripe fruit such as grapes. As Zitner notes further, the phrase 'verjuice face' is used in John Marston's savage satire, *The Scourge of Villainy*, written around the same time as the composition or revision of *Much Ado*. Marston's work, and in particular its references to Jonson, may have launched the series of bitter quarrels between playwrights known as the '*poetomachia*'.[101] On 4 June 1599, *The Scourge of Villainy* was one of the works banned and publicly burned by George Abbott, the Bishop of London. Verges' name, then, may well have provided Shakespeare's play with a tempting hint of notoriety.

As we have seen above and as Zitner notes, 'Verges provides Dogberry with sufficient occasion for sourness' in his challenge to his fictional authority.[102] Kemp, as the excremental 'Dogberry' (it seems likely that this meaning of the name as opposed to the more floral dogwood fruit might have caused some amusement amongst playgoers), however, used to having the stage to himself, probably also had good reason to feel his own 'sour grapes' towards Verges, or Cowley, as the quarto later reveals. The comic and increasingly caustic bantering between these two major comic figures as they vie for the stage contributes to the marked festive vigour of the play. Shakespeare has the last laugh, though, in that both characters are respectively either 'too great' (Dogberry) or 'too old' (Verges) to carry out their duties effectively.[103]

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[100] See Zitner, *Much Ado*, p. 46.
[101] Cf. Felix E. Schelling, *Ben Jonson*, pp. xii-xiv.
[102] Zitner, *Much Ado*, p. 46.
[103] Draper, 'Dogberry's Due Process of Law', p. 565.

In the text of the first half of 3.3, a pattern emerges of Dogberry's long-winded attempts at expositional speech before he is interrupted by one of the other characters. It seems, then, that Kemp is continually reined in by the scripted, as opposed to extemporal, quality of the dialogue, and that Dogberry's pedantic instructions to the Watch provide the other characters on stage with opportunities to interrupt him – interruptions which grow in frequency as the scene continues. Also, it is not only Dogberry who is the 'butt' of ridicule in this scene, but also Kemp himself as the comedian's conventional facets of his 'clownage' are woven by the playwright into his constable's character. What seems to be the case overall, then, is that while 3.3 provides a vehicle for Kemp as a stereotypical figure of Messina's own bumbling English constable, it also dilutes Kemp's anarchic presence in exercising the considerable talents of Shakespeare's company as a whole in staging the play. And this, in turn, leads to the conclusion that the whole of 3.3, and not just the latter half of the scene, is 'essential' to the play in totality.

Effectively, the culmination of Don John's plot is thwarted by the arrival of Dogberry at the start of 3.3. In this way, Shakespeare is able comically to countervail the effects of the villainous Vice by pitching him against the antagonistic figure of his constable-clown. One of the key features of *Much Ado*'s narrative structure, as McEachern notes, is the way in which 'Shakespeare delays both its gestation and resolution'.[104] Through the headily-charged rhetoric at the close of 3.2, we are left with the promise of the shocking defamation of Hero as a whore. This would have added to the intense, anticipatory closure of 3.2 in mirroring, both structurally and thematically, the dramatic anticipation which builds at the end of 1.1 with its similar promise of festive confusion in Don Pedro's disguised wooing of Hero: 'I know we shall have

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[104] McEachern, *Much Ado*, p. 55. On this point, see also Zitner, *Much Ado*, p. 50.

revelling tonight' (1.1.268). Instead of a lurid, albeit false scene of on-stage cuckoldry at the opening of 3.3, however, we are presented with the arrival of the Watch, led by the famous Kemp, at the very point of the play's topple into the tragic realm. The dramatic anticipation so artfully set up at the close of 3.2, then, would have been confounded by the immediate, and possibly ludically simultaneous, arrival of the Watch. In this light, Dogberry and the Watch are highly relevant to the action of the play so far, and certainly less surprising for its original audiences attuned to the potential for bawdy, comic disruption with the appearance of Kemp.

Also, though, as the main clown figure in the play, one of Dogberry's functions would have been to interrupt and slow the action down in the earlier style of *A Knack*'s 'naughtie' Jeffrey, or even *Romeo's* bungling Peter. Ironically enough, the extreme generic juxtapositioning of 3.2 and 3.3 also provides an element of coherence in *Much Ado*. It points, in this way, to what Barbara Everett describes as Shakespeare's ambitious and sophisticated comic composition at this mid-way point in his career.[105] More traditional critics such as H. H. Furness might object to the play's 'smack[s] of comicality'. Everett argues in response, however, that 'the genius of *Much Ado*' is that it provides such interjectory moments where we least expect them.[106] In this light, Dogberry's extensive and drawn out instructions to his Watchmen might be interpreted further as a strategic delay in the action we are left expecting at the close of 3.2, providing a dramatic space in which the resolution of the play is thrown into question once more. As a further antidote to Don John, it seems, the longer stage time Dogberry and the Watch are given at this point, the better.

If, as Gaw suggests, Dogberry's instructions were 'interpolated *in toto*', we can assume that neither Q1 nor F1 represents the scene in its entirety. As Michael Hirrel

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[105] Everett, '*Much Ado About Nothing*: the unsociable comedy', p. 69.
[106] Here Everett is citing H. H. Furness's objections to the play's 'smack[s] of comicality' in his edition of the New Variorum *Much Ado*. Ibid., p. 71.

has argued recently, no printed play can present the text as it was acted.[107]

Consequently, we have no way of knowing for how long Dogberry and his men might

have held the stage at this point. We have already seen how the printed format of

punctuation and space in Launce's opening address points to the 'elasticity' of his

speech, where the clown could take the opportunity to make a number of jokes,

stretching them out or holding them back, depending on the audience's response.[108]

Again, though, Dogberry's lengthy instructions, along with his arrival might be more

thematic than is apparent so far, as they provide a comic backdrop to the extensive

manipulation of Shakespeare's source material for the play.

Borachio and Conrade's conversation in the latter half of 3.3 contains the

retrospective narration of the events of the night, which is essential in reporting to both

audience and reader what has recently occurred in terms of Don John's plot:

> But know that I have tonight wooed
> Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero.
> She leans me out at her mistress' chamber window, bids me a
> thousand times good night – I tell this tale vilely.
>
> (3.3.126-9)

Reporting the chamber scene through this conversation increases its dramatic

plausibility in that it allows the facts concerning Margaret's impersonation of Hero to be

held back from those chiefly interested until near the end of the play. Also, though,

Dogberry's comic and verbal virtuosity which bridges the gap between the discovery

and exposure of Don John's plot provides, ironically enough, a way of preserving the

play's unity of time and place. In the context of developing modes of dramatic realism,

therefore, Dogberry's dominance of the first half of 3.3 would have provided a realistic

time-lapse between Don John's revelation of his plans, and the comic apprehension of

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[107] Cf. Michael J. Hirrel, 'Duration of Performances and Lengths of Plays: "How Shall We Beguile the Lazy Time?"', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 61 (2010), 159-82.
[108] On this point, see also de Grazia, *Hamlet Without Hamlet*, p. 177.

the drunken Borachio and Conrade in the following scene. In other words, Dogberry's arrival takes place at the same time as the supposed action with Hero off stage.

In the light of Shakespeare's change to his sources, possibly as a result of introducing the Watch, Dogberry's extensive introduction provides the dramatist with a fictional screen which smooths over the potential dramatic inadequacies of the reported scene. In order to compensate for any necessary suspension of belief, Dogberry's hilarious and extensive instructions to the Watch provide the play with a freeze-frame of comic show which avoids the potential mimetic pitfalls of continuous action. This both satisfies the audience with the arrival of Kemp as Dogberry, and masks the potential dramatic inadequacies in the decision to 'vilely' report the scene through Borachio rather than stage such a key narrative event (3.3.129). This, after all, is the play's only scene of 'late-night wooing' as described by Zitner,[109] and the apex of the play's overriding concerns with deception and disguise on which the threads of the main plot hinge.

Borachio's boastful account of his romp with the disguised Margaret is certainly vile, not only in its explicit misogyny where the unfortunate servant is tricked into masquerading as her mistress, but also in its use of plain language.[110] If anything, Borachio's 'vileness' is underpinned by his cynical allusion to *Romeo*'s Act Two balcony scene. The play thus produces its own malicious travesty of romantic love which underpins the misogynistic bent of *Much Ado* so far. At the same time, the play burlesques Shakespeare's own earlier tragedy, which also contained Kemp as a similar, if somewhat less bathetic, siphon of comic action as Peter.

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[109] Zitner, *Much Ado*, p. 2.
[110] The socially ambitious Margaret shares certain features with Maria in *Twelfth Night*. Both are clever and articulate and have a fondness for drunkards. Both also represent a step towards the characteristics of the dauntless Helen in *All's Well That Ends Well* (1606-7).

The emphasis in Shakespeare's composition of *Much Ado*, as we have already seen in both the comedies and tragedies discussed, seems to have been on presenting contrasts between adjacent scenes or incidents. Consequently, the play in its early performances would have contained a rapid sweep of contrapuntal and continuous narrative action, unencumbered by prop- or set-related realism. The lack of any realistic gap in stage time between 3.2 and 3.3 results in a two-fold presentation of comedy, both satirical and liminal at one and the same time, which links the scenes and to which only the peculiar conditions of the unlocalised Elizabethan stage could give scope. As in the case of the respective gulling of Benedick and Beatrice in 2.3, the proximity of the before and after action provides a formal dramaturgical pleasure in that it underlines the marked social contrasts so vital to the social and psychological authenticity of the play.[111] We can see, as a result, how Dogberry's dramatic function, while retaining what Weimann describes as the clown's vital 'zest in performance',[112] is also more integral to the wider action.

We might assume further that at the same time as updating the play into fashionable prose through the unconventionally comic roles of Beatrice and Benedick whose 'merry war' (1.1.50) dominates the first half of the play, Shakespeare decided to ground the second half of the play in a more predictable festive vigour with the introduction of Kemp and his 'good men' of the Watch. The dramatic logic behind the second half of 3.3 is clear, however, in that the purpose of the scene is to produce precisely the series of consequences necessary for the eventual comic conclusion to the play's multiple plot-lines.

V.   Exit Dogberry

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[111] McEachern describes *Much Ado* as 'undoubtedly the most socially and psychologically realistic of [Shakespeare's] comedies, in its portrait of the foibles and generosities of communal life', p. 1.
[112] Weimann and Bruster, *Power of Performance*, p. 100.

After the arrest of Borachio and Conrade, there are a number of confusing and variant speech prefixes between '*Conrade*' and '*Constable*' in Q1, all of which, as I will show, may well have been allocated to Dogberry during early performances of the play.   They also relate to Dogberry's possible, and critically contentious, re-entry into 3.3 just before its close.

Most clarifications of Q1's textual irregularities, as we have seen, concern in the main questions of stage directions and in particular entry and exit directions. At certain points in the text, characters are given an entry when they should not have been, or given an exit cue when they need to remain on stage.[113] A slightly more complicated category involves those instances when a character is given an exit cue, but fails to quit the stage promptly or makes what might be described as a false exit. An example of this occurs at Dogberry's first exit from 3.3 (at Q1 E4^v or 3.3.85 in modern editions of the play). At the end of his protracted instructions to the Watch we find the direction '*exeunt*' in Q1, immediately prior to '*Enter Borachio and Conrade*'. Presumably, the 'exeunt' at this point refers to the exit of both Dogberry and Verges. The remaining members of the Watch thus remain hidden from view of the newly arrived characters and overhear their conversation. Unlike the intersection of 3.2 and 3.3, Dogberry and Verges are given an explicit exit cue, and this compounds Dogberry's closing comic spin on the importance of the Watch's 'vigilance' in his absence:

> 'adiew ,be vigilant I be-/seech you'
>
> > > *exeunt.*
> > > (E4^r)

Dogberry, then, is definitely required to leave the stage at this point in the action.

It is also possible that Q1's 'exeunt' is the result of compositor intervention in order to clarify which characters do in fact leave the scene at this point, as the stage is

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[113] See 2.1.195 and 2.1.145; there is also no entrance for attendants at 1.2.21, or for a messenger at 3.5.51.

not entirely cleared. In his 'Textual Introduction' to the play, Zitner notes an example

in Q1 where '*Exeunt Ladies*' at 5.4.12 (I3v) may have been added to the text by its

compositor. Setting an already crowded page, the compositor aligned the direction with

Leonato's short-set line, 'And give her to young Claudio'. Similarly, due to the

crowded nature of the printed page on which the direction appears in 3.3, Dogberry and

Verges' 'exeunt' at 3.3.85 is aligned with the short line '-seech you' in Q1. We cannot

take for granted, then, that the direction was transcribed directly from Shakespeare's

'foul papers'. Once again, it seems, we must acknowledge a more fluid staging of the

scene, perhaps due to Kemp, and this sheds some light on the arguments surrounding

the possibility of Dogberry's return.

At what Wells describes as the 'climax' of 3.3,[114] Q1 prints the following

exchange between Watch and villains:

Watch 1	We charge you in the princes name stand.
Watch 2	Call uppe the right maister Constable, wee have here recovered the most dangerous peece of lechery, that ever was knowne in the common wealth.
Watch 1	And one Deformed is one of them, I know him, a weares a locke.
Conr	Masters, masters.
Watch 2	Youle be made bring deformed forth I warrant you.
Conr	Masters, never speake, we charge you, let us obey you to go with us.
Bor.	We are like to prove a goodly commoditie, being ta- ken up of these mens billes.
Conr.	A commodity in question I warrant you, come weele obey you. *exeunt.*

(F[v])

John Meagher argues that the first two speeches in this passage attributed in Q1 to

Conrade should be spoken by Dogberry. Q1's 'Masters, masters', therefore, is

Dogberry's opening line 'as he rushes [back] on-stage to take charge'. Meagher argues

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[114] Stanley Wells, 'A Crux in *Much Ado About Nothing*, III.iii.152-63', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 31 (1980), 85-6.

further that, 'Shakespeare gave these two speeches to Dogberry as *Con*' (i.e. *Constable*), but that the compositor believed 'this to be the Conrade who has been in the scene for the last seventy-five lines, rather than the Dogberry who has been absent just as long'. The compositor thus 'head[ed] the speeches accordingly *Conr*'.[115]

Wells finds Meagher's argument 'not inherently implausible' and notes in favour of it that all of Q1's speech prefixes for Conrade in the earlier part of the scene, printed on E4[r] and E4[v], are headed '*Con.*', a term which is not used elsewhere in the quarto for Dogberry. Neither Wells nor Meagher point out, however, that during the lines under discussion there is a possible differentiation made between the two characters through punctuation. In the lines which are clearly attributed to Conrade on F[v], 'And thought they Margaret was Hero?', which appears just prior to the Watch's initial 'charge', and in the scene's closing line as printed above, the abbreviated speech-prefix is printed with a full-stop as 'Conr.' The two speeches which are potentially attributable to Dogberry, however, are printed as 'Conr', without a full-stop.

Both the authoritative tone of 'Masters, masters' and the erroneous use of 'obey' in the second speech do both seem Dogberryesque. Editors, however, continue to resist the notion that Dogberry does indeed return to the stage, the main reason being that, as Wells notes, 'Shakespeare has left remarkably little time for the proposed action [of Dogberry's return] to take place' as he has quitted the stage some seventy-five lines before. This is 'presumably', Wells surmises, in order to go to bed: 'and there be any/matter of weight chaunces , cal up me'. McEachern objects to Dogberry's return in a similar vein, and argues that unless we imagine Dogberry's off-stage location to be

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[115] John C. Meagher, 'Conrade Conned: Or, the Career of Hugh Oat-cake', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 24 (1973), 90-91.

extremely close to hand, the shortness of time it appears to take to summon him is 'not theatrically plausible in terms of placing or character'.[116]

We have already seen, however, how comedy can sweep aside concerns of time and place, particularly on the unlocalised stage. As a member of the Elizabethan Watch, Dogberry inhabits a world which the audience would have recognized as their own far more profoundly than *Titus*' clown, Launce, or even Peter. The comings and goings of Dogberry, therefore, would not only add to the confusion on stage in the wake of the Watch's 'discovery', but also, surely, have delighted the audience at the audacious reappearance of their beloved Kemp.

The arguments offered above seem to me a limited way of reading the Q1 text in terms of the play's supposed commitment to its aesthetics of illusion which, while admittedly more representational in terms of acting, are still subject to the liminal punctuations of comic play. What is needed, I believe, is a broader critical perspective than what Kiernan describes as the 'curse' of realism. If we read the quarto in the context of the play's original performances, starring Kemp as Dogberry, then what McEachern describes as his seeming 'reluctance' to leave the stage in 3.3 can be read, not only as part of Dogberry's bumptious character, but also Kemp's unwillingness, as an actor, to leave a scene which he has failed to dominate mid-way through. Kemp as Dogberry is, in fact, not far away at all. He is presumably just inside the tiring house, and ready to reappear on stage at the slightest opportunity.

But if plays, ultimately, are about the timing of entrances and exits, then Dogberry's first appearance in *Much Ado* is crucial in that it offers not only the control of the scene, but also allows a daring change of direction in the entire generic thrust of the play. By 4.2, however, Dogberry's penultimate scene in the play, we are left in no

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[116] McEachern, *Much Ado*, p. 136.

doubt of his fictional status. Following his lengthy, and once again tedious examination

of the 'offenders' Borachio and Conrade, according to modern editions of the play,

Conrade berates the constable: 'Away, you are an ass, you are an ass'. In Q1, however,

it is 'Couley' who speaks the line, not to Dogberry but to 'Kemp', provoking the

following extraordinary response:

> *Kemp* Doost thou not suspect my place ? doost thou not
> suspect my yeeres? O that he were here to write me downe an
> asse! But maters , remember that I am an asse though it bee
> not written downe,yet forget not that I am an asse : No thou
> villaine, thou art full of pietie as shal be provde upon thee by
> good witness. I am a wise fellow, and which is more,an officer,
> and which is more, a householder, and which is more, as pret-
> ty a peece of flesh as anie in Messina , and one that knows
> the Law, goe to and a rich fellow enough, go to, and a fellow
> that hath had losses, and one that hath two gownes and every
> thing hansome about him : bring him away: O that I had bin
> writ downe as an asse!
>
> <div align="right">

exit.

(G4^v)
> </div>

I would suggest here that, as in the case of Bottom with his ass's ears, an emblem long

associated with foolishness both 'in art and proverb',[117] the joke is not so much on the

magical transformation of the weaver into an ass, but in the revelation of his true nature.

Moreover, in his own Bottom-like verbal virtuosity, Dogberry displays what, according

to Erasmus' Folly, is the 'fool's greatest gift of all' – and the secret, according to

Greenfield, of his success – his self-liking' or, perhaps more revealingly, his 'self-

resembled show'.[118] While Bottom is visually disguised by his ass's head (both as

character and actor), Dogberry remains Kemp. This is not only in terms of

performance, but also in the quarto text itself where the actor is further exposed in the

textualised slippage between reality and illusion in the speech headings.

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[117] Greenfield, '*A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the *Praise of Folly*', p. 239. For more on the emblematic 'ass', see Helen Adolph, 'The Ass and the Harp', *Speculum*, XXV, 1950, 49-57.
[118] Cited in Greenfield, '*A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the *Praise of Folly*', p. 243.

In this way, the Dogberry/Kemp figure semanticises his own ass's ears in his ludicrous arrogance and verbal mistakes which, similarly to Bottom, reveal the real fool behind the clown. Dogberry, then, does not reside in the Tarltonesque world of witty, quibbling 'clownage', and gone are the neat puns of the liminal Launce. Rather, Dogberry can be found, along with the illiterate Peter, in the overblown domain of 'natural' fooldom. But if Dogberry is a 'natural' fool, or 'asse', so too is Kemp who demands, along with his character, to be 'writ downe as an asse'. All we are left with at the end of *Much Ado*, therefore, is the actor, unwittingly and comically exposed by the character he plays, and laughed 'at', as opposed to laughed 'with'.[119]

VI.   Conclusion

Dogberry cuts a very different clown figure from those that have gone before and documents the reining in and dilution of Kemp's anarchic comic force. This enables both the curtailment and interrogation of traditional festive values in Shakespeare's developing comic vision, and a glimpse of the dramatist's first exploration into the darker comic world of the later 'problem plays' with their tragi-comic mix.[120]

Kemp's role as Dogberry in *Much Ado* stands midway in Shakespeare's career and, rather like the figure of the clown himself, looks both back to its festive roots and ahead to darker comic forces. This explains, perhaps, his dramatic restlessness. Despite the fact that he always appears on stage in a group and never alone, he fights for his place and demands to be heard. If this is down to Kemp in the main as opposed to the character he plays, then it clearly suited Shakespeare to allow the actor's bumptious

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[119] On this distinction, see Weimann and Bruster, *Power of Performance*, p. 109.

[120] In Shakespeare studies, the term 'problem plays' normally refers to the three 'comedies' written during the first decade of the seventeenth century: *Troilus and Cressida* (c. 1602), *Measure for Measure* (c. 1603-4), and *All's Well That Ends Well* (c. 1606-7). Critics might also extend the term to other plays, including *The Merchant of Venice* (1596), *Timon of Athens* (1605-6), and *The Winter's Tale* (1609-10).

stage virility to infect the preposterous persona of his fictional creation in ways which contributed to the thematic and functional motion of the play.

The seeming tension in Dogberry is also, I suggest, the result of the revealing intersection of two traditions: writing and playing, or 'author's pen' and 'actor's voice', Shakespeare's script and Kemp's role, which come together not only in the creation of a part but also of a play. This idea allows a further reading of Dogberry as a great role for Kemp – the best 'fool' part he is likely to have found at that stage in his career. Shakespeare's talent is thus revealed in developing Kemp as an actor who was essentially a stand-up comic, into an integrated character in the play, and one who was no longer required to be outside the main thrust of action in terms of comic effect. Rather, Kemp the actor is worked into the richly comic fabric of *Much Ado* as Dogberry.

In this way, the relationship between the playwright and clown becomes part of the comic strategy of the play itself and thus an element in Shakespeare's experimental composition, poised increasingly on a contrapuntal point between comedy and tragedy eventually articulated in 1603 by both the prince and play in *Hamlet*'s clown-Prince.[121] Dogberry, in effect, held up the 'mirror' to Kemp's own nature as a performer in the comic tradition and also, quite possibly, as an 'asse'. By 1600, moreover, it seems that Dogberry had already come to serve as one of the 'abstract and brief chronicle[rs] of the time' (*Hamlet*, 2.2.524-5), for Kemp had other plans. His future routes as a performer lay elsewhere, north of the river, where his jigs continued to flourish.[122]

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[121] De Grazia argues that Hamlet's clown-like characteristics affect the delay in his revenge around which the play is constructed. See de Grazia, *Hamlet Without Hamlet* pp. 158-204.

[122] Cf. Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 39.

CONCLUSION

In the chapters above I have sought to explore the authorial potential in 'popular' performance and to propose an alternative to the actor/author or theatrical/literary debate which influences so much of Shakespeare scholarship today. Each play studied in this thesis has demonstrated its own unique cultural mix of writer and actor. In some cases, the clown seems marginalised; in others, his comic potential is exploited to the full. Throughout the 1580s, and well into the 1590s, the clown is marked by the different ways in which the 'actor's voice' was able to animate the 'author's pen' as two media jostle side by side to produce a kind of textual/theatrical hybridity.

In the plays examined, we first see Kemp playing Jeffrey in *A Knack* and *Titus'* clown in scenes which bear a distinct similarity to each other in their stand-alone quality: though loosely tied to the narrative, they both contain space for the actor to improvise, as Wiles argues.[1] We then see Kemp, however, begin to dissolve into Launce in *Two Gentlemen*, where his comic force is 'tied' to the structural and thematic framework of the play. Later, having peeped through the veneer of the foolish Peter in *Romeo*, Kemp emerges once again, this time as Dogberry, fully immersed in the role of Shakespeare's ludic constable as 'textually controlled' clowning became the norm.[2] Thus, while Kemp's popularity ensured that he remained an essential cog in Shakespeare's dramatic output, in both tragedy and comedy, his roles arguably became more distilled throughout the plays in which he appeared.

Despite this seeming reduction in Kemp's comic force, the early texts also reveal how Shakespeare's dramatic art, whether on the stage or on the page, was subject to constant theatrical change. All of the texts examined reveal the figure of the clown as

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[1] Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, p. 73.
[2] Weimann and Bruster, *Power of Performance*, p. 86.

remarkably influential in terms of performance decisions and part of a working environment throughout the 1590s. In this context, Hamlet's quite categorical command to the Elsinore players to allow 'those that play your clowns' to 'speak no more than is set down for them' (*Hamlet*, 3.2.34-5) seems apt. Indeed, Wiles argues that it is impossible to resist the conclusion that this passage in *Hamlet*, probably composed in 1600-1, is topical and that, if performed in approximately 1600 by the Lord Chamberlain's Men as seems likely, 'invited' the audience to notice the loss of Kemp.[3] In the first 'bad' quarto of the play published in 1603, the Prince's equivalent speech certainly affords him an extensive opportunity to denigrate and ridicule the mannerisms of a typical clown who, 'blabbering with his lips', repeats the following stock comic phrases from Tarlton's repertoire: 'Cannot you stay till I eat my porridge?'; 'You owe me a quarter's wages!'; and 'Your beer is sour!'.[4] Hamlet's final comment about 'keeping' in the clown's 'cinque-pace of jests' (*Hamlet*, 1603, 9.32-6), however, does seem to refer quite pointedly to the jesting and jigging Kemp, who was known for his dancing skills.[5]

> Weimann argues that at this point in Q1, the Prince,
>
> in one and the same speech collapse[s] two different orders of authority in the purpose of playing. One follows humanistically sanctioned, mimetic precepts associated with Donatus and Cicero, the other – in the teeth of their rejection – the contemporary practices of Tarlton and company.

Q1's version of the scene is thus 'marked by a hybrid source of authority',[6] where dramatic one-upmanship is staged, dramatized and marked by a contradiction in what Hamlet himself describes as 'the purpose of playing' (3.2.18-19). As Harold Jenkins succinctly observes, Q1 'provides, ironically enough, an instance of the thing

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[3] See Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown*, pp. vii-viii.
[4] Cf. Robert Weimann, *Author's Pen and Actor's Voice: Playing and Writing in Shakespeare's Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 23.
[5] Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, eds., *Hamlet: the Texts of 1603 and 1623* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006), p. 114.
[6] Weimann, *Author's Pen*, p. 23, p. 28.

complained of' in Hamlet's stagey advice to both clowns and actors.[7] In other words,

Hamlet tells the players what not to do, precisely by doing it himself: by going off-

script, as it were, and speaking more than his own part with his Tarlton-like

interjections in the Q1 version of the speech.

Hamlet's comments also seem self-consciously to reflect on the fact that all

clowns, including the great 'clown-Prince' himself, were responsible for a certain level

of interference in a play-script. However, Weimann's 'different orders of authority'

might be interpreted in other ways. In Q1, Hamlet appears to cite Tarlton's 'infinite

jests' (5.1.172-3), before fondly recalling Yorick until his skull causes Hamlet's 'gorge'

to 'rise' (5.1.173-4). Thus, while Q1 reveals some tensions between 'word' and 'action'

(3.2.16-17), or writing and playing, it also glances back at an era of more obvious

cooperation between dramatists and actors in staging a play at the beginning of the

seventeenth century.

While *Hamlet* is deservedly lauded as the major turning point in Shakespearean

drama and an exemplar of dramatic portrayals of subjectivity, it is also a play which

seems fascinated by the clown function. *Hamlet*, in fact, is saturated with popular

theatre – from Claudius' motley 'king of shreds and patches' (3.4.105), through the

Prince's own 'antic disposition', and culminating in the plethora of clowns, even dead

ones, at Ophelia's grave, who wrestle the play back to its oral roots in Act Five Scene

One. Indeed, as de Grazia argues, the Prince's own clown-like characteristics allow him

to delay revenging his father's death throughout the play, so suggesting that a

substantial comic force lies at the heart of *Hamlet*'s subjective tragedy.[8] It is through

the convention of the soliloquy, after all, and in the manner of the liminal Vice of the

old morality plays who directly addresses the audience, that Hamlet is instilled with his

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[7] Harold Jenkins, ed., *Hamlet* (London: Methuen, 1982, repr. 2005), p. 289.
[8] See de Grazia, *Hamlet Without Hamlet*, pp. 158-204.

own form of interiority. Hamlet, then, is given agency to think, and to share his thoughts with the audience, but it is also this very interiority which allows him to act the clown and constantly to delay his revenge.

On a metatheatrical level, Q1's clowning Hamlet might also be acknowledging the generations of comic actors who had influenced Shakespeare's work. It is worth noting, in this light, that the latter half of Hamlet's Q1 speech is cut from the second quarto (Q2, published in 1605), and from subsequent early editions of the play. Perhaps the antics of Tarlton, and more recently Kemp, were not quite so fresh in the memories of spectators by then. Perhaps, more tellingly again, Yorick is actually Kemp, and not Tarlton at all.

The years of Kemp's association with Shakespeare, however, seem to have been a stable period for the comedian and indeed he became indelibly associated with his comic talents. As noted in my Introduction, in the late 1590s Cambridge students brought the characters of Kemp and Burbage on stage in their *Parnassus* play, in order to represent archetypal common players of both comedy and tragedy respectively, familiar to all sections of society.[9] Shortly after the lease for the site of the Globe theatre had been signed on 21 February 1599, however, Kemp's share in the venture was made over to the other partners in the Lord Chamberlain's Men, and it has generally been assumed that he left the company at this time in order to begin his 'daunce' to Norwich.[10]

It has been conjectured that Kemp may have returned to the company at some point after his trip, but a passage in *Nine Daies Wonder* itself has more frequently been taken as an indication that Kemp had left the company, and the Globe itself, for good: 'I

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[9] See above, pp. 1-2.
[10] Cf. James Nielson, 'William Kemp at the Globe', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 44:4 (1993), 466-8.

have without good help daunst my self out of the world'.[11] At the end of the pamphlet,

Kemp also seems to suggest that he will be leaving London: 'I William Kemp […] am

shortly god willing to set forward as merily as I may; whether I my selfe know not'.[12]

Again, this biographical fact seems proved by a second appearance in a *Parnassus* play.

In *The Second Part of the Returne from Parnassus* (c. 1602), Kemp is greeted as

returned 'from dancing the morrice ouer the Alpes'.[13] The only strong evidence we

have for any appearance by Kemp on the English stage after 1600 is the presence of his

name in the records of payment in Henslowe's diary, which Chambers considers proof

that 'during the winter of 1602-3 [Kemp] was certainly one of Worcester's men'.[14]

According to T. W. Baldwin, the Chamberlain's Men waited a full year before

appointing Armin as the replacement to Kemp. It is also significant to note that Kemp's

shares in the Globe were at first assigned, presumably in trust, to Heminges, Condell

and Shakespeare himself. They were finally divided into equal fourths, however

between these three and Pope.[15] What seems likely, then, is that the company held

Kemp's place open but when he decided to further his exploits early in 1600, they at last

found it necessary to replace him with Armin, 'a sophisticated and versatile' performer,

according to Alexander Leggatt. Indeed, Leggatt puts forward the traditional view that

Kemp's separation from Shakespeare's company marks its disengagement from the

practice of 'an old-fashioned clown trading on a single personality', in order to replace

'clownish agency' with a 'character actor'.[16] But this is less than the whole truth.

Whatever else Armin stood for as the 'wise fool', as the new comedian in the troupe it

seems likely that he would have taken over some of Kemp's parts. As Weimann and

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[11] Kemp, 'Dedication' to *Nine Daies Wonder*.
[12] Ibid.
[13] *The Three Parnassus Plays*, ed. J. B. Leishman (London: Ivor Nicholson nd Watson, 1949), p. 336.
[14] Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, II, 327.
[15] T. W. Baldwin, 'Shakespeare's Jester: The Dates of *Much Ado* and *As You Like It* ', *Modern Language Notes*, 39:8 (1924), 447-55 (p. 451).
[16] Alexander Leggatt, 'The Companies and Actors', in *The Revels History of Drama in English*, 8 vols. (London: Methuen, 1975), III, 107.

Bruster note, Armin's own performance practice was far more deeply rooted in the tradition of clownish agencies and direct address than has commonly been assumed. Consider, for example, the penned speeches of *Hamlet*'s gravediggers and *Macbeth*'s porter. While Armin did not trade on a single personality, therefore, he 'did not altogether surrender the jester's personality as an identifiable source of appeal'.[17] Moreover, Johnson maintains that Armin's position as a resourceful comedian was complemented by the authority of his own penmanship. As an 'actor-author', Armin not only participated in but developed further the 'rich connections between the craft of acting and the business of authorship'.[18] In Armin, then, the clown remained at the 'intersection of theatricality and literariness' identified by Erne, on the basis 'that the stage and the printed page did not necessarily represent two rival forms of publication'.[19]

Overall, what seems to be the case from the traces of Kemp examined in this thesis is that, for both actor and dramatist, his clowns were more than just a pleasant comic garnish to Shakespeare's plays. On the contrary, they were an essential ingredient of the theatrical and literary feast they provided to both spectators and readers throughout a decade which both began and ended in what Jonson would still describe in 1611 as 'jig-given times'.[20]

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[17] Weimann and Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance*, p. 87.
[18] Johnson, *The Actor as Playwright*, pp. 14, 10.
[19] Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, pp. 220, 92.
[20] Ben Jonson, 'Dedication' to *Catiline* (London, 1611), A2ʳ, in *Early English Books Online* http://eebo.chadwyck.com [accessed 26 April 2013].

APPENDIX

Plates:

Plate 1   *Kemps Nine Daies Wonder* (1600), title-page

Plate 2   *A Knack to Know a Knave* (1594), title-page

Plate 3   *Romeo and Juliet* (1599), K3^{v}

Plate 4   *Much Ado About Nothing* (1600), G3^{v}-G4^{v}

Plate 5   *Tarltons Jests* (1613), title-page

Plate 6   *Romeo and Juliet* (1599), title-page

Plate 7   *A Knack to Know a Knave* (1594), E4^{v}

Plate 8   *Titus Androncius* (1594), H^{v}

Plate 9   *Titus Andronicus* (1594), title-page

Plate 10   *Titus Andronicus* (1600), H^{r}

Plate 11   *Titus Andronicus* (1600), title-page

Plate 12   *Romeo and Juliet* (1597), title-page

Plate 13   *Romeo and Juliet* (1599), title-page

Plate 14   *Romeo and Juliet* (1599), K3^{r}

Kemps nine daies vvonder.

Performed in a daunce from
London to Norwich.

Containing the pleasure, paines and kinde entertainment
of *William Kemp* betweene *London* and that City
in his late Morrice.

Wherein is somewhat set downe worth note; to reprooue
the slaunders spred of him: many things merry,
nothing hurtfull,

Written by himselfe to satisfie his friends.

LONDON
Printed by E. A. for *Nicholas Ling*, and are to be
solde at his shop at the west doore of Saint
Paules Church. 1600.

Plate 1   *Kemps Nine Daies Wonder* (1600), title-page

A moſt pleaſant and merie nevv Comedie,

Intituled,

A Knacke to knowe a Knaue.

Newlie ſet foorth, as it hath ſundrie
tymes bene played by ED. ALLEN
and his Companie.

VVith K E M P S *applauded Merrimentes*
of the men of Goteham, in receiuing
the King into Goteham,

Imprinted at London by Richard Iones, dwelling
at the ſigne of he Roſe and Crowne, nare
• Holberne bridge, 1 5 9 4̣,

Plate 2   *A Knack to Know a Knave* (1594), title-page

The most lamentable Tragedie

Enter Will Kemp.

Peter. Mufitions, oh Mufitions, harts ease, harts ease,
O, and you will haue me liue, play harts ease.

Fidler. Why harts ease?

Peter. O Mufitions, becaufe my hart it felfe plaies my hart is
O play me fome merie dump to comfort me.   (full:

Minftrels. Not a dump we, tis no time to play now.

Peter. You will not then?

Minft. No.

Peter. I will then giue it you foundly.

Minft. What will you giue vs?

Peter. No money on my faith, but the gleeke.
I will giue you the Minftrell.

Minftrel. Then will I giue you the Seruing-creature.

Peter. Then will I lay the feruing-creatures dagger on your
I will cary no Crochets, ile re you, Ile fa   (pate:
You, do you note me?

Minft. And you re vs, and fa vs, you note vs.

2. M. Pray you put vp your dagger, and put out your wit.
Then haue at you with my wit.

Peter. I will dry-beate you with an yron wit, and put vp my
Anfwere me like men,   (yron dagger.
When griping griefes the hart doth wound, then mufique with
her filuer found.
Why filuer found, why mufique, with her filuer found, what fay
you Simon Catling?

Minft. Mary fir, becaufe filuer hath a fweet found.

Peter. Prates, what fay you Hugh Rebick?

2. M. I fay filuer found, becaufe Mufitions found for filuer.

Peter. Prates to, what fay you Iames found poft?

3. M. Faith I know not what to fay.

Peter. O I cry you mercy, you are the finger.
I will fay for you, it is mufique with her filuer found,
Becaufe Mufitions haue no gold for founding:
Then Mufique with her filuer found with fpeedy help doth
lend redreffe.

Exit.

Minft.

Plate 3   *Romeo and Juliet* (1599), K3ᵛ

eate his heart in the market place.

Bened. Heare me Beatrice.

Beat. Talke with a man out at a window, a proper saying.

Bened. Nay but Beatrice.

Beat. Sweete Hero, she is wrongd, she is slaundred, shee is vndone.

Bened. Beat?

Beat. Princes and Counties! surely a princely testimonie, a goodly Counte, Counte Comfect, a sweete Gallant surely, O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend woulde be a man for my sake! But manhoode is melted into curties, valour into complement, and men are only turnd into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only tels a lie, and sweares it: I cannot be a man with wishing, therfore I will die a woman with grieuing.

Bened. Tarry good Beatrice, by this hand I loue thee.

Beatrice Vse it for my loue some other way than swearing by it.

Bened. Thinke you in your soule the Count Claudio hath wrongd Hero?

Beatrice Yea, as sure as I haue a thought, or a soule.

Bened. Enough, I am engagde, I will challenge him, I will kisse your hand, and so I leaue you: by this hand, Claudio shal render me a deere account: as you heare of me, so think of me, goe comforte your cosin, I must say she is dead, and so farewell.

Enter the Constables, Borachio, and the Towne clearke in gownes.

Keeper Is our whole dissembly appeard?

Cowley O a stoole and a cushion for the Sexton.

Sexton Which be the malefactors?

Andrew Mary that am I, and my partner.

Cowley Nay thats certaine, we haue the exhibition to examine.

Sexton But which are the offenders? that are to be examyned, let them come before maister constable.

Kemp Yea mary, let them come before mee, what is your name,

name, friend?

Bor. Borachio.

Ke. Pray write downe Borachio. Yours sirra.

Con. I am a gentleman sir, and my name is Conrade.

Ke. Write downe maister gentleman Conrade: maisters, do you serue God?

Both Yea sir we hope.

Kem. Write downe, that they hope they serue God: and write God first, for God defend but God shoulde goe before such villaines: maisters, it is prooued alreadie that you are litle better than false knaues, and it will go neere to be thought so shortly, how answer you for your selues?

Con. Mary sir we say we are none.

Kemp A maruellous witty fellowe I assure you, but I will go about with him: come you hither sirra, a word in your eare sir, I say to you, it is thought you are false knaues.

Bor. Sir, I say to you, we are none.

Kemp Vel, stand aside, fore God they are both in a tale: haue you writ downe, that they are none?

Sexton Master constable, you go not the way to examine, you must call foorth the watch that are their accusers.

Kemp Yea mary, thats the eftest way, let the watch come forth: maisters, I charge you in the Princes name accuse these men.

Watch 1 This man said sir, that don Iohn the Princes brother was a villaine.

Kemp Write downe, prince Iohn a villaine: why this is flat periurie, to call a Princes brother villaine.

Borachio Maister Constable.

Kemp Pray thee fellowe peace, I doe not like thy looke I promise thee.

Sexton What heard you him say else?

Watch 2 Mary that he had receiued a thousand duckats of don Iohn, for accusing the Ladie Hero wrongfully.

Kemp Flat burglarie as euer was committed.

Const. Yea by masse that it is.

Sexton What else fellow?

Watch

Plate 5   *Tarltons Jests* (**1613**), **title-page**

THE
MOST EX-
cellent and lamentable
Tragedie, of Romeo
and *Iuliet*.

*Newly corrected, augmented, and
amended:*

As it hath bene sundry times publiquely acted, by the
right Honourable the Lord Chamberlaine
his Seruants.

LONDON
Printed by Thomas Creede, for Cuthbert Burby, and are to
be sold at his shop neare the Exchange.
1599.

Plate 6   *Romeo and Juliet* **(1599), title-page**

A merie knacke

I would gladlie bring my Nephew on the way.
Ki. With all my heart Dunston, but stay not long.
Eth. I humbly take my leaue of your Maiesty.
            Exeunt Dunst. and Ethenwald.
Kin. Farewel Ethenwald, but Perin tell me now,
What doest thou thinke of Alfrida,
Is she so faule as Ethenwald reports her,
Beleeue me then she had bene vnfit for me.
     per. My gratious Lord, Ethenwald hath dissembled with
For Alfrida is fair and vertuous: (your Maiesty,
For last night, being in priuate conference,
He tould me he had deuised a mean
To collour with the King by forged excuse,
No, no, (quoth he) my Alfrida is faire,
As is the radiant North star Christaline,
That guides the wet and wearie Traueller,
South with the surge of Neptunes watery main,
And thus my Lord, he fell to praising her,
And from his pocket straight he drew this counterfeit,
And said twas made by beauteous Alfrida.
     King. A face more faire than is the Sunne bright beames,
Or snow white Alpes beneath faire Cynthea,
Who would refuse with Hercules to spin,
When such faire faces beare vs companie.
Faire Pollyxena neuer was so faire:
Nor she that was proud loue to Troylus.
Great Alexanders loue, Queen of Amazons,
Was not so faire as is faire Alfrida.
But perin, be thou secrete to the King,
And I will sound these subtill practizes,
And Ethenwald, be sure I will quittance thee,
And reach thee how to ballie with thy King,
But perin lets to Court vntill to morne,
And then weele take horse and away.   *Exeunt.*
         Enter mad men of Goteham, to wit, a Miller,
               a Cobler, and a Smith.
                       Miller.

to knowe a knaue.

Miller. Now let vs consult among our selues,
How to misbehaue our selues to the Kings worship,
Iesus blesse him: and when he comes, to deliuer him this petition
I thinke the Smith were best to do it, for hee's a wise man.
     Cobler. Naighbour, he shall not doe it, as long as Iefferay the
Translater is Maior of the towne.   (the Mace:
     Smith. And why, I pray, because I would haue put you from
     Miller. No, not for that, but because he is no good fellow,
Nor he will not spend his pot for companie.
     Smith. Why (sir) there was a god of our occupation, and I
charge you by vertue of his godhed, to let me deliuer the petitio.
     Cob. But soft you, your God was a Cuckold, and his God-
head was the horne, and thats the Armes of the Godhead you call
vpon. Go, your are put down with your occupation, and now I wil
not grace you so much as to deliuer the petition, for you.
     Smith. What, dispraise our trade?
     Cob. Nay, neighbour, be not angrie, for Ile stand to nothing
onlie but this.
     Smith. But what, beare witnesse a giues me the But, and I
am not willing to shoot: Cobler, I will talke with you: nay, my
bellowes, my colertrough, and my water shall enter armes with
you for our trade: O neighbour, I can not beare it, nor I wil not
beare it.
     Mil. Heare you, neighbour, I pray containe your self and be
not wilful, & let the Cobler deliuer it, you shal see him mar all,
     Smith. At your request I will commit my selfe to you,
And lay my selfe open to you, lyke an Oyster.
     Mil. Ile tell him what you say: Heare you naighbor, we haue
consulted to let you deliuer the petition, doe it wisely for the cre-
dite of the towne.
     Cob. Let me alone, for the Kings Carrindger was here,
He sayes the King will be here anon.
     Smith. But heark, by the Mas he comes.
         Enter the King, Dunston, and Perin.
   King. How now Perin, who haue we here?
     Cob. We the townes men of Goteham,
                   Hearing

Plate 7   *A Knack to Know a Knave* (1594), E4ᵛ

The moſt Lamentable Tragedie

Your letter is with *Iubiter* by this.

Titus. Ha, ha, *Publius, Publius,* what haſt thou done?
See, ſee, thou haſt ſhot off one of *Taurus* hornes.

Marcus. This was the ſport my Lord, when *Publius* ſhot
The Bull being galde, gaue *Aries* ſuch a knocke,
That downe fell both the Rams hornes in the Court,
And who ſhould finde them but the Empreſſe villaine:
Shee laught, and tolde the *Moore* hee ſhould not chouſe,
But giue them to his Maſter for a preſent.

Titus. VVhy there it goes, God giue his Lordſhip ioy.

Enter the Clowne *with a basket and two pidgeons in it.*

Clowne. Newes, newes from heauen,
Marcus the Poaſt is come.

Titus. Sirra what tidings, haue you any letters,
Shall I haue iuſtice, what ſaies *Iubiter?*

Clowne. Ho the Gibbetmaker? Hee ſaies that he hath
taken them downe againe, for the man muſt not be hangd
till the next weeke.

Titus. But what ſaies *Iubiter* I aſke thee?

Clowne. Alas ſir, I know not *Iubiter,*
I neuer dranke with him in all my life.

Titus. VVhy villaine art not thou the Carrier.

Clowne. I of my pidgeons ſir, nothing els.

Titus. VVhy didſt thou not come from heauen?

Clowne. From heauen, alas ſir, I neuer came there,
God forbid I ſhould be ſo bolde, to preſſe to heauen in my
young daies:
VVhy I am going with my pidgeons to the tribunall
Plebs, to take vp a matter of brawle betwixt my Vncle,
and one of the Emperals men.

Marcus. VVhy ſir, that is as fit as can bee to ſerue for
your Oration, and let him deliuer the pidgeons to the
Emperour from you.

Titus.

of Titus Andronicus.

Titus. Tell mee, can you deliuer an Oration to the Em-
perour with a grace,

*Clowne.* Nay truelie ſir, I could neuer ſay grace in all
my life.

*Titus.* Sirra come hither, make no more adoo,
But giue your pidgeons to the Emperour,
By mee thou ſhalt haue iuſtice at his hands,
Hold, hold, meane while here's money for thy charges,
Giue me pen and inke.
Sirra, can you with a grace deliuer vp a Supplication?

Clowne. I ſir.

Titus. Then here is a Supplication for you, and when you
come to him, at the firſt approch you muſt kneele, then
kiſſe his foote, then deliuer vp your pidgeons, and then
looke for your reward. Ile bee at hand ſir, ſee you doe it
brauelie.

Clowne. I warrant you ſir, let me alone.

Titus. Sirra haſt thou a knife? Come let me ſee it,
Here *Marcus,* fold it in the Oration,
For thou haſt made it like an humble Suppliant.
And when thou haſt giuen it to the Emperour,
Knocke at my doore, and tell me what he ſaies.

Clowne. God be with you ſir, I will. *Exit.*

Titus. Come *Marcus* let vs goe, *Publius* follow mee.

Exeunt.

† *Enter Emperour and Empreſſe and her two ſonnes, the
Emperour brings the Arrowes in his hand
that Titus ſhot at him.*

(ſcene,

Saturnine. VVhy lords what wrongs are theſe, was euer
an Emperour in Rome thus ouer-borne,
Troubled, confronted thus, and for the extent
O ſegall iuſtice, vſde in ſuch contempt.

H 2 My

Plate 8　　　*Titus Androncius* **(1594), Hᵛ**

THE
MOST LA-
mentable Romaine
Tragedie of Titus Andronicus:

As it was Plaide by the Right Ho-
nourable the Earle of *Darbie*, Earle of *Pembrooke*,
and Earle of *Sussex* their Seruants.

LONDON,
Printed by Iohn Danter, and are
to be sold by *Edward White* & *Thomas Millington*,
at the little North doore of Paules at the
signe of the Gunne.
1594.

Plate 9   *Titus Andronicus* (1594), title-page

of Titus Andronicus.

And who should finde them but the Empresse villaine:
Shee laught, and tolde the Moore he should not choose
But giue them to his maister for a present,
  Titus. VVhy there it goes, God giue his Lordship ioy.

Enter the Clowne with a basket and two pidgions in it.

  Titus. Newes, newes from heauen,
Marcus the poast is come.
Sirra what tydings, haue you any letters,
Shall I haue iustice what sayes *Iupiter?*
  Clowne. Ho the liebbetmaker? hee sayes that hee hath ta-
ken them downe againe, for the man must not be hangd till
the next weeke.
  Titus. But what sayes *Iupiter* I aske thee?
  Clowne. Alas sir, I know not *Iupiter?*
I neuer dranke with him in all my life.
  Titus. Why villaine, art not thou the Carrier?
  Clowne. I of my pidgions sir, nothing els.
  Titus. VVhy, didst thou not come from heauen?
  Clowne. From heauen, alas sir, I neuer came there,
God forbid I should bee so bolde, to presse to heauen in my
  young dayes.
Why I am going with my pidgeons to the tribunall Plebs, to
  take vp a matter of brawle betwixt my Vncle, and one of
  the Emperialls men.
  Marcus. Why sir, that is as fit as can be to serue for your
Oration, and let him deliuer the pidgeons to the Emperour
from you.
  Titus. Tell mee, can you deliuer an Oration to the Em-
perour with a grace.
  Clowne. Nay truely sir, I coulde neuer say grace in all my
life.
  Titus. Sirra come hither, make no more adoe,
                    H.   But

Plate 10   *Titus Andronicus* (1600), H^r

The moſt lamenta-

ble Romaine Tragedie of *Titus*
Andronicus.

As it hath ſundry times beene playde by the
Right Honourable the Earle of Pembrooke, the
Earle of Darbie, the Earle of Suſſex, and the
Loode Chamberlaine theyr
Seruants.
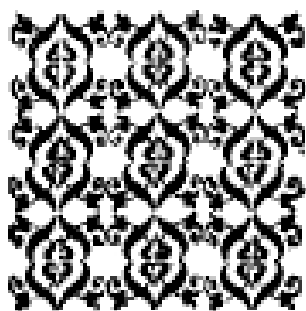
AT LONDON,
Printed by I. R. for Edward White
and are to bee ſolde at his ſhoppe, at the little
North doore of Paules, at the ſigne of
the Gun. 1600.

Plate 11   *Titus Andronicus* **(1600), title-page**

AN
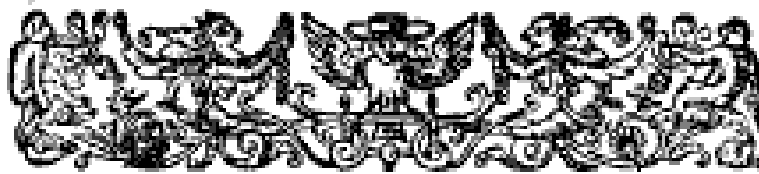
EXCELLENT

conceited Tragedie

OF

Romeo and Iuliet.

As it hath been often (with great applause)
plaid publiquely, by the right Ho-
nourable the L. of *Hunsdon*
his Seruants.

LONDON,
Printed by Iohn Danter.
1 5 9 7.

Plate 12   *Romeo and Juliet* (1597), title-page

THE
MOST EX-
cellent and lamentable
Tragedie, of Romeo
and *Iuliet*.

*Newly corrected, augmented, and
amended:*

As it hath bene sundry times publiquely acted, by the
right Honourable the Lord Chamberlaine
his Seruants.

LONDON
Printed by Thomas Creede, for Cuthbert Burby, and are to
be sold at his shop neare the Exchange.
1599.

Plate 13   *Romeo and Juliet* **(1599), title-page**

of Romeo and Iuliet.

Fri. Peace ho for shame, confusions care liues not,
In these confusions heauen and your selfe
Had part in this faire maide, now heauen hath all,
And all the better is it for the maid:
Your part in her, you could not keepe from death.
But heauen keepes his part in eternall life,
The most you sought was her promotion,
For twas your heauen she should be aduanst,
And weepe ye now, seeing she is aduanst
Aboue the Cloudes, as high as heauen it selfe.
O in this loue, you loue your child so ill,
That you run mad, seeing that she is well:
Shees not well married, that liues married long,
But shees best married, that dies married young.
Drie vp your teares, and stick your Rosemarie
On this faire Coarse, and as the custome is,
And in her best array beare her to Church:
For though some nature bids vs all lament,
Yet natures teares are reasons merriments.

Fa. All things that we ordained festiuall,
Turne from their office to black Funerall:
Our instruments to melancholy bells,
Our wedding cheare to a sad buriall feast:
Our solemne himnes to sullen dyrges change:
Our Bridall flowers serue for a buried Coarse:
And all things change them to the contrarie.

Fri. Sir go you in, and Madam go with him,
And go sir *Paris*, euery one prepare
To follow this faire Coarse vnto her graue:
The heauens do lowre vpon you for some ill:
Moue them no more, by crossing their high will.
Exeunt manet.

Mus. Faith we may put vp our pipes and be gone.
Nur. Honest goodfellowes, ah put vp, put vp,
For well you know, this is a pitifull case.
Fid. I my my troath, the case may be amended.

K 3

Plate 14   *Romeo and Juliet* (1599), K3ʳ

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A NOTE ON TEXTS

Texts:
Unless otherwise stated, all general quotations from Shakespeare's plays are taken from *The Norton Shakespeare*, gen. ed. Stephen Greenblatt, with eds. Walter Cohen, Jean Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997).

Dating:
Following the example of Andrew Gurr in *The Shakespearean Stage*, the old-style system of dating, which began the calendar year in March instead of on 1 January, has been adjusted to modern dating for the entire thesis, unless otherwise stated.

Modernisation:
In reproducing passages and quotations from the early texts, I have followed the conventions of early modern spelling and punctuation in most cases, changing only letters which ease reading: 'i' becomes 'j'; 'u' becomes 'v'; and the long 'f' is changed to 's'.

Illustrations:
Plates containing facsimile copies of various pages or folios from the early texts cited in the thesis are collated in the Appendix.