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Edited by Peter Holland

Excerpt

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SHAKESPEARE, TEXT AND PARATEXT

SONIA MASSAI

'Reader, . . . Introth you are a stranger to me; why should I Write to you? you neuer writ to mee.'

(Nathaniel Field, *A Woman is a Weather-Cock*,
STC 10854, 1612, A3^v)

'To the onely rewarder, and most iust poiser of vertuous merits, the most honorably renowned No-body, bounteous Mecenas of Poetry, and Lord Protector of oppressed innocence.'

(John Marston, *Antonio and Mellida*,
STC 17473, 1602, A2)

The early modern dramatic paratext is a rich and varied repository of tributes to patrons and readers, where dramatists negotiated or parodied their attitudes towards dramatic publication and their reliance on the medium of print as a source of income and literary reputation. However, the lack of signed dedications or addresses to the reader in the early editions of Shakespeare's plays has deflected critical and editorial attention from early modern dramatic paratexts and from the significance of other paratextual features in Shakespeare, including title-pages, head titles, running titles and act and scene divisions. This article shows that a close analysis of some of these features and a contrastive analysis of Shakespearian and non-Shakespearian early modern playbooks lend fresh insight into what we mean by 'Shakespeare' and 'text' and how the texts of Shakespeare's plays are edited and re-presented to the modern reader.

Critical and editorial neglect of paratextual features in the early editions of Shakespeare's plays is also due to the enduring legacy of the New Bib-

liography. One crucial aspect of this legacy is the common tendency to identify the printer's copy rather than the printed text as the ultimate source of textual authority. As a result, all those features that were added to the printer's copy as the dramatic manuscript was transmitted into print and transformed into a reading text tend to be overlooked. The paradox of course is that no dramatic manuscripts used as printer's copy to set up early modern playbooks have survived.¹ Scholars interested in Shakespeare and performance often criticize the 'tyranny of print'.² Ironically, the study of Shakespeare in print has also been deeply affected by the 'tyranny of the lost manuscript'. This understanding of the printed text as a misrepresentation of the printer's copy, combined with the absence of any address or dedication signed by Shakespeare, has in turn led to a near-universal misconception of the paratext as marginal, dispensable, occasional, fundamentally different and ultimately detachable from the text.

Even the more familiar types of theatrical paratexts, such as prologues, epilogues, presenters and choruses, are regarded as inherently different and separate from the main body of the dramatic

¹ No dramatic manuscripts or printed editions were for example identified as printer's copies used to set up extant early modern playbooks by J. K. Moore in *Primary Materials Relating to Copy and Print in English Books of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Oxford, 1992).

² See, for example, Margaret Jane Kidnie, 'Where is *Hamlet*? Text, Performance, and Adaptation', in Barbara Hodgdon and W. B. Worthen, eds., *A Companion to Shakespeare and Performance* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 101–20; p. 104.

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dialogue, or the *text* of the play. Early modern theatrical paratexts may indeed have been detachable from the plays in performance. According to Tiffany Stern, prologues and epilogues were meant 'for new plays and, more specifically, for new plays before their benefit performance'.³ But prologues and epilogues, along with title-pages, dedications, addresses, dedicatory poems, lists of dramatis personae and errata, postscripts and colophons, were certainly not detachable, nor were they meant to be detached from the printed playbooks which originally included them. It is certainly true that preliminaries were often printed last and on independent units or sub-units of paper. This practice was, however, driven by the practical challenge of casting-off the printer's copy before the presswork started rather than by any difference in the perceived status of prefatory materials when compared to the rest of the text. And it is certainly true that early modern playwrights occasionally maximized their chances to secure patronage by adding dedications only to presentation copies⁴ or by using the same edition to woo different patrons.⁵ But the presence or absence of a dedication or any other paratextual feature has a significant impact on how the playbook presents itself to the reader. Well known is the alternative presentation of *Troilus and Cressida* 'As it was acted by the Kings Maiesties seruants at the Globe' or as 'a new play, neuer stal'd with the Stage, neuer clapper-clawd with the palmes of the vulger' (¶2) in the two issues of the 1609 edition. As John Jowett has most recently put it, the two issues of *Troilus and Cressida* turn the play into 'a cultural object that exists in relation to posited readers . . . the regular purchaser of plays from the Globe [and] the coterie readership that the reset preliminaries seem to court'.⁶

Even more crucially, early modern theatrical paratexts cannot always be disentangled from the text. In *Summers Last Will and Testament* (STC 18376, 1600), the opening stage direction reads as follows: 'Enter Will Summers in his fooles coate but halfe on, comming out' (B1). The actor is half-dressed and not quite ready to play Tudor jester Will Sommers. The actor is also reluctant to play his role

as presenter, or prologue: 'Other stately pac't *Prologues* vse to attire themselues within: I that haue a toy in my head, more then ordinary, and vse to goe without money, without garters, without girdle, without a hat-band, without poynts to my hose, without a knife to my dinner, and make so much vse of this word *without*, in euery thing, will here dresse me with-out' (B1). The actor is most obviously 'without' the fictive world of Nashe's masque when he, 'a foole by nature', playing Will Sommers, a fool 'by arte', proclaims to be speaking to the audience 'in the person of the Idiot our Playmaker' (my emphasis, B1). The actor continues to stay 'without' the masque by acting as a disparaging commentator – he calls the masque a 'dry sport' (D1) and confesses half way through that 'I was almost asleep; I thought I had bene at a Sermon' (C1^v). But he also interacts with the characters, most memorably when Bacchus forces him to drink and knights him by dubbing him with his '*black Iacke*' (D2). Will Sommers is simultaneously within and without Nashe's masque, he is simultaneously text and paratext.

Drawing a distinction between text and paratext is just as difficult in plays written for the commercial stage. The Chorus in the First Folio edition

³ Tiffany Stern, "'A small-beer health to his second day': Playwrights, Prologues, and First Performances in the Early Modern Theatre', in *Studies in Philology*, 101 (2004), 172–99; p. 174.

⁴ A dedication to the 'intire friends to the familie of the Shereleys', signed by John Day, William Rowley and John Wilkins, was, for example, added to only a few copies of the 1607 edition of *The Travels of the Three English Brothers* (STC 6417). Interestingly, the dedication attempts to reconcile the tension between the wide circulation ensured by print and the authors' wish to present their play only to friends of the family: 'wee wish all to peruse, and yet none but friends, because wee wish all should be friends to worth and desert' (A1).

⁵ An autograph epistle 'To my Honorable Freinde S^r Francis Foliambe knight and Baronet', signed by Philip Massinger, was inscribed on X2v in one copy of the 1623 quarto edition of *The Duke of Milan* (STC 17634), although all extant copies already include a printed dedication 'To the Right Honourable and much esteemed . . . Lady Katherine Stanhope'.

⁶ John Jowett, *Shakespeare and Text*, Oxford Shakespeare Topics (Oxford, 2007), pp. 61, 64.

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of Shakespeare's *Henry V*, for example, fulfils both textual and paratextual functions. Conventionally paratextual is the classical trope of the authorial invocation of divine inspiration in its opening lines: 'O For a Muse of Fire, that would ascend / The brightest Heauen of Inuention'. Similarly paratextual is the Chorus's prologue-like appeal to the audience – 'let vs, Cyphers to this great Accompt, / On your imaginarie Forces worke' – and the explicit instruction to 'Suppose within the Girdles of these Walls / Are now confin'd two mightie Monarchies' (STC 22273, h1). As in Nashe's masque, the Chorus in *Henry V* functions as prologue, presenter, actor, authorial persona but also as a character. After Act 1, for example, the Chorus echoes Harry's parting lines – 'omit no happy howre, / That may giue furth'rance to our Expedition: / For we haue now no thought in vs but France' – as Harry is leaving the stage: 'Now all the Youth of England are on fire, . . . For now sits Expectation in the Ayre' (h2^v). The Chorus of course used to be a character in Greek tragedy, where it originated, and it is still primarily a character in plays like *Gorboduc*, which self-consciously imitates classical models. The Chorus in *Henry V* is similarly a character, but it is also actor and authorial persona, prologue, epilogue and presenter.

One further feature of Nashe's masque seems enlightening when thinking about 'Shakespeare', 'text' and 'paratext'. Towards the end of his first speech, Will Sommers delivers the following lesson to the actors:

Actors, you Rogues, come away, cleare your throats, blowe your noses, and wyepe your mouthes e're you enter, that you may take no occasion to spit or to cough, when you are *non plus*. And this I barre ouer and besides, That none of you stroake your beardes, to make action, play with your cod-piece poynts, or stād fumbling on your buttons, when you know not how to bestow your fingers (B2).

This lesson to the actors is delivered by a presenter-epilogue-authorial persona-character in the opening speech of Nashe's masque. Hamlet's lesson to the actors – 'Speake the speech I pray you as I pronoun'd [sic] it to you, trippingly on the tongue'

(Q2, G3^v, STC 22276)⁷ – is delivered in character and half-way through the play. However, both distinctions – within or without the fictive world of the play, within or without the printed text of the play – are often unhelpful.

Our readiness to endorse these distinctions is intimately connected to the etymology of the very word we use to describe the paratext. The etymology of the word 'paratext' implies a spatial dislocation, meaning 'next to, by the side of, beside' (OED) the text. Gérard Genette's influential definition of paratext as a 'threshold, or "vestibule" that offers the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back', or as a 'transitional zone between text and beyond text',⁸ reinforces distinctions that are quite simply inadequate and counterproductive when applied to early modern printed playbooks.⁹ As much as early modern

⁷ 'Pronounce me this speech trippingly a the tongue' Q1, F2, STC 22275; 'Speake the Speech I pray you, as I pronounc'd it to you trippingly on the Tongue', F1, Oo5^v STC 22273.

⁸ Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin, foreword by Richard Macksey (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 2, 407.

⁹ Genette's definition is neither misleading nor anachronistic in relation to other types of early modern paratexts. According to Wendy Wall, for example, the shift from manuscript to print for the circulation of sixteenth-century sonnet sequences and poetic miscellanies often led their predominantly male authors to 'convey a sense of social scandal by naming publication in terms of spatial metaphors' and their publications 'as ladies lavishly displayed to a public audience' (*The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca, NY and London, 1993), pp. 180–1). The sense of disclosure and voyeuristic exposure of intimate spaces and bodies to the gaze of the reader would certainly seem to be in keeping with the wider circulation which was suddenly afforded by print to texts which were previously reserved for the eyes of a few select readers. Spatial metaphors – the threshold or the vestibule – therefore work well to describe the sense of 'social scandal' brought about by the printing of this type of texts for a multitude of anonymous readers. The publication of commercial drama evoked quite an opposite set of anxieties, as scholars of Jonson, Chapman and Webster, among others, know full well. The trajectory of dramatic publication of plays originally performed in the London open theatres started from a public, commercial space open to anybody who cared to attend a show and aimed to reach a much smaller and select group of discerning readers.

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drama is intrinsically metadramatic, early modern printed playbooks are self-consciously meta- rather than para-textual, meta- meaning both 'next to, by the side of, beside' and 'denoting change and transformation' (*OED*), as in 'metamorphosis'. The presence of what we improperly call paratext in early modern playbooks is genuinely and thoroughly transformative. Detaching metatextual features from early modern playbooks is as foolish as attempting to draw a distinction between Hamlet's soliloquies and his lesson to the actors, between drama and metadrama. By contrast, regarding as *text* all the different parts of early modern printed playbooks, including paratextual features such as title-pages, head-titles, running titles, and act and scene divisions, which are normally excluded from or normalized in modern critical editions of Shakespeare's plays, can be extremely beneficial, because it forces us to rethink what we mean by 'Shakespeare' and 'text' and how we edit Shakespeare for the modern reader.

The recent re-definition of 'Shakespeare' as 'literary dramatist', for example, has been useful in refocusing critical and editorial attention on the printed text. However, this definition is somewhat qualified by a closer look at Shakespeare's text, if by text we mean anything and everything included (or not included) in the early playbooks. A glaring anomaly for a playwright supposedly committed to dramatic publication is the lack of any signed or unsigned dedication, address or postscript in the early editions of plays published during Shakespeare's lifetime. Worth pointing out is that Ben Jonson,¹⁰ John Marston¹¹ and Thomas Dekker¹² wrote addresses to their readers and occasionally signed them, starting from the early 1600s. Also problematic is the drop in the number of first editions of Shakespeare's plays after 1602 and the fact that only two Jacobean plays – *King Lear* (STC 22292, 1608) and *Pericles* (STC 22334–5, 1609) – reached the press after 1603.¹³ Theories advanced so far to explain the drop in the number of new Shakespearean editions after 1602–3 are fundamentally unsatisfactory. In his book *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist*, Lukas Erne discusses and only partly

endorses two popular theories, '[a] temporary glut in the playbooks market and the resurrection of the children's companies'.¹⁴ However, other playwrights published plays written for the commercial stage at regular intervals during the first decade of the seventeenth century. Nine of Thomas Dekker's plays were for example published between 1600 and 1612, and only two of them had been written for the same children's company, the Children of Paul's.¹⁵ The alternative theory endorsed by Erne and shared by others is that Shakespeare and the King's Men, inspired by Jonson's example, were already planning a collected edition.¹⁶ Once again, this explanation is highly problematic, considering that Jonson went on to publish eighteen plays and masques at regular intervals between the early 1600s

¹⁰ Ben Jonson, *Cynthia's Revels* (STC 14773, 1601), unsigned; *Sejanus, His Fall* (STC 14782, 1605), signed.

¹¹ John Marston, *Antonio and Mellida* (STC 17473, 1602), signed.

¹² Thomas Dekker [with John Marston?], *Satiromastix* (STC 6520.7, 1602), unsigned.

¹³ Two Elizabethan plays were printed after Elizabeth's death: *Hamlet* was entered in the Stationers' Register on 26 July 1602 but it was published (after 19 May) 1603, see Greg, *A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration* (Oxford, 1939–1959), p. 309; *Troilus and Cressida* was entered in the Stationers' Register on 7 February 1603 but was not printed until 1609.

¹⁴ Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 107.

¹⁵ *Satiromastix* (STC 6520.7, 1602) was exceptionally performed by the Chamberlain's Men and by the Children of Paul's. Erne does stress that the 'glut in the playbooks market' may only provide a partial explanation for the lack of new Shakespearean plays in print in the first half of the 1600s, because 'the four-year period from 1605 to 1608 saw the publication of no fewer than fifty-two plays written for the commercial stage, more than in any other four-year period during Shakespeare's lifetime' (p. 109). Also worth noting is the fact that new plays published in the first decade of the seventeenth century are attributed to 'W.S.' or to 'W. Shakespeare'. These are *Thomas Lord Cromwell* (STC 21532, 1602), *The Puritan* (STC 21531, 1607), and *The Yorkshire Tragedy* (STC 22340, 1609). The Shakespearean plays that do get published in the 1600s also include Shakespeare's name on the title-page, sometimes foregrounding it by placing it first, as in the first quarto of *King Lear* (STC 22292, 1608).

¹⁶ Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist*, p. 110.

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and 1612, and that all of these plays and masques were then included in the 1616 Folio, except for *The Case is Altered* (STC 14757, 1609) and, unsurprisingly, *Eastward Ho!* (STC 4970–3, 1605). The likelihood that Shakespeare's popularity was on the wane is also remote, given the sheer number of apocryphal plays attributed either to 'W.S' or to 'W. Shakespeare' in the first decade of the seventeenth century and the prominence accorded to Shakespeare's name and reputation in all the Jacobean editions of his plays and poems.¹⁷

A different explanation for the drastic drop in the number of new editions of Shakespeare's plays printed after 1603 can be found on the title-pages of the early playbooks. If the impulse to commit Shakespeare's plays to print had come primarily from Shakespeare or his company, Shakespeare's name would have featured consistently on title-pages starting from 1598, when, as Erne puts it, "'Shakespeare", the author of dramatic texts, was born."¹⁸ However, Shakespeare's name is absent not only from the title-page of two 'bad' quartos, namely the first and second editions of *Henry V* (STC 22289, 1600; STC 22290, 1602), but also from the second edition of *Romeo and Juliet*, where the title-page goes as far as advertising the text as 'Newly corrected, augmented, and amended' (STC 22323, 1599), but does not mention Shakespeare. What is strikingly consistent is the correlation between some stationers and the inclusion or exclusion of Shakespeare's name on title-pages. For example, Thomas Millington, bookseller in London between 1593 and 1603,¹⁹ acted as publisher or retailing bookseller of Shakespeare's plays both before and after 1598,²⁰ but none of the plays published or retailed by Millington included Shakespeare's name on their title-pages. Cuthbert Burby, stationer in London between 1592 and 1607,²¹ also published Shakespeare's plays both before and after 1598, but while the title-page of his 1598 edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* identifies Shakespeare as corrector and reviser of an earlier version of the play,²² possibly an earlier printed edition which is no longer extant,²³ the title-page of his 1599 edition of *Romeo and*

Juliet fails to identify Shakespeare as the corrector and reviser of the first quarto edition printed and published by John Danter in 1597.²⁴ By contrast,

¹⁷ The fact that Shakespeare's name is printed in large-sized letters at the top of the title-page of the first quarto edition of *King Lear* (STC 22292, 1608) has often been discussed by editors and textual scholars. See, most recently: Douglas Brooks, 'King Lear (1608) and the Typography of Literary Ambition', in Jeffrey Masten and Wendy Wall, eds., *Institutions of the Text, Renaissance Drama*, 30 (2001), pp. 133–59. Also 'sensational' is the title-page in Thomas Thorpe's 1609 collection of poems: 'SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS. Neuer before Imprinted', set, once again, in large, capital letters at the top of the title-page. Thorpe's initials also feature at the end of a dedication which addresses Shakespeare as 'OVR.EVERLIVING.POET' (STC 22353, 1609). The address to the reader added to the second issue of *Troilus and Cressida* similarly mentions Shakespeare's popularity as a writer of witty, conceited comedies comparable to Terence and Plautus and predicts a time 'when hee is gone, and his Commedies out of sale, [the readers] will scramble for them, and set vp a new English Inquisition' (STC 22332, 1609, A2v).

¹⁸ Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist*, p. 63.

¹⁹ R. B. McKerrow, *A Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of Foreign Printers of English Books, 1557–1640* (London, 1910), pp. 193–4.

²⁰ Thomas Millington was the publisher of the first and second quarto editions of 2 *Henry VI*, printed by Thomas Creede in 1594 (STC 26099) and by Valentine Simmes in 1600 (STC 26100), and of the first and second editions of 3 *Henry VI*, printed by Peter Short in 1595 (STC 21006) and by William White in 1600 (STC 21006a). Millington also acted as retailing bookseller of the first quarto edition of *Titus Andronicus* in 1594 (STC 22328) and as co-publisher with John Busby of the first quarto edition of *Henry V* in 1600 (STC 22289).

²¹ McKerrow, *A Dictionary*, p. 55.

²² 'Newly corrected and augmented | By W. Shakespere' (STC 22294).

²³ See, for example, Arthur Freeman and Paul Grinke, 'Four New Shakespeare Quartos' in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 5 April 2002, which offers fresh external evidence to prove that an earlier edition did exist and that it was dated 1597, as shown by the library catalogue of Edward, 2nd Viscount Conway.

²⁴ The title-page of Burby's second quarto edition of *Romeo and Juliet* (STC 22323) goes as far as drawing the reader's attention to the fact that the text of Danter's first quarto edition (STC 22322) had been 'Newly corrected, augmented, and | amended', but does not attribute the correction and revision to Shakespeare. Burby was also the publisher of the

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starting from 1598, Andrew Wise's editions of *Richard II*, *Richard III*, *1 Henry IV* and *Much Ado About Nothing* include authorial attributions on their title-pages.²⁵

The title-pages of Wise's editions highlight another interesting correlation between Shakespeare's name and the name of his patron. The Lord Chamberlain's name features on thirteen title-pages of plays printed in the late 1590s/early 1600s and ten of these plays are by Shakespeare and nine were published by Wise.²⁶ Furthermore, as I have established elsewhere, Andrew Wise published the work of two other main authors beside Shakespeare, viz. Thomas Nashe and Thomas Playfere, and all three of them were under the direct patronage and protection of George Carey, Lord Chamberlain between 1597 and 1603.²⁷ So far, royal and aristocratic patronage has been identified as having a beneficial influence on the development of early English drama *in performance*.²⁸ The early editions of Shakespeare's plays show that royal and aristocratic patronage had a similarly beneficial influence on the development of early English drama *in print*. This conclusion would seem to tally with David Bergeron's observation that dedications to royal and aristocratic patrons increased in printed playbooks in the 1630s, when dramatic publication was most buoyant.²⁹ Ironically, 'the change of reign and patron',³⁰ the one explanation rejected by Erne as 'far-fetched', seems to me entirely plausible. The evidence provided by paratextual features in early playbooks supports what we have known for a long time: that the thrifty Elizabeth made plays rather than masques the staple feature of Court entertainments;³¹ that Elizabeth introduced a conventional 'reward' for the actors on top of the standard payment, a custom which was no longer observed by members of James's family, who watched plays at the standard rate;³² that George Carey was a patron of the arts, but that Thomas Howard, Lord Chamberlain from 1603, never took the slightest interest in the actors; and that the deficit the Chamber Treasury routinely ran under James very nearly wiped the Revels Office out of existence in 1607.³³ The frequency of new editions up to 1602–3 and the connection

between the emergence of Shakespeare's name in print and aristocratic patronage would therefore seem to suggest that Shakespeare regarded dramatic publication targeted at a relatively small number of select readers as an extension of his services to his patron and the small number of select spectators who, by the sheer act of watching his plays, turned them from popular to courtly entertainment.

Shakespeare was no Jonson. Positing a Shakespeare who saw the stage and the page as opportunities directly related to his position as a company man, as a Lord Chamberlain's Man, makes more sense than positing a Shakespeare who single-mindedly willed his plays into print. In turn, understanding Shakespeare as a company man, as

first and second quarto editions of *Edward III* (STC 7501, 1596; STC 7502, 1599).

²⁵ The only exception is the first quarto edition of *1 Henry IV* (STC 22280, 1598; this edition was preceded by an earlier edition, generally referred to as Q0, of which only quire C is extant, STC 22279a), which was entered in *The Stationers' Register* on 25 February 1598 and may have preceded the printing and publication also in 1598 of the second and third editions of *Richard II* (STC 22308 and STC 22309) and the second edition of *Richard III* (STC 22315).

²⁶ The only two exceptions are the first and second quarto editions of *1 Henry IV* (STC 22280, 1598 and STC 22281, 1599).

²⁷ See Sonia Massai, *Shakespeare and the Rise of the Editor* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 91–105.

²⁸ See, for example, Richard Dutton, *The Mastering of the Revels: The Regulation and Censorship of English Renaissance Drama* (Basingstoke, 1991), or, more recently, Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company, 1594–1642* (Cambridge, 2004).

²⁹ David M. Bergeron, *Textual Patronage in English Drama, 1570–1640* (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 20ff.

³⁰ Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist*, p. 109.

³¹ John Pitcher, *Jacobean and Caroline Revels Accounts, 1603–1642*, *Malone Society Collections* 13 (1986), p. xviii.

³² W. W. Greg, *Dramatic Records in the Declared Accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber, 1558–1642*, *Malone Society Collections* 6 (1961 [1962]), p. xxv.

³³ The Revels Office, traditionally housed in the priory of St John of Jerusalem in Clerkenwell, was made homeless, destitute and hardly in a position to remain operative from 9 May 1607, when James gave the Priory to his cousin Esmé Stuart, Lord Aubigny. For further details, see Greg, *Dramatic Records*, p. xi; Pitcher, *Revels Accounts*, pp. xiii–xiv.

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opposed to 'Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist', does make a difference in terms of how we read Shakespeare and what we regard as 'Shakespeare'. More specifically, reading Shakespeare's histories, the most popular of Shakespeare's histories, as performed *and* printed under the patronage of the Lord Chamberlain has important implications for the type of writer we think Shakespeare was and for what we think he may or may not have written.

The Lamentable Tragedie of Loocrine is a good case in point. *Loocrine*, printed in 1595, was an older play, written possibly by George Peele, or, more probably by Robert Greene, and, as the title-page tells us, it was 'Newly set foorth, ouerseene and corrected, By W. S.' (STC 21528). By far the most sensible theory about the identity of 'W.S.' was put forward by C. F. Tucker Brooke in 1908, who argued that 'there is . . . no shadow of a reason why we should not accept as absolute truth the statement of the title-page'. Tucker Brooke also believed that out of all the known potential candidates 'possessed of those initials'³⁴ – namely William Smith, sonneteer, William Stanley, Earl of Derby and patron of actors, Wentworth Smith, jobbing dramatist in the early 1600s, William Smyght and William Sheppard, actors – William Shakespeare is the most likely candidate.³⁵

What interests me, of course, is the epilogue and why this interesting specimen of theatrical paratext seems to have been all but forgotten.

Lo here the end of lawlesse trecherie,
Of vsurpation and ambitious pride,
And they that for their priuate amours dare
Turmoile our land, and see their broiles abroach,
Let them be warned by these premisses,
And as a woman was the onely cause
That ciuill discord was then stirred vp,
So let vs pray for that renowned mayd,
That eight and thirtie yeares the scepter swayd,
In quiet peace and sweet felicitie,
And euery wight that seekes her graces smart,
wold that this sword wer pierced in his hart.

This epilogue, a tribute to the Queen universally ascribed to the reviser 'W.S.', was very possibly

written for a revival of the play at Court by the Queen's Men, with whom Shakespeare is likely to have been connected before he became a Lord Chamberlain's Man. I again agree with Tucker Brooke when he claims that 'there is no question connected with *Loocrine* which is less worth the settling' than whether Shakespeare wrote this epilogue.³⁶ What is crucial is not the authenticity of this epilogue, but the fact that it was ascribed to 'W.S.', that contemporary readers would have associated those initials with William Shakespeare more readily than with any other known playwrights or writers in the mid-1590s, and that we do not seem to take the slightest interest in the significance of this attribution. This blind spot may be due to our expectation of what Shakespeare's debut in print should have looked like: 'W.S.' is not a literary dramatist self-consciously using the medium of print for the sole purpose of shaping his literary reputation; 'W.S.' is a popular dramatist whose name is for the first time deemed attractive enough to entice readers to buy the edition of an older play. 'W.S.' is also connected to the one section of the text that draws attention to the 'here and now', to the time of publication, by eulogizing the 'eight and thirty years' of Elizabeth's reign. In other words, this 'W.S.' is interestingly in keeping with the William Shakespeare who as a company man would continue to regard the stage and the page as extensions of his service to his patron, possibly as a member of the Queen's Men

³⁴ C. F. Tucker Brooke, *The Shakespeare Apocrypha* (Oxford, 1908), p. xx.

³⁵ See also Jane Lytton Gooch, ed., *The Lamentable Tragedy of Loocrine, A Critical Edition* (New York and London: Garland, 1981), p. 29. I would add that while the use of the initials on title-pages of apocryphal plays in the early seventeenth century can be explained as a marketing ploy exploiting Shakespeare's by then well-established reputation in print, Shakespeare's name had not as yet appeared on the title-pages of any of the editions of plays now attributed to Shakespeare. And yet Shakespeare was already a popular dramatist by 1595, certainly popular at Court, since his name is, for example, explicitly mentioned in the 'Declared Accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber' in 1595 (Greg, *Dramatic Records*, p. 29).

³⁶ Tucker Brooke, *The Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. xx.

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first and then more prominently as a member of the Chamberlain's Men.

Paying attention to one other paratextual feature, which is often acritically adopted and reproduced by modern editors of Shakespeare, namely act and scene divisions, does not only challenge the simplistic distinction between 'text' and 'paratext' or what we think we mean by Shakespeare – literary dramatist versus company man – but also how we edit Shakespeare for the modern reader. Positing that Shakespeare was a company man rather than a literary dramatist does not mean that the texts of the plays preserved in the early playbooks necessarily reflect theatrical practice. Act and scene divisions, for example, need to be carefully reconsidered as being the product of printing house, rather than playhouse, practices.

In 'The Structure of Performance: Act-Intervals in the London Theatres, 1576–1642', Gary Taylor established that children's companies started using intervals from at least 1599 and that all adult companies had also adopted this convention by roughly 1616,³⁷ and some of them from as early as 1607–10.³⁸ Taylor reached this conclusion by arguing that, since all children's plays printed after 1599 and all plays printed after 1616 include act divisions, act divisions in these plays must reflect theatrical practice rather than a more gradual change in the social and literary status of playbooks or a change in printing conventions.³⁹ According to Taylor it was 'the first acquisition of a private theatre by an adult company', the King's Men acquiring the Blackfriars in 1608, that prompted the adult companies to abandon continuous playing in favour of 'the more academic Renaissance convention of a formal division into five acts'.⁴⁰ Taylor also specified that '[o]f plays written in 1642 or before, but first printed in 1616 or after, only nine are printed without a division into five Acts'.⁴¹ Interestingly seven of the nine exceptions are Folio plays in the second half of the volume: 2 and 3 *Henry VI*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Timon of Athens*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*.⁴² Erratic division in plays in the first half of the volume, including *Shrew* and *Henry V*, also suggests editorial intervention aimed at imposing a formal structure onto plays meant for continu-

ous performance. More generally, act divisions in the Folio suggest potential editorial intervention at least as far as the middle of the Histories section. Every play included in the Comedies section, for example, is divided despite the fact that twelve of them predate the acquisition of the Blackfriars. Taylor is confident that most comedies 'were set from late transcripts, or from quartos which had been annotated with reference to a prompt-book' and that 'their divisions are, at least presumptively, theatrical in origin'.⁴³ I have argued elsewhere that changes in the text of the dialogue, speech prefixes and stage directions in at least two Folio comedies – *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Much Ado About Nothing* – reflect the typical pattern of local changes introduced by light annotation of the printer's copy for the press rather than consultation of a theatrical manuscript.⁴⁴ I would now like to suggest that act and scene divisions in some Folio comedies may also reflect editorial rather than theatrical practice.

Andrew Gurr has argued that only *The Tempest*, the first play grouped with the other 'comedies' in the Folio, 'shows unequivocal evidence that it was conceived with act breaks in mind'. According to Gurr,

Some . . . pause, at least for music, must have been designed to intervene between Acts 4 and 5 . . . Prospero and Ariel leave the stage together at the end of Act 4 and enter together again to open Act 5 . . . He has the same characters leaving and re-entering like this in none of his other plays. For that reason if no other it is clear that he had the Blackfriars in mind, not the Globe, when he wrote *The Tempest*.⁴⁵

³⁷ Gary Taylor, 'The Structure of Performance: Act-Intervals in the London Theatres, 1576–1642', in Gary Taylor and John Jowett, *Shakespeare Reshaped, 1606–1623* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 4–8.

³⁸ Taylor, 'Structure of Performance', p. 25.

³⁹ Taylor, 'Structure of Performance', p. 17.

⁴⁰ Taylor, 'Structure of Performance', pp. 30–1.

⁴¹ Taylor, 'Structure of Performance', p. 18.

⁴² *Hamlet* is divided up to Act 2, scene 2, but division is abandoned thereafter.

⁴³ Taylor, 'Structure of Performance', pp. 44–5.

⁴⁴ Sonia Massai, *Rise of the Editor*, pp. 136–58.

⁴⁵ Andrew Gurr, 'The *Tempest's* Tempest at Blackfriars', *Shakespeare Survey* 41 (Cambridge, 1989), p. 93.

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SHAKESPEARE, TEXT AND PARATEXT

Other Folio comedies may reflect the use of act breaks in later revivals of plays originally conceived for continuous performance. The text preserved in the first and second quarto editions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (STC 22302, 1600; STC 22303, 1600 [1619]), for example, has no act divisions. By contrast, the Folio text introduces act divisions whose origin in a later revival of the play is suggested by at least one additional stage direction at the end of Act 3, which specifies that 'They [the lovers] sleepe all the Act' (STC 22273, 1623, O1), where 'Act' is taken to mean 'Act-interval'.⁴⁶ However, in other Folio comedies act breaks are neither in keeping with the structure of the play nor obviously related to later revivals which may have prompted the introduction of act breaks in a play meant for continuous performance.

Act and scene divisions in *As You Like It*, for example, would seem fairly straightforward. A new scene starts every time the stage is cleared, and at least the shifts to Acts 2 and 3 are marked by the first scene set in the Forest of Arden (2.1) and a short scene back at the Court of Duke Frederick (3.1). However, continuous action, or what Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen conveniently describe as a 'running scene' in their recent edition of Shakespeare's *Complete Works*,⁴⁷ overlaps twice with the act divisions preserved in the Folio. The first meeting between Rosalind disguised as Ganymede and Orlando in the forest opens a long sequence which spans five scenes and one act break in the Folio text. These five scenes are both thematically and temporally intertwined: they focus on young lovers who are being taught how to woo (Rosalind and Orlando in 3.2 and 4.1 and Silvius and Phoebe in 3.5) and how to wed (Touchstone and Audrey in 3.3), with Rosalind and Celia constantly on-stage except for a short intermission in 3.3. The brief hunting scene and song in 4.2 are followed by another long sequence of interrelated strands of the plot involving the lovers. This sequence is divided into four scenes spanning across Acts 4 and 5, but is thematically and temporally distinctive as a unit. Once again, Rosalind and Celia are the main focus of the action as they make arrangements for their own weddings and for Silvius and Phoebe's

wedding in the final scene, marked in the Folio as 5.4. Touchstone and Audrey provide two short intermissions, which are thematically related to the rest of the sequence, as Touchstone and Audrey also prepare to get married in 5.4.

Act divisions in the Folio text of *As You Like It* run against the grain of the dramatic action at least twice in the second half of the play. More generally, *As You Like It* has no five-act structure. There are, for example, few significant and clear-cut temporal breaks shaping plot and character development. Oliver's question to Charles in 1.1 – 'What, you wrastle to morrow before the new Duke' (STC 22273, 1623, Q3^v) – provides the first temporal break after the opening scene. The next significant temporal break falls between Rosalind and Celia's preparations to leave Frederick's Court in 1.3, and Celia's attendants finding her bed 'vntreasur'd' of its mistress early the next morning in 2.2 (Q5^v). Once all characters have resettled in the forest, temporal breaks become blurry. When Orlando is late for his appointment with Rosalind, and Rosalind complains – 'But why did hee sweare hee would come this morning, and comes not?' (R4) – we are given no clues to establish what morning this might be (later on the same morning of Rosalind and Celia's arrival in the forest, or Orlando's arrival, or one other morning after their arrival in the forest). The only other temporal break clearly signalled in the dialogue separates Rosalind's promise that every Jack will have his Jill in 5.2 and Hymen's celebration of four weddings in the final scene. What is remarkable about the continuous quality of the action in the forest is that Shakespeare makes it a central motif in his rewriting of pastoral tropes. When Rosalind disguised as Ganymede is looking for a pretext to start a conversation with Orlando, she rather awkwardly asks, 'what i'st a clocke?' Orlando's point – 'there's no clocke in the Forrest' (R3) – has wonderful resonance. Jaques

⁴⁶ Harold F. Brooks, *A Midsummer's Night Dream*, The Arden Shakespeare, 2nd series (London, 1979), p. xxxii.

⁴⁷ Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, eds., *William Shakespeare: Complete Works*, The Royal Shakespeare Company (Basingstoke, 2007).

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memorably makes fun of Touchstone's meditations upon a dial: 'Tis but an houre agoe, since it was nine, / And after one houre more, 'twill be eleuen' (R1). Measuring time makes little sense in the Forest of Arden. As Rosalind puts it, time 'ambles', 'trots', 'gallops' and 'stands still', which is a variant of Jaques's description of the seven ages of man, with the schoolboy 'creeping like snaile / Vnwillingly to schoole', with the soldier 'sodaine, and quicke in quarrell', with the 'sixt age shift[ing] / Into the leane and slipper'd Pantaloone' and the 'Last Scene of all', 'meere obliuion', when time stands still again (R1^v). Touchstone's meditations upon a dial and the passing of time 'And so from houre to houre we ripe and ripe, / And then from houre to houre we rot and rot' (R1) reminds us of the experiential quality of time in a play where time refuses to be measured. Tempting in this respect is to read 'As the Dial Hand Tells O'er', a poem discovered by William Ringler and Steven May and tentatively identified as an occasional epilogue written by Shakespeare for a 1599 court performance of *As You Like It*, as a celebration of Elizabeth's triumph over time, metonymically evoked by another dial.⁴⁸

The thematic emphasis on the experiential quality of time in the Forest of Arden and the organization of the play into long sequences which refuse to fall into a five-act structure suggest that the act division introduced in the Folio originated in editorial, rather than dramatic or theatrical, practices. This view is reinforced by textual and bibliographical evidence which has recently been used to attribute the act divisions in this play to Ralph Crane, the scribe hired by the King's Men from the late 1610s and responsible for preparing the printer's copy of several Folio plays.⁴⁹ It is therefore all the more surprising that, given the increasing amount of evidence to suggest that act division in *As You Like It* originated as part of the process whereby the text of some Folio comedies was prepared for the press, recent editors retain it and describe it as befitting the play's structure.⁵⁰

Act and scene divisions in other Folio comedies deserve careful reconsideration, and especially in those comedies that were set up from copies

prepared by Ralph Crane. *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, for example, would seem to be shackled with divisions which artificially break up the flow of the action. As one of its recent editors has noted, '*The Merry Wives of Windsor* is a comedy so loosely structured that it must have undergone, more than most plays produced at the time, constant changes, omission or additions during its stage career.'⁵¹ Act and scene divisions in this play might once again be the by-product of Crane's editorial intervention. Particularly noticeable is the frequent use of divisions and massed entries in Act 5, in light of the fact that massed entries are typical of Crane's scribal practices. The Act division falls awkwardly in the middle of a sequence set at the Garter Inn and is followed by a massed entry, '*Enter Falstoffe, Quickly, and Ford*' (E5^v), with Ford actually entering and speaking eight lines later. The last sequence in the play starts at 5.2 and is marked by the entrance of the first of the several parties of characters meeting in Windsor Great Park at night to play one final trick on Falstaff. The impulse to divide the text each time one group of characters exits (or moves to a different area on the stage) produces three short scenes, 5.4 consisting of a mere entry direction and four lines of dialogue spoken by one character. Rather than reflecting theatrical practice, act and scene divisions in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* would seem to be the product of the idiosyncratic scribal changes routinely introduced by Crane as he prepared the printer's copies of several Folio plays for the press.

Having started this essay by pleading for the paratext to be considered as integral to and coextensive with the text, I am now going to end by

⁴⁸ Attribution of this poem to Shakespeare has been persuasively disputed by Michael Hattaway in his essay 'Dating *As You Like It*, Epilogues and Prayers, and the Problems of "As the Dial Hand Tells O'er"' (forthcoming in *Shakespeare Quarterly*).

⁴⁹ James Hirsch, 'Act Divisions in the Shakespeare First Folio', *Publications of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 96 (2002), pp. 219–56.

⁵⁰ See, for example, Juliet Dusinberre, ed., *As You Like It*, The Arden Shakespeare, 3rd series (London, 2006), p. 126.

⁵¹ Giorgio Melchiori, ed., *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, The Arden Shakespeare, 3rd series (London, 1999), p. 109.