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Taboo or Not Taboo?

The Text, Dating and Authorship of *Hamlet*, 1589-1623

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History records five *Hamlets*. The first, usually called the *Ur-Hamlet* (U for short), was mentioned in 1589. At that period English actors toured in Denmark, Holland and Germany. A debased and undatable Tragoedia: *Der Bestrafte Brudermord* (BB), i.e. Fratricide Punished, sub-titled *Prinz Hamlet aus Dannemark*, survives in a manuscript copy. The earliest printed *Hamlet* was the First (so-called "Bad") Quarto (Q1) of 1603. Next came the Second Quarto (Q2) in late 1604 and early 1605, and finally the First Folio (F) in 1623. Each of these four extant versions differs widely from the others.

So does each of the five current editions, by Nigel Alexander¹, the late T.J.B. Spencer² (with Anne Barton³), Harold Jenkins,⁴ Philip Edwards,⁵ and G.R. Hibbard.⁶ No two of these texts have the same lineation; variant readings abound, by the hundred. The editors confidently contradict each other about everything, from the tiniest verbal detail to the total control-text used.

Thus students will learn that "there is only a remote possibility,"³ or else a clear probability⁴ or even a certainty^{5,6} that Shakespeare had read the French source of his story. Again, U was in all probability,^{3,4} or possibly⁵ (though not necessarily⁶), written by Kyd, except that it could easily have been written by Shakespeare himself.⁷ Further, U either was ("I am sure"⁵), or ("beyond all doubt") was not,⁴ the source of Marston's *Antonio's Revenge*. Next, the 2200 lines of Q1, including some 300 otherwise unknown, were evolved from the defective memory of an actor who had played Marcellus and perhaps also Lucianus, or Marcellus and certainly also Lucianus,⁵ and Voltemand.^{4,6} This general hypothesis (as its deviser, G.I. Duthie,⁷ called it in 1941) was "conclusively demonstrated"⁴ or "shown beyond reasonable doubt"⁶ by G.I. Duthie in 1941. This doctrine of "memorial reconstruction" is demonstrable by detailed comparison between Q1 1603 and the supposedly pre-existing and available,^{4,6} or non-existent and unavailable,⁵ authentic texts of Q2 1604-5 and F 1623, or rather the text "represented by"⁴ or "behind"⁶ F, or some other unknown text hybrid between Q2 and F.⁵ Duthie's approach and methods may either be extolled and exemplified for several pages,^{4,6} or left entirely unmentioned,^{1,2} or even replaced by an utterly different and incompatible theory.⁵ The prime purpose of Q1 either was,^{1,5} or was not,^{4,6} to provide copy for a printer. Its c.300 otherwise unknown lines may well,^{2,3} or cannot possibly,^{4,5,6} contain lines by Shakespeare. Its source is completely unclear,¹ or else entirely clear,^{2,4,5,6} namely, either "a version significantly different from that which we know today"² (incorporating "material which seems to come from... an older tragedy"³) or else a version not all that different from those we know today, namely F,^{4,6} or Q2,⁷ or a hybrid between the two,⁵ none of which incorporates any material from any older tragedy.

But at least all authorities agree that there must have been different stages in the play's evolution, including a possible "revision by Shakespeare"⁵? Not a bit of it; "all those theories which view Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as progressing to its final shape via one or more rewriting... are quite without evidence or plausibility."⁴ The *Hamlet* we know was,⁴ or was not,⁵ complete in all essentials by 1600. The bibliographical evidence proves that a theory of collusion between two publishers either "accords best with the incontrovertible facts"⁶ or is just a "baseless supposition."⁴ For their control-text, modern scholarly editors must logically prefer F to Q2,⁶ or Q2 to F,⁴ which, for historical reasons, cannot be⁴ (though it may be¹) later than 1604, and must also be earlier⁶ or later⁵ than 1606. Its copyist was either an irresponsibly careless transcriber, who "did untold damage,"⁵ or else William Shakespeare revising his masterpiece for publication.⁶ And so on, and on for page after page, as edition piles on edition.

The root cause of all this rot in the state of *Hamlet* studies is ineradicable academic preconception. Two topics in particular have become taboo. First, Shakespeare (1564-1616) could not conceivably have written U 1589. Secondly, Q1 1603 could not conceivably have derived from his own manuscript. He just *cannot* have started *so early*; he just *cannot* have written *like that*. These baseless accusations are never nowadays brought to trial, or they would be laughed out of court by the simple question "why not?" Their logical interlinkage is also overlooked. Once admit the late developer's early start, and his unfamiliar early style soon follows; and conversely. Yet the double taboo has remained unbroken for decades. The only *Hamlet* editor¹ who sees that U could easily be a Shakespeare play (why not?) misses the self-evident inference that so, therefore, could Q1. The only *Hamlet* editor² who sees that unfamiliar passages in Q1 could easily have been written by Shakespeare (why not?) remains

blind to the plain possibility that these derive from U.

Obscured by such blinkers, U has stayed out of sight, and mind. Editors now claim total ignorance of it, because it is lost. At the same time they freely attribute it to Thomas Kyd (1558-1594) or some forgotten contemporary. Such a stance is unsteady. Whether the U text is in fact lost, or survives within some later version, is a vital issue which ought not to be thus blocked by question-begging assumptions. All roads should remain open to an objective and systematic approach by way of documented facts in date order. The following annotated catalogue aims to record all the available information relevant to the date, source, genre, text and performance of any Hamlet play from 1589 to 1623. The data cited derive from extant verifiable documents.

1514: *Danorum regum heroumque historiae* by the 12th century chronicler Saxo Grammaticus tells the story of Amlodhi (Latinised as Amlethus) whose father the king is killed by his own brother Feng, who then weds the king's widow Geruth. Amlodhi resolves on revenge. He is supported by a loyal foster-brother. He feigns madness, which is tested by observing his reactions to a woman. He is questioned by courtiers, and speaks in riddles. He kills an eavesdropper and treats the corpse with contempt. He reproaches his mother, who encourages his vengeance. He is sent to England with two companions and his own death-warrant, in which he substitutes their names. He arrives home during a funeral. After an exchange of swords he kills his uncle and becomes king. His further adventures are recounted.

1570: *Histoires tragiques* by Francois de Belleforest. Its fifth volume contains a paraphrased and embellished version of the Saxo story. The hero's name is Amleth.

1571, 1578: reports on the 1554 lawsuit Hales vs. Pettit about suicide by drowning, parodied in *Hamlet* 5.1.

1579: Katherine Hamlett was drowned in the Avon.

1580: the Stratford-on-Avon archives record an inquest on Katherine Hamlett, drowned in the Avon. Verdict— misadventure.

1581: *Ten Tragedies* of Seneca, including *Thyestes*, in English translation.

1582: according to Aubrey's *Brief Lives*, Shakespeare came to London and "began early to make essays at Dramatique Poetry, which at that time was very lowe; and his Playes tooke well."

1585: Shakespeare's only son (d. 1596) is christened after his Stratford friend Hamlet Sadler.

1586: English actors in Denmark.⁵

1588: death of Richard Tarleton, chief comedian of the Queen's Men.

1589: many English lives are lost in an invasion of Portugal.

By 1589: three Senecan revenge tragedies: *Hamlet* (U), Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* and Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*⁸(indebted to *Thyestes* and the *Histoires Tragiques*)⁹

1589: *Menaphon*, a novella by Robert Greene (1558-1592) has a satirical preface by his protege Thomas Nashe (1567-1601). Relevant excerpts: "I'le... talke a little in friendship with a few of our triuiall translators. It is a comon practice now a daies amongst a sort of shifting companions, that runne through euery arte and thrive by none, to leaue the trade of *Noverint*¹⁰ whereto they were borne, and to busie themselues with the indevors of Art, that could scarcelie latinise their neck-verse¹¹ if they should haue neede; yet English Seneca read by candle light yeeldes manie good sentences, as *Bloud is a begger*, and so foorth; and if you intreat him fair in a frostie morning, he will afford you whole *Hamlets*. I should say handfulls of tragical speaches. But o greife ! *tempus edax rerum*, what's that will last alwaies ? The sea exhaled by droppes will in continuance be drie, and *Seneca* let bloud line by line and page by page, at length must needes die to our stage: which makes his famisht followers to imitate the Kidde in Aesop, who enamored with the Foxes newfangles, forsooke all hopes of life to leape into a new occupation; and these men renouncing all possibilities of credit or estimation, to intermeddle with Italian translations... their twopenie pamphlets... their home-born mediocritie Sufficeth them to bodge up a blank verse with ifs and ands... and spend two

or three howers turning over French *Doudie*..."¹²

1590-1591: English actors in Holland and Germany.⁸

1592: A Groatsworth of Wit...by Robert Greene, complains about "an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tygers hart wrapt in a Players hyde*, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blanke verse as the best of you: and beeing an absolute *Iohannes factotum*, is in his own conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrey... such rude groome... these buckram¹³ gentlemen... peasants..."

1592: *Kind Heart's Dream* by Henry Chettle (?1560-?1607) prefaces his remarks on the Greene-Shakespeare controversy by a reference to "two very sufficient translators."

1593: The Earl of Pembroke's theatre company disbands, bankrupt.

1594: *Titus Andronicus* and *The Taming of A Shrew* published; both had been acted by the Earl of Pembroke's company.

1594: *Titus Andronicus* and *The Taming of A Shrew* and *Hamlet*¹⁴ performed at Newington Butts by the Lord Chamberlain's Men.

1594: Shakespeare first recorded as a Lord Chamberlain's Man.

1594 or 1595: The Lord Chamberlain's men perform in Cambridge¹⁵; a payment of xl.s is recorded in treasurers' accounts for the year ending Michaelmas 1595.

1594: *A Looking-Glass for London and England*, by Thomas Lodge (1558-1625) and Robert Greene: "Alas, sir, your father, why sir methinks I see the gentleman still . . . his beard rat's colour, half black half white." ¹⁶

1594. *Wit's Miserie* by Thomas Lodge describes a devil that looked "as pale as the vizard of the ghost who cried so miserably at the Theatre, like an oyster-wife, Hamlet, revenge!"

1596: death of Hamlet Shakespeare, aged eleven in Stratford-upon-Avon. See footnote 23 below.

1598: Speght's edition of Chaucer. Gabriel Harvey wrote that date at the beginning and end of his own copy, which also contains (fol.394v) his note: "And now translated Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso & Bartas himself deserue curious comparison with Chaucer, Lidgate, & owre best English, auncient and modeme. Amongst which, the Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia & the Faerie Queeneare now freshest in request: & Astrophil & Amyntas ar none of the idlest pastimes of sum fine humanists. The Earle of Essex¹⁷ much commends Albion's England ... and the Lord Mountjoy makes the like account of Daniels peece of the Chronicle, touching the Usurpation of Henrie of Bullingbrooke. ... The younger sort takes much delight in Shakespeare's Venus, & Adonis: but his Lucrece, & his tragedie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, haue it in them, to please the wiser sort. Or such poets: or better: or none.

Villa miretur vulgus: mihi flavus Apollo
Pocala Castaliase plena ministret aquae:

quote Sir Edward Dier, betwene Test & earnest. Whose written deuises far excell most of the sonets, and cantos in print. His Amaryllis, & Sir Walter Raleighs Cynthia, how fine & sweet inuentions? Excellent matter of emulation for Spencer, Constable, France, Watson,¹⁸ Daniel, Warner, Chapman, Siluester, Shakespeare, & the rest of owr flourishing metricians. I looke for much, as well in verse, as in prose, from mie two Oxford friends, Doctor Gager, & M. Hackluit: both rarely furnished for the purpose: & sumtime as weightie as briefe: & amongst so manic gentle, noble, & royal spirits meethinkes I see sum heroical thing in the clowdes: mie soueraine hope, Axiophilus shall forgett himself, or will remember to leave sum memorials behinde him: & to make an vse of so many rhapsodies, cantos, hymnes, odes, epigrams, sonets, & discourses, as at idle howers, or at flowing fitts he hath compiled. God knowes what is good for the world, & fitting for this age."

1598: *Palladis Tamia: Wit's Treasury* by Francis Meres: "As *Plautus* and *Seneca* are accounted the best for Comedy and Tragedy among the Latines; so Shakespeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the Stage; for ... Tragedy (witnes) his... *Titus andronicus*." *Hamlet* is not mentioned.

1601: *Antonio's Revenge*, by John Marston, derives from a *Hamlet* play.

1601: *Satiromastix* by Thomas Dekker: "My name's Hamlet, revenge; thou hast been at Paris Garden,¹⁹ hast not?"

1602: On 26 July, James Roberts "Entred for his copie under the handes of master Pasfield and master Waterson warden A booke called the Revenge of Hamlett Prince Denmark as yt was latelie Acted by the Lord Chamberleyne his servantes."

1603: After 19 May: Q1 "*The Tragical Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke*. By William Shakespeare. As it hath beene diverse times acted by his Highnesse servantes" in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and elsewhere. At London printed for N [icholas] L [ing] and John Trundell. 1603." Its running title is "The tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark." Its c.2200 lines include some 300 otherwise unknown, with a dialogue between the Queen and Horatio. Among many other differences of nomenclature, Polonius is called "Corambis" and his servant Reynaldo "Montano". Details of character and plot are also variant; thus Hamlet is unequivocally young, the Queen encourages his vengeance, and the nunnery scene precedes the arrival of the players.

1604: Q2 "*The Tragical History of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*. By William Shakespeare. Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much again as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie. At London, Printed by F[ames] R [oberts] for N [icholas] L [ing] and are to be sold at his shoppe under Saint Dunstons Church in Fleetstreet. 1604."²¹ This much longer version, c.3700 lines, is recognisably the world-famous masterpiece. It shared the copyright established by Ling's publication of Q1.

1607: *Hamlet, The Taming of A Shrew, Romeo and Juliet, Love's Labours Lost* and twelve other books transferred from Nicholas Ling to John Smethwick.

1608: *A Nest of Ninnies* by Robert Arnim: "There are, as Hamlet says,²² things called whips in store."

1611, 1622: Q3 and Q4, printed for John Smethwick from Q2, with amendments.

1616: Shakespeare's will includes bequests of money, for the purchase of memorial rings, to "Hamlett Sadler" and "my fellows John Hemynges and Henry Cundell."

1623: Hemings and Condell bring out the First Folio of collected plays, including F, *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*: this text has some 80 lines not found in Q2, which has some 230 lines not found in F.

1623: Ben Jonson, in the First Folio, "To the memory of my beloved, the author Master William Shakespeare, and what he bath left us... - thou hadst small Latin and less Greek... yet must I not give Nature all" "he who casts to write a living line must sweat and strike the second heat/upon the Muses' anvil."

c. 1626: Ben Jonson, in *Timber, or Discoveries* (1641) "he flow'd with that facility that sometime it was necessary he should be stopped."

unknown date: BB, the German prose text *Der Bestrafte Brudermord*.

It has a rhymed Senecan prologue spoken by Night and the Furies. Its Hamlet says "Ja, ja, Konig, schickt mich nach Portugal, auf dass ich nimmer wieder komme" (Yes, yes King, send me to Portugal, so that I'll never conie back again). It incorporates crudely farcical elements otherwise unknown. As in Q1, Polonius is 'Corambus'; the nunnery scene precedes the arrival of the players; and so on.

The foregoing facts offer self-evident inferences. Shakespeare had written U by 1589; it was acted in Germany and eventually debased to BB; meanwhile, successive English versions were published as Q1 1603, Q2 1604- 5, and F 1623. All the relevant data click cleanly into that simple sequence.

But in modern editorial chronology, Q2 1604-5 came first (acted c.1600), closely followed by F 1623, all well before Q1 1603. Neither U nor the unfamiliar text of Q1 had anything to do with Shakespeare. To achieve these remarkable results, all the actual historical evidence of

date and authorship has to be ignored or denied. Thus the admittedly possible date of 1598 for Harvey's mention of *Hamlet* cannot be allowed to mean 1598; the publication announced in 1602 cannot be allowed to mean Q1 1603; the latter's title-page assurances about Shakespeare's authorship and his company's performances cannot be allowed to mean either him or his company; and so on. All such contemporary fact may safely be discarded in favour of modern theories; or so editors instinctively suppose. But what if those theories are all just wrong, as in view of their contradictions many of them must be? Then the whole tragical history of twentieth century *Hamlet* criticism will have to be rewritten. All five editions under review evade the vital questions (which should have been considered in strict sequence) by arguing backwards in logic from conclusion to premises and in time from F 1623 via Q1 1603 to U 1589. We should, instead, start again from the sources, with a fresh approach. Then the first problem becomes: who wrote U?

For 400 years, the legendary Amlodh lay latinised as Amlethus. For another twenty years, he was also gallicised as Amleth. Then suddenly, in 1589, he steps on to the world stage as the hero Hamlet, in the first recorded mention of that form of his name. It was no mere Englishing; he could readily have been called Amleth here too. He had been deliberately rebaptised by his new creator. The alteration was quite elaborate; the initial vowel was aspirated and the soft final consonant hardened. The author of U must have chosen that changed name, for some good reason.

One editor (only) sees that the "remarkably named" Katherine Hamlett, drowned in the Avon near Stratford in 1579, "may be more than coincidence." All non-editors will see that this is the wrong way round. It is the unheard-of fictional non-Danish non-Christian name Hamlet, not the real-life English surname, that is truly remarkable, though never remarked. Of course that Stratford name is more than coincidence. It had been bestowed in baptism, first on Shakespeare's best Stratford friend, c.1564, and then on his own son Hamlet²³ in 1585.

It would have seemed an apt title for a 1589 Shakespeare play which begins with a father, a son and a best friend, and goes on to describe a woman's death by drowning, an inquest, and a debate about burial in consecrated ground. In the Stratford inquest, held in February 1580, the jury found accidental death, *per infortunium*; the deceased Katherine Hamlett slipped and fell into the river, and was drowned, and met her death in no other wise or fashion, *et non aliter nec olio modo ad mortem suam devenit*.

But the real coincidence is surely that this Christian name, otherwise unrecorded in any archive ever researched, yet familiar in every sense among Tudor Stratfordians, happened to be an anagram of the French equivalent for the Latin form of the non-Christian name of a legendary pagan prince of Denmark.

Only Shakespeare among known dramatists had any known links with the name Hamlet; and his could hardly have been more intimate or intense. The name was specially chosen by the author of U. But this has now become a typical taboo. Modern authorities assume that Shakespeare could not have written the early Hamlet, so its newly-bestowed tide must be set aside or explained away. The only editor⁴ who notices it fails to see its clear significance. No one even hints that it was the name of Shakespeare's only son, and his own best friend as well as that best friend's drowned namesake, presumably a kinswoman, whose affinity with Ophelia may "admittedly be more than a coincidence."⁴

In a more robust age of scholarship the archivist Edgar I. Fripp²⁴ could write: "The story of Ophelia, we can hardly doubt, was fashioned out of the poet's youthful recollection" of this accident and inquest, with the further inference that the fifteen-year-old Shakespeare was probably then working as a lawyer's clerk in Stratford. According to Nashe, the author of U was born to the trade of *noverint*, i.e. a lawyer's clerk. His identity is separately inferable from the copious evidence of feuding among dramatists c.1590. One editor⁶ notices that "the tone in which Nashe and Lodge write of the *Ur-Hamlet* suggests that they both found it rather ridiculous." They were both university wits, like their crony and collaborator Robert Greene. What he found rather ridiculous was the pretentious dramatic style of the upstart uneducated countryman Shakespeare, who had attended only the local grammar school, if that. It is already plain from the excerpts cited above, and plainer still from all such sources in their entirety, that Greene and Nashe are shooting the same shafts from the same shoulder-to-shoulder standpoint, *de haut en bas*. They are thus defending the same lofty citadel against the same lowly besiegers. Nashe in 1589 jeers at Kyd and his sort, Greene in 1592 at Shakespeare and his. But Kyd and Shakespeare were the only notable non-University playwrights of the period. Their identity as the only two targets can also be inferred from Nashe's description of them as "translators," in conjunction with Chettle's mention of "two translators." Nashe must have rendered them recognisable to his readers, or his shafts would lack all point. He offers two clues which have remained clear for 400 years. He quibbles on "handfuls" and "*Hamlets*"; fifty words later, in a changed context, he puns on "Kidde" and "Kyd." It would be senseless to point twice at one of a pair and ignore the other. So, since

"Kiddle" means Kyd, "Hamlet" cannot. So *Hamlet* means Shakespeare.

That last point carries its own quota of independent weight. The universally adopted term *Ur-Hamlet* is formed by analogy with an early version of *Faust* known as the *Ur-Faust*. It would take more than a quibble and a pun to persuade German readers that the *Ur-Faust* was written by anyone but Goethe, as common sense also insists. On the same ground, which Tudor playwright is most likely to have written an early *Hamlet* play? Or, to put the same point more simply, who wrote *Hamlet*?

Here the editorial earthworks become dauntingly massive. The taboo has been working underground, and overtime, for decades. As the first line of defence, Kyd can be pushed forward as a "probability." This involves the astounding assumption that Nashe's "these men" must mean one man only; twenty plain plurals have to be given that singular interpretation, just for the sake of a Kyd hypothesis. Even the majority^{1,2,5,6} who see Kyd's *Hamlet* as a mare's nest on a wild goose chase feel forbidden to look any further. The taboo has set up a roadblock. Editors automatically stop at "Kyd or one of his fellow-dramatists" instead of taking the necessary next step - if not Kyd, who?

Before U's next appearance, the scene had changed. Greene died in 1592, Kyd in 1594. Meanwhile, the plague had closed the London theatres, delayed the performance and printing of plays, and forced the theatre companies into retirement or regrouping. Now, for the first time, we hear of "the emerging company of the Lord Chamberlain's men, Shakespeare's company." They performed *Hamlet* at Newington Butts in 1594, and again at their own Shoreditch playhouse, The Theatre, by 1596. This *Hamlet* was surely U. All our editors agree, serenely untroubled by the curious coincidence that the young Shakespeare and the earliest *Hamlet* emerge from obscurity together, side by side, in the same year, and with the same company. With them came *Titus Andronicus* and *The Taming of A Shrew*, both acted by the Earl of Pembroke's Men, who had disbanded in 1593. Shakespeare is often colourably claimed to have belonged to that company, as dramatist and actor. On any assessment, the manifest inference is that when he joined the Lord Chamberlain's Men in 1594 he brought his own early plays with him, such as *Titus*, *A Shrew* and *Hamlet*, all written c.1589.

These trails lead deep into forbidden territory. Yet the editors themselves step over the line. It was indeed "probably to Shakespeare's own company" that U belonged; "he cannot have been unfamiliar with it. Further, "it looks as though the Lord Chamberlain's Men took it with them to The Theatre."⁶ So Shakespeare took it with him to his own playhouse. He would have acted in it, too; that was also his metier. There was a strong tradition that he played the Ghost. If so, his appeal struck home: "remember me." No Tudor role was better remembered. The frosty morning, the tragical speeches, the pale vizard, the black and white beard, the wailful cry of "Hamlet, revenge,"²⁵ all seem to have stayed photographically imprinted from the flash of memorable performance. That, surely, was where the tradition began. Rowe's²⁶ informants were unanimous. "Tho' I have inquir'd, I could never meet with any further account of him than that the top of his own performance was the Ghost in his own *Hamlet*." By 1709, all that remained of Shakespeare on the stage was his own Ghost. But the only recorded appearances of that Ghost come from U, which was therefore his own *Hamlet*. The allusions of his detractors Nashe and Greene, and the latter's collaborator Lodge, would thus be in every sense personal. The identification of role with player, and hence authorship, is further corroborated by Shakespeare's own documented acting career, which began in 1594 and is not recorded after 1606, thus conforming closely with the documented performances and recollections of U.

Further, the author of U had conjured up that Ghost in the first place. It makes no appearance in Saxo or Belleforest. Its source is surely English Seneca, just as Nashe says; and that too implies a personal allusion. "English Seneca" had been heard making tragical speeches just like the Ghost in *Hamlet* when entreated fair on a frosty morning; that would be a telling jibe at an actor-playwright famed for his Ghost role who would later be described by Francis Meres as the English equivalent of Seneca. His Ghost still steps straight out of *Thyestes*, apparently unnoticed. Its curious complaints about fasting, fires and a prison house, as well as its foreshadowings of revenge, demonstrate its direct descent from the ghost of Tantalus: "snatching with famished mouth at vanishing food," "... let me return to... my prison house . . . let me stand in a stream of fire."²⁷ The author of U 1589 thus drew on Seneca (*Thyestes*) as well as on Belleforest (*Histoires Tragiques*). The only Tudor playwright ever deemed to have drawn on both *Thyestes* and the *Histoires Tragiques* was Shakespeare, in *Titus Andronicus* c.1589, which was performed with U 1589 by his own company, in 1594.

One modern editor⁶ reasons that Shakespeare also borrowed from Belle-forest the unusual description of the play on the title-pages of both the First and Second Quarto as a "Tragical History." But what else would the author of the Belleforest-based U have called *his* play, on its own manuscript title-page? He, and he alone, must have used that source; he alone can be credited with any such entitlement. If he wrote the unusual and indeed otherwise unheard of description "The Tragical History of Hamlet" at the head of his own fair copy, then *prima facie*

he was Shakespeare, who alone is known to have used that title and indeed glanced at it in his own text, as tragical-historical (2.2.398). Similarly, only Shakespeare is known to have used the equally idiosyncratic phrase "things called whips"²⁸ which Armin quoted from U.²¹

We have now reached the stage where a shadowy Doppelgänger is detected dodging around Shakespeare at a time when both are busily engaged in writing and revising the same play, for the same company, with the same unusual phrase and the same title from the same sources, and then, as an encore, playing the same part in it, at the same theatre. The editors now need special emergency measures to keep good Jekyll and bad Hyde safely apart. They have to be surgically separated by such saws as "the pre-Shakespearean play,"⁴ "the Elizabethan *Hamlet* that preceded Shakespeare's,"⁵ and so forth. But these two insist on coalescing as well as collaborating. It was the author of U who undertook all the hard Belleforest spadework. By 1589, that barren narrative had been cultivated into a popular stage play. But who reaped the benefit? Thoughtful editors, after deep research, infer that Shakespeare must have mercilessly exploited this "well-known earlier play of unknown authorship"⁵ to make his own supreme masterpiece. He "rewrote" it; he "reworked" it; he "used" it; he "took what he wanted" from it; he "annexed from it whatever he found useful in it"⁶; and thus he "transformed"^{3,4,6} it. Or, in plain English, he stole it.

We learn from Harold Jenkins, who has made a special study of these depredations, that U already contained the essentials of Shakespeare's plot and his leading episodes, namely adultery, fratricide, an incestuous marriage, the ghost of a murdered father, feigned madness, the ultimate achievement of a long-delayed revenge, the encounter with a fair lady, the Queen denounced in a big scene in her chamber, Hamlet's voyage for England and the death of his two escorts, his return, a funeral, the exchange of swords, the killing of the King, the roles of Ophelia, Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Horatio, the combat with old Fortinbras, the drift of the dialogue between Hamlet and his mother, his contempt for the corpse of Polonius, his "fouled stockings," and Claudius's fear of Genrude's displeasure as a reason for not proceeding against Hamlet. Again, U may also have contained, whether explicitly or as the germ of an idea, the loss of lands, their recovery by the young Fortinbras, Ophelia's love of Hamlet from childhood on, her selfless devotion, the functions of the Ghost (telling of murder and betrayal, demanding vengeance, reappearing in the Queen's chamber), together with such phrases as "hoodman-blind," "I lack advancement," "scourge and minister" of Heaven, and such conjunctions as devil, melancholy and abuse, or conscience and enterprise. Indeed, all that Shakespeare inherited from Belleforest may well have come to him via U, including the love interest, the contrast between the dead and the living brother, the Ghost's appearance at the beginning of the play, its promotion from a Senecan prologue of chorus to an active participant, the hero's death as he achieves his revenge, and the sub-plot which makes the man that Hamlet kills the father of a son who will avenge him as well as of the woman who loves Hamlet. If, as Harold Jenkins believes, Kyd wrote U, then by further inference U also contained or suggested the background of war and politics, with ambassadorial visits, Hamlet's distrust of the Ghost, his self-accusation of preferring words to blood, his thought of suicide, the seemingly innocent play within a play, the public reconciliation of the avenging Hamlet with his destined victim, Laertes, a heroine whose love is opposed by her father and her brother, and a woman who goes mad and kills herself, among various other ideas all elaborated in *The Spanish Tragedy*. But these points would remain equally valid whoever wrote U, which might well have contained them just as it might also (as Jenkins further concedes) have had a grave-digger, pirates, the mad visit to Ophelia's closet, the villain spared at prayer, and so forth.

Nor is the U cornucopia thereby exhausted. It continues to shower Shakespeare with immortal ideas, amid the applause of all his editors. Cambridge adds yet more possibilities, such as the device of a secret murder which needs a ghost to disclose it, and the shift of the entire setting from pagan times to a Christian Renaissance court. Among Oxford's contributions are the hero's melancholy cast of mind, his delays, his sea voyages, the characters of Laertes and Osric, and the topical interest in Danish affairs, as well as the title "Tragical History." Oxford also identifies certain notions as peculiar to Shakespeare himself, namely, "matter that appears to spring out of immediate personal experience - a company of players arriving in a town or at a court, squabbles among the London Theatres, legal quibble about the definition of suicide, and a grave-digger plying his trade," supplemented by direct access to Italian²⁹ historical documents about the Duke of Urbino's murder in 1538, and a Canterbury lawsuit of 1560 about the suicide by drowning of Sir James Hales. If those episodes and allusions indeed sprang from Shakespeare's personal experience, and their possible presence in U is admitted, then his possible authorship of U is also admitted. And that actual conclusion is surely inferable *per se* from the profound and unplumbable depths of his indebtedness to U, about which the whole theatre world must have known for generations, without the faintest recorded whisper of complaint or even comment from any quarter. Either Shakespeare was a great playwright who wrote U, or he was a gross plagiarist who

shamelessly abused it.

We left him and his company acting it in the 1590s. In the June 1592 season it was presented together with *Titus* and *A Shrew*. Those two were both published in 1594. Only one copy of each survives. If *Hamlet* was released for publication at the same time, no trace of it now remains except perhaps in Gabriel Harvey's marginal note about "Shakespeare's tragedie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark." In its context this appears to refer to a work that could be read along with *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* published in 1593 and 1594 respectively. Such a time-bomb may still be ticking away somewhere. No wonder Harvey's words are tiptoed around so gingerly. No editor confesses the plain truth; here is a Shakespeare *Hamlet* lurking in history long before modern theory allows it any right to exist. Harvey's evidence is therefore vital. Here is one way of dealing with it: "The sense of time is so confused in Harvey's note that it is really of little use in trying to date *Hamlet*."⁵ It is certainly of no use at all in trying to date *Hamlet* c.1600; but that hardly justifies accusing a Tudor writer of confusion about his own time. The Harvey editor Moore Smith³⁰ concluded that whenever the note was written, "Shakespeare's *Hamlet* was already well known"; and there is no objective reason to doubt that Harvey was writing in or about 1598, as F.S. Boas³¹ also decided after a close examination of the evidence.

One and only one *Hamlet* was well known in 1598, namely U, as performed between 1589 and 1601. But the taboo tells editors otherwise. Harvey must have meant their *Hamlet*, not this. We have to suppose that the work he gravely commends as comparable with *The Rape of Lucrece* for its potential ability to "please the wiser sort" must have been some version of F 1623, which editors date mid-1601. So here, "perplexity begins," as Harold Jenkins puts it; Harvey's note is "not reconcilable" with this date, because it refers in the present tense to the Earl of Essex, who was executed on 25 February 1601. Typically, the historical document, not the literary theory, is blamed for this contretemps; the vital task is to reconcile Gabriel Harvey with Harold Jenkins, not conversely.

This is partly achieved by the silent assumption that Harvey must have waited until 1600 or so before writing in the book he bought in 1598. The other terminus is duly adjusted by postulating that F's undisputed allusion to theatrical events of mid-1601 must have been "grafted on"⁴ to the play as supposedly written and performed c.1600, and duly seen and praised by Harvey then, as the theory requires. For this purpose the admitted fact that Harvey "seems to refer to a work that could be read" is also set aside. Oxford agrees: "there is a difficulty for some" in dating F before February 1601, which can be explained by assuming that the theatrical allusions were "a later addition."

But there are no rational grounds whatever for feigning that Harvey was either writing later than 1598 or referring to any version of Q2 1604-5 or F 1623 and hence no reason to date either before mid-1601 at the earliest. On the contrary, the plain historical evidence for that actual date is freely acknowledged.^{4,5,6} A theory that insists on redating documents, denying title page evidence and disintegrating Shakespeare plays, just for its own convenience, stands self-condemned. Its removal allows the facts to speak for themselves without editorial interference; and they tell us about a Shakespeare *Hamlet* well known to Harvey c.1598, and hence neither Q2 nor F and therefore either Q1 ("by William Shakespeare") or U. Harvey would have good reason to know who wrote it; he was intimately involved in the feud between his hated enemies Greene and Nashe and their enemy Shakespeare, whose work he was thus disposed to praise and support.

The only actual argument against a Shakespearean U is the absence of any *Hamlet* among the Shakespeare plays mentioned by Francis Meres in 1598. But Meres was not compiling a worklist. His rhetorical style required him to balance six examples of excellence in comedy against six in tragedy (including history). Meres makes no reference to any Henry VI history either, although a Shakespeare play on that reign was famously familiar to Greene in 1592. Further, there is no evidence³² that Meres came to London before 1597, when there is a gap in the records of *Hamlet* performances. Perhaps they had stopped for a time, when *Hamlet* Shakespeare died in 1596, just eleven years old.

This Meres omission is massively outweighed by the copious positive evidence of title, name, topical controversy, genre, company, theatre and role, all within the same coherent sequence of sightings and citings in 1589, 1594 and 1601, and supported by Shakespeare's demonstrably detailed indebtedness to U, as well as by ordinary common sense. Into this same sequence the Harvey reference c.1598 fits without strain or overlap. Either this well-known Chamberlain's revenge play and its surely well-known Chamberlain's author both mysteriously vanished in 1600, to be replaced by Shakespeare's shameless piracy of a close colleague, or else the same revenge series continues unbroken into the pastiche *Antonio's Revenge* and the quotation "Hamlet, revenge," both 1601, and thence into the "*Revenge of Hamlet*" announced for publication in 1602, and duly published as Q1 in 1603, as performed by Chamberlain's in Oxford and Cambridge. The company's last known visit to Cambridge" (where Gabriel Harvey, native of Saffron Walden, was a Fellow of Pembroke) is recorded in

1594 or 1595, at the time when they were performing U. There is no record of them at either University at any later date.

Thus U, now shorn of its taboo, is logically linked through Q1 to Q2, which are plainly announced on both their title-pages as Shakespeare's successive versions of his own play.

All these roads lead straight to the expression U---->Q1. Only a dizzying U-turn can avoid it. Before the two have a chance to collide and interconnect, in full view of the reading public; U 1589-1601 has to be driven back into obscurity and Q1 1603 pushed up a blind alley and abandoned as a hypothetical "piracy" made by a hypothetical "reporter," i.e. a hypothetical "actor," in a hypothetical fit of "memorial reconstruction" from hypothetical "performances at the Globe" of a hypothetical "*Hamlet* c.1600" i.e. a hypothetical pre-existing "revision" corresponding to a hypothetical pre-existing "text behind" F 1623.

These conjured rabbits frantically breed dozens more, including the equally feigned complicity and corruption of entire professions, such as actors, publishers, booksellers, composers and copyists. Only modern editors are immune. Yet no two of them can agree about what these hypotheses entail, or whence they derive, or how they are justified, or indeed what they actually are, or anything except their unquestionable correctness. It is fortunate for these theories that they need no objective evidence, otherwise the least twitch of Ockham's Razor would have excised them, decades ago. Instead, the principle of parsimony has been recklessly replaced by the principle of profligacy, and literary conjecture is deemed entitled to dictate historical fact. Above all, the consensus taboo must be obeyed. This has always owned its prestige and power to "the city of London and the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford," as Q1 says on its title page. That text itself is unobtainable in any modern edition. Its own plain evidence remains unheard, because it has been condemned by London, Cambridge and Oxford editors.

Elsewhere, however, these same hypotheses of "memorial reconstruction" have gained little ground. The general public throughout the world is still unaware of them. Contrary to the alleged academic consensus, they have never found universal scholarly favour; they are especially mistrusted in America and Germany. All modern Shakespeareans who have publicly analysed them have rejected^{33,34} them as unfit for consumption. The mute inertia of the entrenched English establishment has weathered these powerful counterblasts. Yet all rational readers, and some editors, must still feel the chill force of what Hardin Craig wrote in 1961: "There is... no evidence, that any plays were ever memorially reconstructed." On *Hamlet*, Craig offers a specific refutation. The text of Q1 "arbitrates between the texts of Q2 and F when they disagree"; therefore Q1 "is not a reported version of either Q2 or F." This powerful argument is compressed; but that cannot justify its consistent neglect. Only Harold Jenkins so much as mentions Hardin Craig, and then only to complain about his "eccentric theories," i.e. his original thought. Yet the truly eccentric theories of John Dover Wilson (1934)³⁵ or George Duthie (1941)³⁶ are still accepted as gospel truth, despite their flagrant incompatibility, incoherence and total lack of objective evidence.

Wilson set himself the scholarly task of dispassionately investigating the textual status and provenance of Q1; or, in his own words, "I had set out to discover what sort of wild ass had perpetrated the ridiculous text of 1603." He thereupon devoted 430 pages, in two volumes, to discussing Q2 and F on the settled assumption that the "piracy" Q1 was – "mainly a memorial reconstruction by some person or persons, whether actors or note-taking spectators, who were present at performances of it [i.e. some unknown hypothetical version of *Hamlet*] in 1603." The only proof needed for these imaginary persons, plays, performances and piracies is that "critics,... I think, nowadays agree." From this one sandy foundation, glittering edifices of speculation soar skyward. "Concurrence of opinion here makes it possible to employ the debased text as a kind of control in our investigation of other versions, since it means that when a reading in Q1 is in substantial if not actually in verbal agreement with the corresponding reading in either Q2 or F, there is a *prima facie* probability that the said reading was current in performance at the Globe."

All this is just shameless nonsense. Of course opinion can neither provide a control nor create a probability. Wilson simply assumes, because others have assumed, that Q1 was mainly produced by a memorising or note-taking process. Yet his own word "mainly" tacitly concedes that much of the Q1 text cannot conceivably have been so caused. If the facts cannot be explained by the theory, so much the worse for the facts; they will just have to fend for themselves. The imaginary process is then illicitly generalised, with astounding consequences. Wilson helpfully supplies an Appendix of 177 Q1 agreements with Q2 against F and 173 with F against Q2. He thus relies on the very facts which, according to Craig, disprove "memorial reconstruction."

But Wilson had devised a self-validating version of his hypothesis. He actually believed, and said, that these 350 readings form "a kind of control." His unspoken reasoning runs thus. These resemblances are far too many for mere coincidence. So they must mainly represent what the memoriser or note-taker (about whom "critics agree") heard and reported from

actual performance. Their presence in Q1 therefore entails their presence in an earlier version of Shakespeare's play, which must therefore have contained both Q2 and F readings. This Mad Hatter's logic was solemnly incorporated into Wilson's 1934 edition of *Hamlet*," which a University Press reprinted for fifty years: "Whatever may have been the nature of the piracy, and however the pirate procured his copy," Q1 "is in large measure based upon a memorised report of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as performed in 1601 or 1602 on the Globe stage... Many of (its readings) are of use as corroborating readings in the other and better texts."

The following props are necessary to keep the theory afloat. "Whatever," "however" = never mind the details. "The piracy, the pirate" = Wilson's names for his own theories. "In large measure" = as before, these theories are admittedly inadequate, though infallible. "Memorised report" = Wilson's private fantasy. Shakespeare's *Hamlet* = Wilson's *Hamlet*, i.e. the non-existent text created by the infallible fantasy. "In 1601 or 1602" = Wilson has now noticed that his previous "1603" allows insufficient time for his hypotheses, which have accordingly been granted a generous extension. "On the Globe stage" = in Wilson's imagination, which has now created not only a memorising or note-taking pirate, and an unknown play, but arranged for Globe performances of it and smuggled the necessary pirate into its audience or cast.

Wilson's sole evidential basis remains exactly the same as before, in almost the same words: "critics...all seem now to be agreed. True to form, even that was entirely false; thus Frank Hubbard^{34Via,b}, had already published evidence and arguments, more than ten years earlier, to show that Q1 was neither a piracy nor a memorial reconstruction. But the University of Wisconsin in the 1920s has proved no match for the University of Cambridge from 1934 to the present day. Wilson saw no need to mention Hubbard, not even to dismiss him as eccentric.

The climactic irony is that in fact no critic or commentator before or since has ever accepted Wilson's special patent brand of note-taking or memorisation theory, with the sole exception of Philip Edwards,⁵ Wilson's immediate successor as the Cambridge *Hamlet* editor. Edwards builds further immense extensions on to Wilson's shaky premises. In the beginning, there was one notional Shakespeare play containing both Q2 and F readings. Then how could each of those two actual texts have been created? Nothing could be simpler. All we need to imagine in addition to the play and its performances and the piratical note-taker, are a book-keeper and his theatre transcript of Shakespeare's holograph foul papers, (in which the book-keeper altered certain words, "presumably" because he thought them "altogether too outlandish or unfamiliar" and omitted certain passages which Shakespeare had marked for deletion and also omitted two passages not thus marked, and added a third, and made "an increasing number of other changes," designed to reduce the number of characters) supplemented by Q2 compositors who incorporated the pirated Q1 text and also ignored or overlooked Shakespeare's deletion-marks (thus preserving "much that Shakespeare himself has discarded"), together with a second transcription of the first fair copy made by a careless copyist who "did untold damage by casualness and rash improvement," thus producing the Folio text guilelessly - printed as authentic Shakespeare by his friends and editors Heminges and Condell.

True to the Cambridge tradition, this new Niagara of invention flows solely from what is "generally recognised"⁵ and "generally thought."⁵ Elsewhere such claims are just as baseless as before. In fact, the Dover Wilson account of "memorial reconstruction" remains totally unrecognised by all editors except Edwards. It contradicts Wilson's own earlier theories³⁸ as well as the main modern version, which envisages Q1 as a corrupt report of a known extant text, essentially F, as "proved" by direct verbal comparison. The Wilson-Edwards model dispenses with even that degree of "proof" by invoking the hypothetical reconstruction, by the hypothetical memory of a hypothetical entity, of a hypothetical play, which is downright ridiculous. It even offers a further self-refutation *ad absurdum*. Let it be granted that Q1 is indeed a note-taker's memorised report of an actual play in actual performance. But then that play must surely have contained, for example, the otherwise unknown scene between the Queen and Horatio, and other such unique features; thus the counsellor character must have been called Corambis, not Polonius, and his servant Montano, not Reynaldo. That play must therefore have resembled Q1, rather than Q2 or F. Therefore Q1 is not a note-taker's memorised report of either Q2 or F; and still less, a fortiori, of any hypothetical hybrid between the two. If Q1 is any such report, or abridgement, then it must be a report or abridgement of an earlier version of Q1 itself.

The final self-rebuttal of the Cambridge theory 1934-1985 is its own explanation of F as the damage done by Wilson's "slovenly playhouse scribe"³⁷ who reappears after fifty years in the wilderness as an irresponsibly careless copyist "with a cavalier indifference to the ethic of fidelity to one's copy."⁵ In the Oxford view, this same agent was William Shakespeare carefully revising his sublime masterpiece for definitive publication. Each of these theories must annihilate the other, and an actual person discharging his known habitual task is surely

preferable to an imaginary entity engaged to work for a theory.

The requirements of the Oxford-Arden "memorial reconstruction" theory, though just as demanding, are completely incompatible with Cambridge. Their basic proofs however take exactly the same tone, now scored for solo trumpet. Their vicarious condemnation of Q1 as a corrupt memorial piracy is "one of the achievements of modern scholarship."⁴ "It is sufficient to say that in the first three decades of this century [this] view won more and more support, so that eventually E.K. Chambers . . . was able to write: "It is generally accepted. . ."⁶ These theological strains continue: Chambers "prepares the way" for Duthie, a previous Oxford editor who (according to the present Oxford editor) "showed, beyond all reasonable doubt, that Q1 is a reported text put together by a process of memorial reconstruction to provide a prompt copy for, in all probability, a band of actors playing outside London."⁶ About this, if nothing else, Arden agrees: "it has been conclusively demonstrated (especially by Duthie,)"⁴ that Q1 is an abridged corrupt memorial version of Shakespeare's play.

Such claims are outrageous. In the first place, both Oxford and Arden believe that the play thus reconstructed was essentially F. But this completely contradicts what Duthie explicitly says in his own summary: "the Q1 reporter based his text essentially on that of Q2." Worse still, Duthie himself rightly disclaims having proved anything at all; his whole book is only "the general hypothesis which I would advance." W.W. Greg, the scholar Duthie chose to write a foreword, says point-blank: "It is not to be supposed that [this] monograph will be accepted as offering a final solution to the problem. It is hardly to be desired that it should."

So much for the Oxford and Arden notions of conclusive proof beyond reasonable doubt. Now for Duthie's own proposed hypothesis. He too begins with the traditional observances. "It has been realised," "various critics," "modern scholarship"³⁶ and similar self-serving litanies are intoned throughout Duthie writes as a convinced and zealous reconstructionist. He too assumes *a priori* that his borrowed beliefs are true. His declared methods prove only that he too has no firm grasp of what constitutes evidence or reasoning, let alone proof. He purposes to address his mind to the question "is Q1 a reported play?" and he answers, yes, it must be, because some parts are reported better than others. This may read like an unkind parody; but it is what Duthie actually asserts, on page after page. Thus in *Hamlet* Q1 "the parts of certain characters are consistently better reported than those of others." Further, "if one or two actors" attempted to reconstruct a play, "the standard of accuracy might well be low except at points where they were themselves involved." These gratuitous assumptions are then solemnly hailed as their own internal evidence. In other early quartos as well as *Hamlet* Q1 "there is internal evidence that the method of transmission was memorial reconstruction effected by actors who took certain parts"; such texts "give evidence, by the inequality of reporting of different parts, of being memorial reconstructions," "the evidence is inequality of the standard of reporting, the speeches of certain characters being consistently on a higher level than those of the others, and the general level of the text being higher when these characters are present on the stage."³⁶ And so on, *passim*.

How did such breathtakingly blatant question-begging ever come to be countenanced for a moment, let alone canonised for decades? Of course the "characters", thus feigned to be actual actors, are just extra hypotheses. Only in Shakespeare studies could any theory ever have been proved by its own corollaries. Even the other *Hamlet* editors remain unimpressed. Two of them^{1,2} omit all mention of Duthie. A third⁵ confines his name to a footnote. Even his avowed adherents feel free to reject his teaching outright, at need, e.g. "This, I am afraid, is where Duthie is mistaken."⁴ However, the denial of Duthie by unbelievers is passed over in silence. Thus the cogent counter arguments of A.A. Jack (1950),³⁹ W.D. Taylor (1950),⁴⁰ and A.B. Weiner (1962)^{33e} are not even cited, let alone rebutted. Nor are any of the copious refutations^{33,34} of memorial reconstruction over the last sixty years, because "nothing is gained from following the controversy in detail."⁶ Indeed, much might be lost, including yet another Oxford cause. Arden complains of "persistent opposition"⁴ (a revealing phrase) from Hardin Craig, without even hinting at the grounds for it. Arden's further dismissal of R. Burkhardt^{33f} omits all mention of his reasons for rejecting memorial reconstruction as the cause of *Hamlet* Q1.

Again, neither of Duthie's disciples admits that their admired authority also "proved," by the self-same methods that *King Lear* Q 1609 was a "memorial reconstruction" of the supposedly pre-existing 1623 version,⁴¹ a notion so manifestly grotesque that even Duthie himself withdrew it, albeit belatedly, grudgingly and unobtrusively.⁴² The same Duthie also claimed, just as crassly, in this same 1941 *Hamlet* monograph, that *The Taming of A Shrew* 1594 was a "memorial reconstruction" of the supposedly preexisting 1623 version, which entails a unique feat of memory, namely, forgetting the Folio play's location, the names of its characters, and all but one of its 3000 lines. Duthie later withdrew this theory too, for its own reconstruction and repair.⁴³

Is Duthie's parallel *Hamlet* hypothesis really so sacrosanct? Is it not far more likely to be just another example of his own confused and confessed inability to distinguish between an

original play and a derivative piracy and indeed between a revered masterpiece and a botched corruption? Duthie's own account of that *Lear* fiasco is well worth recalling in this context:

I adopted for [King Lear] Q1 a theory which had already been advanced by Dr. D.L. Patrick⁴⁴ to explain *Richard III* Q 1597, namely that the text is a memorial reconstruction made by the entire company. I thought of the company as being in the provinces, temporarily deprived of its prompt-book, and desirous of producing a new one; and I imagined its personnel gathered round a scribe, each dictating his own speeches... The Q1 text as it stands could hardly have served in manuscript as a prompt-book... I was forced to suggest therefore, that the scribe wrote down (as best he could) all that he heard (or thought he heard) in a very hasty manner... and then later produced the required prompt-book by transcribing his work with the necessary modifications...

In other words, Duthie calmly appropriated someone else's baseless conjecture^{34 IV a,b} about some other play and forced it to fit King Lear by fettling the facts, thus producing a hundred pages of sheer irresponsible nonsense. He is less than candid about his arguments, which were spuriously presented as proof and fact ("the hypothesis of reporting is inevitable," "it is a reported text," etc.). They are, down to the last detail, exactly the same as his approach to *Hamlet*; with the same appeal to some supposed authority, and the same imaginary provinces, deprivation, desire, scribe, mishearings, modifications, and all the rest. However, Duthie is perfectly frank about his actual procedures, which clearly seem to him characteristic of standard Shakespearean scholarship: "I adopted," "I thought of," "I imagined," "I was forced to suggest." Such utterances are still dauntingly familiar. Compare the Duthie-inspired Arden account of what happened to *Hamlet*: "What we [i.e. I] have to suppose is that a group of actors, wishing to perform a play of which they had no book, would make a book from what could be remembered by one or more of their number who had acted in the play before."⁴

In the ordinary world of discourse, this reckless invention of unevicenced entities and circumstances is exactly what we do not have to suppose, and indeed must not, if we wish to be taken seriously. It is, furthermore, a mere curtain-raiser for the free play of hypothesis now about to be performed. Here is a more complete account of what we have to suppose.

For a start, we have to postulate that Shakespeare had written no *Hamlet* play before 1600. He then converted someone else's successful stage play U into the unactably lengthy Q2, and instantly revised it into the unactably lengthy F, which was soon abridged for stage presentation in yet another version. Next this unknown abridgement is required to be rehearsed and acted, by Shakespeare's own company, in some unrecorded location, for any period short enough to conform with the theory. It cannot be allowed a long and successful run, or there would be too little time left for what now has to happen to it before 1603 at the latest. As we contemplate this brief vision of the Lord Chamberlain's Men with their complete manuscript and copied parts of an abridged acting version of a pre-F in performance at the Globe, the whole insubstantial pageant suddenly fades. The Globe dissolves. Most of the actors melt into thin air, taking their written roles with them. They leave behind a mysterious rump, a "group of actors" with a curious collective wish to go on acting their lost *Hamlet* long after everyone else has stopped. These stragglers have however failed to retain, or perhaps just petulantly thrown away, their own copies. All this must have been a sudden whim of theirs. They have nothing except the memories of their own roles; they had no special reason to attend to any of the others, not even the lines spoken in their presence on stage.

At least we know that Shakespeare himself was not among them, or they would have done better. As it is, they seem touchingly helpless and naive. Yet they are now, in a second spectacular transformation scene, unmasked as unprincipled pirates, motivated solely by greed for gain and eager to dishonour their famous company and betray their great master. All they need is the complete text of a Hamlet play and another gang of equally unscrupulous scoundrels to act it, preferably on a provincial tour of which no records will be kept, in places where the dim bumpkins will be delighted by a botched travesty. At this point, for a welcome change, the plot thins. All but one of the "group of actors" now quietly disappear in their turn; and who can blame them? Only one of them is available for the complete memorial reconstruction of *Hamlet*; and he miraculously manages it single-handed. He can be identified beyond doubt as the actor who played Marcellus, Lucianus and Voltemand, in any required combination, because those Q1 lines are close to F and may thus be feigned as recollected from a conveniently mislaid abridged pre-F text. This is the non-existent backbone of the whole hapless hypothesis. This lone actor's memory is unprofessionally erratic. For example, he has forgotten his own name; he thinks he is called Voltemar. He begins inauspiciously by ruining the most famous *coup de théâtre* in stage history; to the best of his recollection, it as the on-duty sentry who cried out "who's there?" Yet he can remember quite accurately many

of the 2000 lines spoken when he had no occasion to hear them. Others he is notably less clear about; thus he recalls "row of the pious chanson will show you more" as "verse of the godly ballet will tell you all," and "that is the question" as "ay, there's the point." He also reports the rejoinder of Laertes "Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric, /I am justly killed by mine own treachery" as "even as a coxcomb should, /Foolishly slain with my own weapon," with equally peculiar memory lapses in scores of other passages. This professional actor remembers much less *Hamlet* after recent performances than many an ordinary reader after a long lifetime.

His mind plays such impish pranks as writing episodes in the wrong order, recalling the name Polonius as "Corambis," and Reynaldo as "Montano," changing Gertrude's character, adding a new scene between her and Horatio, making Hamlet a young man, and keeping the rhymed-couplet form in the play-scene while altering all the words and demoting their King and Queen into a Duke and a Duchess. At some stage this reconstructor realises that however well or ill he may recall *Hamlet* on his own, he cannot perform it without the Prince of Denmark and others. Now comes the most amazing transformation of all. At this point there providentially arrives a whole new troupe of travelling hypotheses, all just as corrupt and venal as our reconstructing actor. He must have had unusual powers of persuasion, as well as recollection, because they all willingly agree to assist in his improvised piracy, and take it on the required mystery tour. As it happens, they have nothing else to do, and nowhere else to go; and as it turns out, they can act all the roles required. So the reconstructor and his new friends write, copy, rehearse, and perform their bogus Hamlet. All ends happily. Not only do they escape whipping; their corrupt travesty appeals to equally piratical printers, publishers and booksellers as well as the playreading and theatregoing public, who were readily duped and defrauded in Shakespeare's day.

This is how the Duthie theory looks when it emerges into the light of history. So, it has to be removed again, with all speed. Requests for documentary testimony are treated with outright contempt. "If you come across a mutilated corpse you don't deny a murder because nobody has reported one."⁴ This absurd analogy betrays attitude and approach alike. Never mind if the body is on a railway line, or near a chain saw. There is only one conceivable cause of mutilation, whether of corpses or copy. The literary detective has decided on murder, in advance. Before long, the suspect will be arrested without trial and hanged in public, after his quarto has been given a bad name. His own name is "Marcellus." We know this for a fact despite the silence of the archives because "the evidence is in the texts themselves."

Yet again, no proofs are needed for this fundamental idea beyond "it is generally accepted..."⁴ and so forth. Never mind if other editors manage without "Marcellus"¹ or else treat him as merely one suspect among others.^{1,2}

It is vain for A.B. Weiner^{33e} to object that in fact "Marcellus" cannot remember his own lines, not even *ex hypothesi*. The theory has become hallowed. In the course of his enquiry, Duthie accepted it. What could be more conclusive than that? But it has no independent substance whatever, as even its own inventor H.D. Gray⁴⁵ later conceded.⁴⁶ As he explains, he began by assuming the truth of memorial reconstruction, and asked himself which actor was responsible for it. This blatant question-begging is still, 70 years later, being advanced as proof of its own assumption. "The basis for the theory," that "the man who vamped up Q1 from memory" was an actor who had played certain parts, "is the demonstrable fact that these parts are rendered with considerable fidelity to the authentic text."⁴

But of course this is not the basis for a theory; the "actor" is just the theory itself made up to look like a fact, and playing its allotted part accordingly. By the same logic, this "actor" could also be the boy soprano singer of Ophelia's Q1 ditties, which equally embody the "authentic text." The objective question is obviously just "Why?," not "How can the facts best be squared with my pet theory?" The clumsy manipulation of the puppet "Marcellus" betrays the strings already attached in Oxford and Arden. He swarms all over Q1 like a stage army. Is the supposed correspondence with the supposed "text behind F" very close? "Marcellus" must be in top form. Is there serious divergence? He must have been out of earshot or out of sorts. Sustained resemblance means "Marcellus" on stage; difference, off. Supposedly inferior reading prove his stupidity and confusion; supposed abridgements, his ability and acumen. Supposed omissions (i.e. presumed F text with no actual Q1 equivalent) entail deliberate abridgement or involuntary amnesia; fortunately, either will do. Supposed additions (i.e. actual Q1 text with no presumed F equivalent) must be new material supplied by "Marcellus," who has temporarily forgotten that he is an abridger. Supposed reversals in scene-order, such as the Q1 placement of the nunnery scene, are all aberrations on the part of "Marcellus." He must also be somehow responsible for the changes of names and characterisation, and the added scene, and the shift of ideas and phrases and dialogue from one part of the action to another, and the incorporation of lines from other plays, all by sheer inadvertence. For all such purposes the Protean character actor "Marcellus" is first enrolled as a member of Shakespeare's own company and then dismissed as a "hired man who afterwards left or was

turned off" and then obligingly became a pirate, a reporter, a hack-poet, a paraphraser, a playwright, a skilled abridger, an actor in other Shakespeare plays (such as *Twelfth Night*) a member of other companies (where he played in Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*) and an uncomprehending idiot, exactly as the theory requires. These stupefying assumptions, found only in Arden and Oxford, will help the outside world to see who "Marcellus" really is. He can not only "recollect" but "anticipate" lines he had no reason to hear. In Arden, he had "an invention which is helped out by words and phrases rising in the mind from a previous contact with"⁴ *Hamlet* and other Shakespeare plays. In Oxford, Greg's "Marcellus" is approvingly quoted: "the words and phrases of the original that he wove into his verse rose unbidden from the subconscious depths."⁴⁷ Whose subconscious mind might rationally be thus described? George Duthie's elaborating his theory, perhaps, or Shakespeare's, writing a play?

At least they were real people. But the Duthie theory consists solely of invented and unverifiable entities, and thus provides its own disproof. All its transparent devices for attributing textual variants to such freaks of memory as "confusion," "anticipation," "recollection," and so on, together with all its fantasies about dates, actors' lost prompt-copy provincial tours and so forth reappear in Duthie's exactly parallel theories on *King Lear*,⁴¹ already glanced at above, which were admittedly⁴² self-deluding folly. Furthermore Duthie is readily refutable by facts freely available ever since 1605, which had been published in detailed tabulations by Gustav Tanger,⁴⁸ Frank Hubbard^{34, vii} and Dover Wilson³⁸ himself, and were at last decisively adduced as disproof by Hardin Craig.^{33d} Here is a further bombardment from a different direction with the same ammunition. Q1 cannot be a report of F, because it agrees with Q2 against F in 177 readings, which must *ex hypothesi* be mere mistakes that tally with Q2 by pure chance, which is absurd. Nor, conversely, can Q1 revert to its Duthian roots and be a report of Q2, for 173 analogous reasons. Nor, *a fortiori*, can the theory be saved by appeals to a mythical "text behind" F or Q2 or any such hypothetical hybrid. All such plays, performances, persons and procedures are non-existent; and *ex nihilo nihil fit* for publication. Exit Marcellus with full supporting cast of pirates and other extras.

The alleged piracy can be dealt with summarily. Exceptionally, the three chief judges^{4,5,6} all agree. They find piracy proved. As usual they feel able to dispense with evidence, apart from the customary formula "it is generally thought." The same applies to their unique yet unanimous explanation of the many detailed Q1-Q2 identities in spelling and lineation. For this we have to suppose that the gross piracy Q1 was taken as a model by the printers of Q2 and solemnly incorporated into a corrected second edition publicly announced as "newly imprinted according to the true and perfect copy," a phrase which is thus newly interpreted to include the false and imperfect copy. That Q1 "was so used"⁴ is freely asserted as a known fact. "James Roberts's compositors, when they were setting the second quarto, had in front of them not only a manuscript but a copy of the bad quarto of 1603 and they frequently copied its readings in the first act and possibly elsewhere"⁵; "the [Q2] compositors tried to get help from a copy of" [Q1]⁵; "the use by the Q2 compositors of a copy of Q1, particularly in the first act, can mean that [any] reading common to Q2 and Q1 is an error deriving from the latter"⁵; an "exemplar of Q1... was used by compositor X when he set the first act of" Q2,⁶ and so on. But all these are just extra helpings demanded by a greedy pet theory that has to be kept fed. As Craig^{33.d} says, "to save the theory that Q1 is a degenerate form of F, some scholars have introduced an intervening process. The printer of Q2, they say, had at hand a copy of Q1 to which he resorted from time to time in search of guidance in the reading of Shakespeare's manuscript. The device has no testimony to support it and but little convincing bibliographical evidence. The conjecture makes use of the dangerous practice of introducing into the system an invented cause." If this conjecture had any substance, furthermore, it would surely permit the inference, in a real world, that Q1 was an authentic Shakespeare text; not even the despised Tudor printer would check the true from the false. Besides, the Oxford editor has briefly glimpsed, before the curtains of preconviction close again, the reason why this conjecture cannot be true.

How then he asks, did "compositor X" come to make the "fairly numerous mistakes" that this supposed copy of Q1 should have saved him from making?⁶ One obvious answer is that there was no such copy. But the chimera of Q1 contamination is far preferred to the simple solution that all the many and striking Q1-Q2 identities derive from manuscript sources, that would make Q1 a Shakespeare manuscript, which is now literally unthinkable.

In pre-taboo times it was not only thinkable but cogently inferred from documented facts, for two separate reasons. F.S. Boas,⁴⁹ argued, from the Harvey 1598-1601 *termini* and the absence of any recorded visit by the Chamberlain's Men to Cambridge or Oxford after the mid-1590s, that the *Hamlet* performed there was Q1, which represented "Shakespeare's revision of the semi-Senecan play on Hamlet... mentioned by Nashe in 1589." John Dover Wilson³⁸ had earlier argued on bibliographical grounds that the spellings, misprints, and use of inverted commas shared by both Quartos proved that parts of Q1 must have derived from a Shakespeare manuscript, written long before 1603. Neither of these powerful and mutually

corroborative contentions has ever been refuted; they have merely been silently replaced by "Marcellus" with his infinitely flexible memory, and compositor X with his infinitely adjustable copy of Q1. Late in the 1920s times changed, and with them the Oxbridge consensus. Wilson himself forgot his brief flirtation with the facts, and disowned its consequences. When he returned to Hamlet in 1934 he initiated fifty years of chaos and confusion. He had already foreseen and explained this catastrophe in 1918, as follows: "the method pursued hitherto has been predominantly biographical; in the next stage it will have to be predominantly literary." That was a pity, because in historical and logical studies "predominantly literary" is likely to mean "wrong."

It often means "subjective." Thus the New Penguin *Hamlet* made history by including as 3.2.43-55 the following lines, found only in Q1:

and then you have some again that keeps one suit of jests, as a man is known by one suit of apparel; and gentlemen quote his jests down in their tables, before they come to the play, as thus "Cannot you stay till eat my porridge?", and "You owe me a quarter's wages," and "My coat wants a cullison," and "Your beer is sour", and blabbering with his lips, and thus keeping in his cinquepace of jests, when, God knows, the warm clown cannot make a jest except by chance, as the blind man catchall a hare.

Here are a hundred words new to the canon, the only such official bonus since the insurrection scene from *Sir Thomas More* was first included in a standard edition.⁵⁰ These new words qualify as Shakespeare's, under a double imprimatur; they are deemed to represent an actor's adequate memory of an authentic text. For the Arden editor however this is absurd; the added lines are "known only to the reported text Q1," so there is "no evidence to believe that Shakespeare wrote" them.

This dramatic confrontation derives directly from two diametrically opposed literary theories, alias First and Second Marcellus. The former, inspired by Dover Wilson, remembered and transcribed those lines more or less accurately; the latter, a disciple of Duthie, just made up any old nonsense and called it *Hamlet*.

Typically, no one attends to the actual Q1 text, though this is the only real evidence. Shakespeare-lovers will note for example the noun-verb discord "some keeps," the pun on "suit," associated with "apparel," the lively use of "cinquepace," the special collocation "warm clown," i.e. one whose jests are spontaneous, and the amusing application of a quasi-proverbial phrase. The fourfold insistence on "jest" recalls the emphatically repetitive style of *Titus Andronicus*, c. 1589. Further, two of the jests later attributed to Richard Tarleton⁵² concern "beer" and a "cullison" i.e. a badge of arms; and he was a Queen's comedian who died in 1588. So these lines may derive from U, 1589, if Shakespeare wrote them as the title-page of Q1 claims. Even if we would rather mist literary theory, a reporter who actually reports is surely preferable to one who gratuitously invents lines that still sound like Shakespeare four centuries later.

In other Q1 contexts however the New Penguin editor inexplicably abandons his reliable reporter and, for example, omits this sample of how Hamlet reproaches his mother:

Here is your husband with a face like *Vulcan*,
a look fit for a murder and a rape,
a dull dead hanging look, and a hell-bred eye
to affright children and to amaze the world.

Again, the Shakespeare-lover will know, e.g. from *Titus Andronicus*, why a damned villain should resemble Vulcan, black-faced as Satan from underground furnace-fires; hence perhaps the evocative compound "hell-bred." The vivid expression "hanging look," according to the Oxford English Dictionary, was first coined by Shakespeare in *Measure for Measure*. "So dull, so dead in look" appears in *2 Henry IV*; "affrights our children" in *1 Henry VI*; "The world amazes" in *Venus and Adonis*. If this was "Marcellus," he chose a good model. Here are some further samples of his work:

For though the favour of your grace might stay me,
yet something is there, whispers in my heart.

Being the joy and half-heart of your mother.

Him I have lost, I must of force forgo.

None lives on earth but he is born to die.

or that the universal globe of heaven would turn all to chats.

 therefore keep aloof
lest that he trip thy honour and thy fame.

 receive none of his letters,
For lovers' lines are snares to entrap the heart.
He is bereft of all the wealth he had.
The jewel that adorned his feature most
is filched and stol'n away.

He doth unclasp his hold, and parts away,
silent, as is the mid time of the night.

 bound
By love, by duty and obedience.

Borne before an everlasting judge.

Strike more than wonder in judicial ears.

And now the blood that filled my youthful veins
Runs weakly in their pipes, and all the strains
Of music, which whilome please mine ear
Is now a burthen that age cannot bear.

To make increase of shame, and seal damnation.

O do not glare with looks so pitiful
Lest that my heart of stone yield to compassion
And every part that should assist revenge
Forgo their proper powers, and fall to pity.

Alas, it is the weakness of thy brain
Which makes thy tongue to blazon thy heart's grief.

And in his death your infamy shall die.

O Time, how swiftly runs our joys away.
Content on earth was never certain bred,
Today we laugh and live, tomorrow dead.

I will no reconciliation, but by blood.

Being crossed by the contention of the winds.

Then I perceive there's treason in his looks
That seem'd to sugar o'er his villainy.

Believe me, Horatio, my heart is on a sudden very sore all hereabout.

Were such lines, and some 150 others, really invented by someone trying to reconstruct Shakespeare, or were they remembered? These are the contradictory choices offered by the modern literary method. If the second is right, then (though no one seems to notice) those Q1 lines are *prima facie* authentic; and so is the entire Q1 text. Wilson's bibliographical method concurs.

So do the historical facts. James Roberts officially registered (1602), and Nicholas Ling published as Shakespeare's (Q1 1603) a *Hamlet* play "as acted by" Shakespeare's own company. Then Roberts printed and Ling published Shakespeare's enlarged and corrected version (Q2 1604-5). That world masterpiece "must have come from the Globe, or from the hands of Shakespeare himself,"⁶ into the hands of Roberts; Ling already owned its copyright, as a result of his publication of Q 1. Either these are the most surprising prizes in the history of piracy, or else Roberts and Ling were reputable tradesmen going about their business in the real world where they each flourished for thirty years and more. In that world publishers and actors rarely conspired to defraud the public, and an inferior *Hamlet* published twenty

years earlier was rather unlikely to have been written as the later of two versions, even by its own author, let alone compiled from the memory of a hired bit-part player. In any era, the imagination of a Shakespeare editor is by far the most plausible source of any "memorial reconstruction." In Shakespeare's own time, moreover, the relevant factual data fit together without omission, rejection, adjustment or remainder, as follows.

The young Stratfordian, b. 1564, though far from well educated ("home-borne," "... could scarcely Latinise," 1589; "peasant... rude groom," 1592; "small Latin," 1623) had acquired early knowledge of legal proceedings ("noverint," 1589; "buckram gentleman," 1592), e.g. from a local inquest. Soon he was writing popular plays for the London stage, drawn from such sources as Seneca (1581; "English Seneca," 1589; "as Seneca... among the English," 1589) and Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques* (1570; "French Dowdy," 1589; "translator," 1589, 1592) including a "Tragic History" (Q1, 1603; Q2, 1604-5) with a Stratford name (1579-80; 1585-96; 1616) about the "Revenge of Hamlet" (Senecan ghost, 1589; crying "revenge," 1594, 1601; title, 1602) as acted at three London theatres including his own (Newington Butts, 1594; Shoreditch, by 1596; Bankside, 1601) by his own company, and also in Cambridge (no later than 1595, Harvey, c. 1598; Q1 title-page, 1603). The same play ("Corambis") toured Germany in the 1590s; the Senecan prologue of *Der Bestrafte Brudermord* and its topical allusion to Portugal point to 1589; so would the possible Tarleton (d. 1588) reference in Q1. On the English stage Shakespeare's famous performance as the vengeful Ghost was ridiculed by his rivals (Nashe, 1589; Greene and Lodge, 1594; Lodge, 1596), who complained of his chequered career ("shifting companion," 1589; "Johannes Factotum," 1592) and mocked his early melodramatic style ("tragical speeches," 1589-, "tiger's heart"... etc., 1592) which however impressed "the wiser sort" (Harvey, c. 1598) and strongly influenced other playwrights (Kyd, *Spanish Tragedy*, c. 1589; Marston, *Antonio's Revenge*, c. 1600).

In every context, the dates now have a meaning. Thus the 1602 registration and release for publication of Q1 corroborate that it had already run its course on the stage some years earlier. As soon as that imprint had sold out, it could be properly replaced, as its author would wish, by the avowedly enlarged and improved version published as Q2. Later on, the habitual reviser Shakespeare must have envisaged and prepared for the publication of his collected plays. Not long before his death in April 1616, he had a convivial meeting with Ben Jonson. So the vicar of Stratford, John Ward, wrote c. 1661, during the lifetime of Shakespeare's daughter Judith, whose marriage in February 1616 might well have provided the occasion.⁵³ Later in that year, Ben Jonson's own First Folio of complete works was published in London; that topic was no doubt discussed. Shakespeare's own second thoughts, as interlined in his will, remain on written record; he added bequests of money to his close colleagues Heminges and Condell for the purchase of memorial rings. For the last time: "adieu, adieu, adieu, remember me." It was no mere coincidence that they assumed joint responsibility for what they called "the care and pain to have collected and published" their friend's own writings, in the Shakespeare First Folio of 1623. In its most famous commendatory poem, this same Shakespeare was recognisably described by Jonson, in a loving eulogy, as the disadvantaged countryman of Stratford who was not only an inspired natural writer but a conscientious reviser "upon The Muses' anvil"; an artist self-made as well as born. Here is Shakespeare's development from inauspicious beginnings to resplendent mastery by way of dedication and discipline, shaping and reshaping. Here is what happened to *Hamlet*.

All this firm and fertile terrain has long been fenced off by rigid official taboos. It is time to restore the public right of way that leads through successive Hamlets back to the real world of Shakespeare.

NOTES

1. *Hamlet*, ed. Nigel Alexander, Macmillan Shakespeare (Advisory Editor, Philip Brockbank) (London, 1973)
2. *Hamlet*, ed. T.J.B. Spencer, New Penguin Shakespeare (General Editor, T.J.B. Spencer, Associate Editor, Stanley Wells) (London, 1980)
3. *Hamlet*, as at n.2 above: Introduction by Anne Barton
4. *Hamlet*, ed. Harold Jenkins, Arden Shakespeare (General Editors: Harold F. Brooks, Harold Jenkins and Brian Morris) (London 1982)
5. *Hamlet* ed. Philip Edwards, New Cambridge Shakespeare (General Editor, Philip Brockbank) (Cambridge, 1985)
6. *Hamlet*, ed. G.H. Hibbard, Oxford Shakespeare (General Editor, Stanley Wells) (Oxford, 1987)
7. G.I. Duthie, *The "Bad" Quarto of Hamlet* (Cambridge, 1941)
8. A. Cohn, *Shakespeare in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1865): the early repertory included a crude version of *Titus Andronicus*.
9. *Titus Andronicus* ed. J.C. Maxwell, Arden Shakespeare 1953, revised 1963, 1968, xxxi-xxxii.
10. Scrivener, lawyer's clerk.
11. First offenders were granted exemption if they could prove literacy ("benefit of clergy") by reading a verse from the Bible, which might thus save their necks.
12. risqué French books.
13. cf "Thou buckram scribe" (i.e. lawyer's clerk) *Woodstock* Anon. c. 1590, 299.
14. Versions of all three were later played in Germany; cf. Cohn, note 8.
15. F.S. Boas, *Shakespeare at the Universities* (Oxford 1923), 25 citing C.H. Cooper, *Annals of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1842) ii 538; the Oxford theatre records are unclear.
16. cf. "alas, poor ghost"; "my father, me thinks I see my father"; "his beard... a sable silver..." *Hamlet* I.ii.183; 240-2; I.v.4.
17. Executed February 1601, the only definite dating evidence generally discerned in this much-debated passage; but see note 18.
18. If Watson is Thomas Watson, he had died in 1592; and "flourishing" may merely mean "popular". If, as has been suggested, Harvey wrote this later than 1598, it is hard to see how Harvey's close friend for twenty years and more, Edmund Spenser (1552?-16 January 1599) could have been exhorted to "emulation" save during his own lifetime, i.e. in 1598.
19. The Swan theatre on Bankside.
20. As the Lord Chamberlain's company had been renamed under the patronage of James I.
21. Late in that year because some copies are dated 1605.
22. But not in Q1, Q2 or F.
23. Spelt Hamnet in the parish register, and hence in standard biographies and works of reference; but this is plainly just an alternative form of the same name, which is clearly written Hamlett (as well as Hamnet Sadler) in Shakespeare's will, 1616.
24. E.I. Fripp, *Shakespeare, Man and Artist* (London, 1938), ii, 146-7.
25. cf also Samuel Rowlands, *The Night Raven*, 1618: "I will not cry Hamlet revenge my grieves."
26. Nicholas Rowe, "Some Account of the Life etc of Mr William Shakespeare," in *Works*, ed. N. Rowe (1709), vol. I, pp ii-iii.
27. Seneca, *Thyestes*, "avidio fugaces ore captantem cibos," line 2, "abire in attum carceris liceat met". line 70 "alveo medius tuo, Phlegethon, relinquar igneo cinctus freto," line 73.
28. *2 Henry VI*, 11.137; also found in the anonymous additions (c.1600) to Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*. There is no reason to suppose that Armin was mistaken in attributing the phrase to *Hamlet*.
29. cf. the "Italian translations" mentioned by Nashe in 1589.
30. G.C. Moore Smith, *Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia* (Stratford-upon-Avon, 1913) xi
31. F.S. Boas, *Shakespeare and the Universities* (Oxford 1923) 250-60
32. Don Cameron Allen, *Francis Meres's Treatise "Poetrie": A Critical Edition* (Urbana, 1933)

33. In general:

- (a) W. Rubenstein, *Shakespeare's Bad Quartos* (Yale, 1950)
- (b) A. Feuillerat, *The Composition of Shakespeare's Plays* (Yale, 1953) 35-47
- (c) E. Everitt, *The Young Shakespeare* (Copenhagen, 1954)
- (d) Hardin Craig, *A New Look at Shakespeare's Quartos* (New York, 1961)
- (e) A.B. Weiner, ed., *Hamlet, the First Quarto 1603* (New York, 1962) 25-45
- (f) R. Burkhardt, *Shakespeare's Bad Quartos* (The Hague, Paris, 1970)
- (g) D. Schamp, "Thesen zu Shakespeare", *666 Theater Heute* (Nov-Dec 1974) 28-35
- (h) E. Sams, "Shakespeare's text and common sense", *TLS* 2 Sept 1983, 933-4
- (i) E. Sams, ed. *Edmund Ironside* (London, 1986) vii-xv, 365-7

34. In particular:

I *The Taming of A Shrew* Q 1594:

- (a) D. George, "Shakespeare and Pembroke's Men", *SQ* xxxvii (1981), 311
- (b) E. Sams, 33 (h)
- (c) E. Sams, "The Timing of the Shrews", *N & Q*, (March 1985), 33-45
- (d) S. Wells, *The Complete Works* (Oxford, 1986) 29

II *The Whole Contention* Q 1594-5:

- (a) C. Greer, "The York and Lancaster Quarto-Folio Sequence" *PMLA* 48 (1933) 655-705
- (b) A Richardson, *The first part of the Contention* (Diss, Yale) 1953
- (c) C. Pronty, *The Contention and Shakespeare's 2 Henry VI* (New Haven, 1954)
- (d) H. Craig, 33 (d)
- (e) E. Sams, 33 (h)
- (f) G. Greer, *Shakespeare* (Oxford, 1986) 7,75
- (g) J. Jofen, in Foreword to *A Concordance to the Shakespeare Apocrypha*, ed. Ule, (Hildesheim, 1987) I, vii.

III *Romeo and Juliet* Q1 1591

- (a) Craig, 33 (d), 54-65, 81, 88, 95-6, 101-7, 105
- (b) "Random Cloud" "The marriage of Good and Bad Quartos" *SQ* 33 (1982) 417-431

IV *Richard III* Q1 1597

- (a) Craig, 33 (d) 109-11
- (b) K. Smidt, *Injurious Impostors and Richard III* (Oslo, 1964)
- (c) K. Smidt, *Memorial Transmission and Quarto Copy in Richard III: A Reassessment* (Oslo, 1970)

V *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Q1 1602

- (a) W. Bracy, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Columbia, 1952)

VI *Hamlet* Q1 1603

- (a) *Hamlet* Q1 ed. F.G. Hubbard (Madison, 1920)
- (b) F.G. Hubbard "The Readings of the First Quarto of *Hamlet*" *PMLA* 38 (1923) 792-882
- (c) Craig, 33 (d) 75-83
- (d) Weiner, 33 (e)

VII *King Lear* Q1 1608

- (a) G. Duthie, "The Copy for King Lear, 1608 and 1623", in *King Lear*, ed. J. Dover Wilson, The New Shakespeare (Cambridge, 1960, R/1962, 1969, 1972, 1975, 1979) 131-2
- (b) Craig, 33(d), 10-17
- (c) S. Wells, "The Once and Future King Lear" in *The Divisions of The Kingdom* (Oxford, 1983) 1-22
- (d) G. Taylor, "King Lear and Censorship", *ibid* (Oxford, 1983) 75-119
- (e) G. Taylor, "Date and Authorship of the Folio Version", *ibid.* 351-468
- (f) G. Taylor, *The Complete Works* (Oxford, 1986) 1025

VIII *Pericles* Q1 1609

- (a) Craig, 33 (d) 17-26

35. J. Dover Wilson, *The Manuscript of Shakespeare's Hamlet* (Cambridge, 1934)

36. G. Duthie, *The Bad Quarto of Hamlet* (Cambridge, 1941)

37. *Hamlet*, ed. J. Dover Wilson The New Shakespeare (Cambridge) 1934, 2/1936, rpt. 1941. 1948, 1954, 1957, 1961, 1964, 1969, 1971, 1972, 1977, 1978, 1980.

38. J. Dover Wilson, *The Copy for Hamlet 1603; The Hamlet Transcript 1593* (London, 1918), also in the *Library* ix (1918) 153-85 and 217-47
39. A.A. Jack, *Young Hamlet* (Aberdeen, 1950)
40. W.D. Taylor, introduction to item 39, xvii-xx
41. G.I. Duthie, *Shakespeare's King Lear: A Critical Edition* (Oxford, 1949).
42. *King Lear* ed. G.I. Duthie and J. D. Wilson (Cambridge, 1960) 131f.
43. G.I. Duthie, "The Taming of a Shrew and The Taming of the Shrew" in *RES* xix (1943) 337-356
44. Duthie refers to D.L. Patrick, *The Textual History of Richard III* (Stanford, 1936)
45. H.D. Gray, "The First Quarto Hamlet," *MLR*, x (1915) 171-80
46. H.D. Gray, "Hamlet Q1 and Mr. Henry David Gray" *PMLA* 43(1928) 578-82
47. W.W. Greg, *The Shakespeare First Folio* (Oxford, 1955) 301
48. G. Tanger, "The First and Second Quartos and the First Folio of *Hamlet*: their relation to each other" *New Shakespeare Society, Transactions I* (1880-2) 109-97
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