THOMAS MIDDLETON AND THE ADAPTATION OF SHAKESPEARE: LATE JACOBEAN POLITICS IN PRINT AND PERFORMANCE, 1616-1623

by

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ABSTRACT

Since the mid-nineteenth century, various critics have investigated the likelihood that the texts of many of Shakespeare's plays, as published in the First Folio of 1623, may exist only in the form of adaptations created by Shakespeare's younger contemporary Thomas Middleton in the years immediately following the original author's death in 1616. Originally thought to be confined to the study of just two plays – *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure* – recent years have heralded a veritable surge in scholarly interest in this hypothesis, and Middleton has since been suggested to have also given similar treatment to *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Titus Andronicus*, and possibly others. Accordingly, my doctoral thesis is the first study to focus exclusively on Middleton's role as an adapter of Shakespeare, considering what this possibility means for our present-day understanding of Shakespeare's cultural standing among readers in late Jacobean England, and how these texts can inform us about Middleton's own artistry as a dramatist, whose penchant for the creation of politically pointed, often caustically satirical works seemingly stands at odds with the social, political, and religious ambiguity which has so often been associated with Shakespeare's plays.

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother,

Frances Groves (10/04/1929-15/12/2017),

without whose longstanding help and support this achievement would not have been possible

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It is perhaps ironic that a doctoral thesis about the collaborative process of playmaking in early modern England should have turned out to be such a collaborative process in itself. It was in early 2016, when I was working as a duty manager at a tourist attraction in Stratford-upon-Avon, that I first began formulating ideas for PhD research on the adaptation of Shakespeare's plays by his younger contemporary Thomas Middleton. Now, nearly five years later, I find myself sitting at my desk at home, living under a strict lockdown necessitated by a global pandemic. At the time of writing, several vaccines are promising us a way out of this strange, isolated world we find ourselves living in; but despite 'social distancing' almost having become the catchphrase of 2020-21, I am pleased to recall that my own work has allowed me to interact with so many wonderful people, and has incurred many debts, both personal and professional. I hope to acknowledge just some of those debts here.

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As a small, close-knit community, it was inevitable that this PhD – despite the often doom-laden warnings that research degrees can be isolating experiences – has also benefited in various ways from the input of other staff members at the Shakespeare Institute. Dr. Martin Wiggins has always been a kind and supportive mentor, as any research student at the Institute can attest to. Dr. Chris Laoutaris made my interview for my first mid-year review a relaxed, positive, and even enjoyable experience. The expertise of Dr. Erin Sullivan in pedagogical practice, especially with regard to distance learners, was invaluable for undertaking teaching at the Institute myself. Although our opportunities for personal interaction were limited, Prof. Tiffany Stern, Dr. Simon Smith, and Dr Abigail Rokison-Woodall have also all enriched my time studying here. All the staff in the library and in the office have also proved indispensable, especially at those times when it felt like I just didn't know which direction to go in.

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INTRODUCTION

SHAKESPEARE AND MIDDLETON IN THE REALM OF ADAPTATION

During the spring of 2012, a highly belligerent war of words arose within the pages of the *Times Literary Supplement* (*TLS*) over a proposition that the surviving text of William Shakespeare's *All's Well that Ends Well* – a comedy of *c.*1605 which is traditionally considered to be the work of a single author – may in fact contain several passages contributed by a second dramatist, the identity of whom was suggested to be Shakespeare's younger contemporary Thomas Middleton. Citing as indicative of this possibility such suggestive details as the play's 'variable speech-prefixes' and 'unusually high percentage of rhyming couplets', the original proponents of this theory, Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith, reasoned that through hypothesising co-authorship literary critics would henceforth be better equipped 'to explain both the play's stylistic anomalies and its particular stylistic and dramaturgical qualities.'[1] It is important to emphasise that their identification of such 'Middletonian markers' within an otherwise ostensibly Shakespearean dramatic work was not by any means an improbable discovery. After all, since the latter part of the twentieth century, guided by the pioneering stylometric investigations undertaken during the 1970s by David J. Lake and MacDonald P. Jackson, a general scholarly consensus has arisen that approximately one-third of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* (*c.*1607) can safely be attributed to Middleton's co-authorship.[2] It might thus appear that the precedent of *Timon* provides a good degree of vindication of Maguire and Smith's claims: if Shakespeare can be observed to have appreciated the benefits of collaborating with Middleton at one point during his career – recognising, to quote from Eilidh Kane's analysis, 'the ways two individual writers could bring their own skills to bear on

[1] Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith, 'Many Hands: A New Shakespeare Collaboration?', *Times Literary Supplement* (20 April 2012), pp. 13-15 (p. 13).
[2] David J. Lake, *The Canon of Thomas Middleton's Plays: Internal Evidence for the Major Problems of Authorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 279-86; MacDonald P. Jackson, *Studies in Attribution: Middleton and Shakespeare* (Salzburg: Universität Salzburg, 1979), pp. 54-66.

a shared project'[3] – then there should be no immediately obvious reason for us to reject entirely out of hand the possibility that he may also have adopted similar working practices on other occasions.

Although Maguire and Smith's investigation proved to be of considerable scholarly interest – the researchers later reported 'A number of highly knowledgeable and esteemed colleagues well-versed in authorial attribution and in the Middleton canon' privately offering 'additional evidence […] alongside suggestions about how we might modify our method'[4] – their work did not meet with universal enthusiasm. In a particularly dogmatic refutation of their work which was issued soon after by Brian Vickers and Marcus Dahl, it was even suggested that Maguire and Smith's efforts to associate Middleton with the writing of *All's Well that Ends Well* was primarily influenced by more general negative opinions of the play's overall quality as a piece of dramatic literature, an accusation which was firmly reinforced in their thoroughly dismissive conclusion that 'Whether you like the play or not, *All's Well* is all Shakespeare's.'[5] There can be no denying that the style in which Vickers and Dahl presented their rebuttal made for rhetorically powerful reading, but the forceful manner in which they elected to close their riposte, suggesting that qualitative biases might still be considered a driving force behind new claims for collaboration within the established Shakespeare canon, might seem particularly strange when we consider Vickers's own previously avowed support for the concept of Shakespeare as a collaborative playwright. In a highly influential monograph first published in 2002, after all, Vickers had discussed at length his agreement with the increasingly common belief that Shakespeare actively co-wrote with other dramatists on at least five occasions

[3] Eilidh Kane, 'Shakespeare and Middleton's Co-Authorship of *Timon of Athens*', *Journal of Early Modern Studies*, 5 (2016), pp. 217-35 (p. 233).
[4] Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith, '*All's Well That Ends Well*: Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith on the State of the Debate', *Centre for Early Modern Studies* (July 2012) <https://cemsoxford.wordpress.com/2012/07/31/alls-well-that-ends-well-laurie-maguire-and-emma-smith-on-the-state-of-the-debate/> [accessed 5 November 2017].
[5] Brian Vickers and Marcus Dahl, 'What is infirm… *All's Well That Ends Well*: An Attribution Rejected', *Times Literary Supplement* (11 May 2012), pp. 14-15 (p. 15).

throughout his career, not only with Middleton on the aforementioned example of *Timon of Athens*, but also with George Peele on *Titus Andronicus* (*c*.1592), with George Wilkins on *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (*c*.1607), and twice with John Fletcher, first on *All Is True*, also known by the alternative title *Henry VIII* (*c*.1612), and later on what was probably Shakespeare's final play, *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (*c*.1613).[6] In the same monograph, Vickers also wrote in favour of Shakespeare being the author of the 'Hand D' passages in the manuscript of the history play *Sir Thomas More* (*c*.1601)[7] – a work probably originally written by Anthony Munday (Hand S) and Henry Chettle (Hand A), and subsequently revised by Chettle, Shakespeare, Thomas Heywood (Hand B), and Thomas Dekker (Hand E)[8] – and in later publications he has responded approvingly to arguments that Thomas Nashe likely played a role in the composition of *Henry VI Part 1* (1592)[9] and that Shakespeare was probably involved in writing at least four scenes of the anonymous chronicle history play *Edward III* (*c*.1593).[10] That Vickers and Dahl would thus deem it appropriate to attack so stridently this newly proposed expansion to the concept of Shakespeare as a collaborative dramatist, so soon after the publication of Maguire and Smith's original article – and, it should be emphasised, before the scholarly community at large had had the opportunity to assess and respond to Maguire and Smith's claims in reputable peer-reviewed publications – leads me to consider the firmness with which they chose to present their disagreement as constituting a decidedly premature judgment.

Despite the vigorousness with which scholars on each side of this debate chose to articulate their individual stances on the matter, no scholarly agreement was achieved during

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[6] See Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author: A Historical Study of Five Collaborative Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[7] Ibid., pp. 34-43.
[8] See e.g. John Jowett (ed.), *Sir Thomas More* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2011), p. 6.
[9] Brian Vickers, 'Incomplete Shakespeare; or, Denying Coauthorship in *1 Henry VI*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 58 (2007), pp. 311-52.
[10] Brian Vickers, 'The Two Authors of *Edward III*', *Shakespeare Survey*, 67 (2014), pp. 102-18. Vickers argues that Thomas Kyd was the play's second author, although this conclusion has not reached widespread acceptance. For a tentative alternative suggestion that Christopher Marlowe was Shakespeare's co-author on this play, see Gary Taylor, John V. Nance, and Keegan Cooper, 'Shakespeare and Who? Aeschylus, *Edward III* and Thomas Kyd', *Shakespeare Survey*, 70 (2017), pp. 146-53.

this brief episode of academic contention. Nor did either party proceed to expand upon their claims in any peer-reviewed scholarly publications in the years immediately following this initial presentation of their work in the *TLS*. Several years later, however, in 2016, Rory Loughnane published an essay in which he approached afresh the concept of a partially Middletonian *All's Well that Ends Well*. Independently evaluating the main points of evidence contributed as part of the original debate, Loughnane determined that neither Maguire and Smith nor Vickers and Dahl had presented their arguments in such a way as to make their respective claims for or against co-authorship wholly convincing. As Loughnane observed,

> the evidence of authorship produced by both sides was flawed; in short, both groups were using lexical and linguistic evidence as markers of authorship on too large a scale (or, conversely, too small a scale) in terms of relative proximity of markers to either propose or reject the case for an individual author, Shakespeare, Middleton, or whomever.[11]

Following Loughnane's assessment, it may well appear that the questions that had been generated in 2012 around the authorship of *All's Well* were ultimately destined to remain unresolved. Yet it would be wrong to imply that Maguire and Smith's initial hypothesis failed to exert a significant influence upon future directions in literary scholarship. In the years that followed, the editorial team involved in the development of the then-forthcoming volumes of the New Oxford Shakespeare undertook a series of further investigations into the question of Middleton's possible involvement in the play's composition, and consequently, upon that project's eventual completion in 2016, they felt confident enough not only to endorse the critical thrust of Maguire and Smith's arguments, but also to credit Middleton as one of two authors whose hands do indeed appear to be present in the existing text of the play. Whereas Maguire and Smith had originally postulated direct collaboration between Shakespeare and

[11] Rory Loughnane, 'The Virginity Dialogue in *All's Well That Ends Well*: Feminism, Editing, and Adaptation', in *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. by Dympna Callaghan, 2nd edn (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2016), pp. 411-27 (p. 412).

Middleton, however, the New Oxford edition suggests something fundamentally different, as explained in the associated 'Canon and Chronology' discussion provided by Taylor and Loughnane: it is here argued that Middleton's supposed contributions to the text were the result not of orthodox methods of co-authorship, but of Middleton's later 'adaptation' of Shakespeare's original work. They putatively dated Middleton's labours in this regard to sometime in the first half of 1622, approximately seventeen years after the play's probable original date of composition.[12]

It is important to note that Middleton's purported involvement in adapting the text of *All's Well that Ends Well* is not supported by any surviving external evidence. The play is preserved in only one extant version, which was included in Shakespeare's First Folio in 1623, and as such there is no other independent textual witness with which we might compare the possibly adapted surviving text. The identification of Middleton's work as an adapter of established plays by older dramatists, however, is not simply something which has been enabled by the advent of modern computer-aided techniques for stylistic analysis, but is in fact clearly attested to by the existing historical record. One of the earliest references to Middleton as a playwright working in the early modern commercial theatre industry shows him to be engaged in exactly this kind of commission.[13] In an entry in his *Diary* dated 'the 14 of desembȝ 1602', the theatre impresario Philip Henslowe records a sum of five shillings 'to paye vnto m^{r} mydelton for a prologe & A epeloge for th*e* playe of bacon for th*e* corte'.[14] Critics have tended to interpret Henslowe's reference to 'th*e* playe of bacon' as denoting a court revival of Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, an Elizabethan comedy probably originally written

[12] Gary Taylor and Rory Loughnane, 'The Canon and Chronology of Shakespeare's Works', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 417-602 (p. 558).

[13] All biographical details concerning Middleton are taken from Gary Taylor, 'Middleton, Thomas (*bap*. 1580, *d*.1627), Playwright', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (September 2004) <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-18682> [accessed 18 October 2017], unless otherwise noted.

[14] Philip Henslowe, *Henslowe's Diary*, ed. by R. A. Foakes, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 207.

around 1589.[15] Although this is indeed likely, it is also theoretically possible that this entry describes the later anonymous drama *John of Bordeaux* (*c*.1591), a play which is also referred to by the title *The Second Part of Friar Bacon*. But regardless of this minor degree of uncertainty, Henslowe's record remains important for what it teaches us about Middleton's early involvement in the reshaping of existing texts by other playwrights, in this case many years after the given text's original period of composition.

The evidence for Middleton's lost additions to 'th*e* playe of bacon', however, has markedly different (and arguably less culturally ground-breaking) implications from the more recent arguments in the New Oxford Shakespeare concerning the surviving version of *All's Well that Ends Well*. Rather, the discovery of Middleton's possible posthumous adaptation of this play serves to align *All's Well* with three other Shakespearean works which have also had similar claims made concerning their textual provenance. The expression of such theories can in fact be traced back as far as 1869, in W. G. Clark and W. A. Wright's edition of *Macbeth* for Oxford's Clarendon Press. Although *Macbeth* is generally believed to have been written around 1606, in the immediate aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot of November 1605, Clark and Wright found especially intriguing the fact that two songs cued in the surviving text of the play – 'Come away, come away, &c.' (TLN 1467) and 'Blacke Spirits, &c.' (TLN 1572)[16] – also appear in full in Middleton's later tragicomedy *The Witch* (*c*.1616), at 3.3.39-72 and 5.2.63-79 respectively.[17] Clark and Wright therefore suggested that 'the play was interpolated after

[15] See, for example: Swapan Chakravorty, *Society and Politics in the Plays of Thomas Middleton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 23; Alexander Leggatt, *Introduction to English Renaissance Comedy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 30; Mark Hutchings, 'Thomas Middleton, Chronologer of His Time', in *Thomas Middleton in Context*, ed. by Suzanne Gossett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 17-27 (p. 25); and Todd Andrew Borlik, 'Building a Wall Around Tudor England: Coastal Forts and Fantasies of Border Control in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*', *Early Theatre*, 22 (2019), pp. 67-88 (p. 78).

[16] All references to Shakespeare's First Folio are keyed to the through line numbering (TLN) given in Charlton Hinman (ed.), *The First Folio of Shakespeare: The Norton Facsimile*, 2nd edn (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996).

[17] Isaac Reed, *The Witch's* first editor, noticed the connection of the songs to *Macbeth*, though he did not suggest that Middleton adapted the latter. See Isaac Reed (ed.), *The Witch* (London: J. Nicholls, 1788).

Shakespeare's death' – which occurred on 23 April 1616[18] – 'or at least after he had withdrawn from all connection with the theatre', and that 'The interpolator was, not improbably, Thomas Middleton; who, to please the "groundlings," expanded the parts originally assigned by Shakespeare to the weird sisters, and also introduced a new character, Hecate.'[19] Then, over a century later in 1983, Alice Walker published an essay in which she identified numerous textual indications of later alterations also having been made to the text of Shakespeare's *c.*1603 play *Measure for Measure*, alterations which were ultimately assigned to the hand of Middleton in the original Oxford Shakespeare's *Complete Works* and *Textual Companion* of 1986-7.[20] The processes by which this conclusion was reached were later explained in detail in the collaborative work of two of the Oxford editors, John Jowett and Gary Taylor, in 1993.[21]

While many studies have since endorsed and expanded upon both of these hypotheses, with fully edited texts of both plays later being included as part of the Oxford Middleton *Collected Works* in 2007, for many years *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure* remained the only widely recognised instances of likely Middletonian adaptation in the established Shakespeare canon. The New Oxford Shakespeare's promotion in 2016 of a partially Middletonian *All's Well that Ends Well*, however, was accompanied by similar work conducted on the slightly expanded version of *Titus Andronicus* which was included in the First Folio in 1623. Working with Doug Duhaime, a digital humanities programmer at Yale University, Taylor presented evidence that the so-called 'Fly Scene' (3.2) – present in the Folio text of the play, but absent

[18] All biographical details concerning Shakespeare are taken from Peter Holland, 'Shakespeare, William (1564-1616), Playwright and Poet', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (January 2013) <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e25200> [accessed 18 October 2017], unless otherwise noted.

[19] W. G. Clark and William Aldis Wright (eds), *Macbeth* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1869), p. xii.

[20] Alice Walker, 'The Text of *Measure for Measure*', *Review of English Studies*, 34 (1983), pp. 1-20. See also Gary Taylor, 'The Canon and Chronology of Shakespeare's Plays', in *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, with John Jowett and William Montgomery (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 69-144 (pp. 125-6).

[21] John Jowett and Gary Taylor, '"With New Additions": Theatrical Interpolation in *Measure for Measure*', in *Shakespeare Reshaped, 1606-1623*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Jowett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 107-236.

from each of the earlier quarto editions of 1594, 1600, and 1611 – may well be yet another hitherto unrecognised instance of material having been supplied by Middleton for interpolation into a pre-existing Shakespearean work. Their supporting evidence for this argument was eventually published the following year, as part of the New Oxford Shakespeare's *Authorship Companion* of 2017.[22]

Hence, in the steady increase of Shakespearean plays suggested to have been subjected to processes of adaptation at the hand of Middleton – from one, *Macbeth*, in 1869, to as many as four by 2017 – we can find good evidence of Smith's provocative observation that, while 'Currently, only the writing partnership with John Fletcher at the end of Shakespeare's career is known to have lasted beyond a single play,' it is highly likely that 'Middleton may yet emerge as a more significant collaborator' in terms of his involvement in the established Shakespeare canon.[23] Certainly, Middleton's posthumous textual engagement with Shakespeare's surviving body of works may well have been part of a much more sustained project of interaction than scholars have historically been equipped to recognise. Research into Middleton as an adapter of Shakespearean drama has thus brought to the fore many new possibilities for the critical interpretation of the four plays in question. Specifically, while historicist analyses of Shakespeare's works have often sought to contextualise them in relation to their original dates of composition (something which is itself often difficult to ascertain), the ever-increasing likelihood of posthumous Middletonian adaptation additionally encourages us to consider a great many alternative contextual possibilities through which we might attempt to investigate the surviving texts of these plays. In other words, if Middleton truly was made responsible for adapting up to four Shakespearean dramas – almost certainly *Macbeth* and *Measure for*

[22] Gary Taylor and Doug Duhaime, 'Who Wrote the Fly Scene (3.2) in *Titus Andronicus*?: Automated Searches and Deep Reading', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 67-91.
[23] Emma Smith, 'His Collaborator Thomas Middleton', in *The Shakespeare Circle: An Alternative Biography*, ed. by Paul Edmondson and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 297-304 (p. 297).

Measure, probably *All's Well that Ends Well*, and possibly also *Titus Andronicus* – then several important questions are necessarily invoked. What circumstances occurred for the creation of such adaptations to have become desirable, or, indeed, necessary? And what does this mean for the present-day critical interpretation of these works, now that critics are confronted with the problematising factor of an additional (and, it must be emphasised, later) contributor having been detected as an adapting hand within the Folio texts?

This doctoral thesis seeks to respond to these recent developments in Shakespeare scholarship. It expands upon the major implications of the aforementioned stylistic studies, approaching the affected play-texts not simply in terms of their relevance to recent advancements in the study of early modern dramatic authorship, but also with regard to the significance the arguments for their partially Middletonian status may have upon wider issues associated with the history of the Renaissance theatres. Middleton's purported involvement in the reshaping of these works would not have been produced entirely independently of the requirements for their staging in new theatrical contexts. These texts were owned not by the authors that contributed to them, but by the acting company that performed them, in this case the Lord Chamberlain's (later King's) Men, the company for whom Shakespeare had served as principal dramatist from around the time of its formation in 1594.[24] It is thus that James J. Marino comments that 'The Chamberlain's Men owned those plays, exclusively, as subsequent actors have not, and they exerted substantial authority over them. The plays are shaped by their artistic and commercial goals, goals shared by their partner William Shakespeare.'[25] In this sense, it is therefore vital that we attempt to understand these plays not only as literary works originated by Shakespeare yet surviving in the form of adaptations produced by Middleton, but also as a particular company's commissioned revisions to their own commercial properties. To

[24] For the uncertainty of exactly when Shakespeare joined the company, see Roslyn L. Knutson, 'What's So Special About 1594?', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 61 (2010), pp. 449-67.
[25] James J. Marino, *Owning William Shakespeare: The King's Men and Their Intellectual Property* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), p. 12.

quote Marino, 'A King's Men's play changed by the King's Men should not be imagined to be a derivative work. It is better thought of as an original work, shaped by its authors.'[26] As this thesis will demonstrate, it is through an appreciation of how the multi-faceted triopoly of Shakespeare, Middleton, and the King's Men operated together in producing the adapted versions of these plays that we can best understand how and why Shakespeare's material would thus have come to be repurposed for revival under new theatrical, social, and political conditions in the years immediately following their original author's death in April 1616.

It is important for readers to be aware that we cannot currently identify with absolute certainty every single passage, line, stage direction, speech prefix, or even individual word that may have been altered in or added to these texts by Middleton during the adaptation process. If Taylor and Duhaime's identification of Middleton as the author of *Titus Andronicus* 3.2 is correct, then this would be an exception: as we are able to compare the Folio text of this play with the quarto texts that preceded it, it is easy to see that the only substantial textual change is the introduction of the 84 lines that make up 3.2. For the other three plays considered in this thesis, however, the attributions to Middleton are less straightforward. As Taylor puts it in an article discussing Middleton's textual renovation of *Macbeth*, 'adaptation produced much smaller blocks of new text than most collaborations. Smaller blocks mean less data; less data mean less evidence to support any hypothesis. No one should be surprised that empiricists who agree on the authorship of whole plays or two-author Jacobean collaborations reach conflicting conclusions about a putative adaptation.'[27] Nevertheless, editions such as the Oxford Middleton and the New Oxford Shakespeare have managed to assign several passages from these plays to Middleton with confidence.[28]

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Gary Taylor, 'Empirical Middleton: *Macbeth*, Adaptation, and Microauthorship', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 65 (2014), pp. 239-72 (p. 242).

[28] Unless alternative citations are provided, my discussion here of which parts of the affected play-texts are attributable to Middleton is informed by the information provided in Taylor and Loughnane, pp. 554-7 (*Measure for Measure*), pp. 557-9 (*All's Well That Ends Well*), and pp. 564-8 (*Macbeth*).

In *Macbeth*, aside from the addition of the two songs from Middleton's *The Witch* (included at 3.5.A1-A37 and 4.1.A1-A17 in the New Oxford text), it seems likely that Middleton added 1.1.8 ('I come, Grey Malkin'), 1.3.40-2, the entirety of 3.5, 4.1.39-43, 4.1.120-130.1, 4.1.133-55, and 4.2.38-55 to Shakespeare's play.[29] It is also possible that he introduced several new stage directions: Roger Holdsworth has noted that the stage direction formulation '*Enter* [Character A] *meeting* [Character B]', which occurs in *Macbeth* at 1.2.0.1-2 and 3.5.0.1, was extremely rare in early modern drama, but was often used by Middleton.[30] Taylor has added to this observation, counting 15 uses of this formulation by Middleton, but zero by Shakespeare (discounting these examples from *Macbeth*).[31] Thus, of the play's 2,103 lines (by the count of the New Oxford text), 151 are confidently attributed to Middleton, constituting approximately 7.2% of the existing text.

The surviving Folio text of *Measure for Measure* similarly exhibits signs of musical transposition. The song beginning with the line 'Take, O take those lips away', which is performed at 4.1.1-6 by the Boy who is accompanying Mariana, appears to have originated in a play written approximately fourteen years after *Measure for Measure* was originally composed. The play in question is *Rollo, Duke of Normandy; or, The Bloody Brother* (*c*.1617), written by Fletcher in collaboration with Philip Massinger and possibly also Nathan Field, where the song appears with a second stanza. Jowett and Taylor first demonstrated that this song originated in *Rollo* rather than in *Measure*, and so must have been incorporated into Shakespeare's play at a later date.[32] It is likely that the lines immediately following the Boy's singing of the first stanza of this song (4.1.7-22) were also added by Middleton. Moreover,

[29] For the most thorough summary of Middleton's involvement in *Macbeth*, see Gary Taylor et al., 'Works Included in this Edition: Canon and Chronology', in *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to the Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino, with MacDonald P. Jackson, John Jowett, Valerie Wayne, and Adrian Weiss (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), pp. 335-443 (pp. 383-98).
[30] See Roger Holdsworth, 'Stage Directions and Authorship: Shakespeare, Middleton, Heywood', *Memoria di Shakespeare*, 8 (2012), pp. 185-200.
[31] Taylor, 'Empirical Middleton', p. 268.
[32] Jowett and Taylor, pp. 123-40.

Jowett has identified the opening of 1.2 (1.2.A1-A67 in the New Oxford edition)[33] as a Middletonian addition inspired by a newssheet published on 6 October 1621,[34] and further added passages have been identified at 2.1.37-40, 2.1.72-4, 2.1.166-72, 2.1.232-43, throughout 2.2 (adding Lucio to the scene), and at 4.3.1-14. Additionally, Middleton seems to have swapped the Duke's speeches at 3.1.454-75 and 4.1.56-61, increased the silent presence of Julietta in 1.2 and 5.1, and possibly added the half-line 'But fitter time for that' (5.1.481) to highlight Isabella's silence following the Duke's marriage proposal at the end of the play.[35] Finally, Taylor has suggested that the setting was moved from Italy, possibly Ferrara, to the Vienna of the existing version of the play, and that the Duke's name Vincentio (only given in the list of roles provided in the Folio) was accordingly expunged by Middleton.[36] Terri Bourus provides further evidence in favour of the play's geographical relocation in the 2017 *Critical Reference Edition* of the New Oxford Shakespeare.[37] Of the play's 2,454 lines (a figure which excludes lines apparently intended for deletion following Middleton's adaptation of the play, i.e. 1.2.D1-D7),[38] approximately 130 may have been contributed by Middleton, or around 5.3% of the extant text.

Finally, the attribution work on *All's Well that Ends Well* is very new, and it is possible, considering that Maguire and Smith located signs of Middletonian writing in as many as seven different scenes – 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 4.1, 4.3, and 5.3 – that Middleton may have contributed to

[33] When the letter 'A' is used in line references from the New Oxford Shakespeare, it denotes that the lines referred to are believed to be later additions to Shakespeare's original text (the 'A' standing for 'Addition').
[34] John Jowett, 'The Audacity of *Measure for Measure* in 1621', *Ben Jonson Journal*, 8 (2001), pp. 229-47.
[35] Terri Bourus and Gary Taylor, '*Measure for Measure*(s): Performance-Testing the Adaptation Hypothesis', *Shakespeare*, 10 (2014), pp. 363-401 (p. 370).
[36] Gary Taylor, 'Shakespeare's Mediterranean *Measure for Measure*', in *Shakespeare and the Mediterranean: The Selected Proceedings of the International Shakespeare Association World Congress, Valencia, 2001*, ed. by Tom Clayton, Susan Brock, and Vicente Forés (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), pp. 243-69.
[37] Terri Bourus, '*Measure for Measure*: Introduction', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Critical Reference Edition*, ed. by Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus, and Gabriel Egan, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 1711-18. In this analysis, Bourus also refers to Matthew Steggle's discovery of evidence for a lost play featuring a Duke Vincentio of Ferrara, which may also support this possibility: see Matthew Steggle, 'The "Comedy of a Duke of Ferrara" in 1598', *Early Theatre*, 19 (2016), pp. 139-56.
[38] When the letter 'D' is used in line references from the New Oxford Shakespeare, it denotes that the lines referred to are believed to have been intended for deletion from Shakespeare's text, but accidentally preserved in the printed version (the 'D' standing for 'Deletion').

more of the play than has yet been identified. However, just three scenes are currently attributed in part to Middleton with confidence. The affected passages are Helen and Paroles's conversation about virginity at 1.1.98-139,[39] the French King's speech at 2.3.109-36,[40] and various passages which expand the comical gulling of Paroles in 4.3 (specifically lines 90-9, 140-93, 203-38, and 260-4).[41] Thus, 175 out of 2,572 lines, or about 6.8% of *All's Well*, has thus far been attributed to Middleton's authorship.

Although certainly an important detail for any scholarly study seeking to contextualise these adapted play-texts during the period of their revision, however, ascertaining when Middleton most likely undertook such commissions presents certain challenges in itself. Considering that Shakespeare is known during his career to have been both a reviser of his own plays and an adapter of plays by other dramatists for the Chamberlain's/King's Men, it seems plausible that another dramatist was brought in to adapt the affected plays in part because Shakespeare was no longer around to do so himself. Therefore, the most logical *terminus post quem* for this process would have to be late 1613 or early 1614, when Shakespeare is generally understood to have retired from actively working in the theatres. The probable *terminus ante quem* would be early in 1622, when the Folio probably entered the printing process, as identified by Charlton Hinman in 1963.[42] However, as B. D. R. Higgins reminds us, when exactly the process of printing the Folio began is debatable,[43] and it is at least hypothetically

[39] Gary Taylor, '*All's Well That Ends Well*: Text, Date, and Adaptation', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 337-65 (pp. 346-64).
[40] John V. Nance, 'Middleton and the King's Speech in *All's Well That Ends Well*', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 321-36.
[41] Rory Loughnane, 'Thomas Middleton in *All's Well That Ends Well*? Part One', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 278-302; Rory Loughnane, 'Thomas Middleton in *All's Well That Ends Well*? Part Two', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 307-20.
[42] Charlton Hinman, *The Printing and Proof-Reading of the First Folio of Shakespeare*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).
[43] B. D. R. Higgins, 'Printing the First Folio', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's First Folio*, ed. by Emma Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 30-47 (p. 43).

possible that play manuscripts could have been delivered to the printers long after the printing process was underway, especially if the play appears late in the Folio, like *Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus*, both part of the 'tragedies' section.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that Middleton's adaptations may have occurred at any time between 1613 and 1623, critics have been able to propose some logical dates within this timeframe. As discussed above, Taylor and Loughnane propose early 1622 for Middleton's adaptation of *All's Well that Ends Well*: they base this suggestion on the play's reference to out-of-fashion toothpicks and brooches (at 1.1.132-4), which would not have been relevant until much later in the reign of King James I; its reference to a fistula (at 1.1.25), which may allude to the anal fistula that afflicted Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, Count of Gondomar and Spanish Ambassador to England, which was mercilessly mocked by Middleton in his own satire *A Game at Chess* in 1624; and the relevance of the play's military themes to the Thirty Years' War, which took place between 1618 and 1648 and inspired numerous responses by Middleton in his works of the early 1620s.[44] Middleton's adaptation of *Measure for Measure* is even easier to date: Jowett's convincing identification of the influence of the 6 October 1621 newssheet discussed above proves that Middleton's adaptation of this play must have been produced around this time.[45]

The adaptations of *Titus Andronicus* and *Macbeth*, however, are far more challenging to date with any degree of certainty. *Macbeth*'s adaptation is usually dated to mid-1616, on the basis of its close association with *The Witch*, a play most likely written early that same year: most studies of this play, entirely independently of any discussion about its influence on the text of *Macbeth*, date it to 1616 (or possibly late 1615),[46] and Pierre Kapitaniak's study of the

[44] See Taylor and Loughnane, p. 558.
[45] See Jowett, 'Audacity'.
[46] Edward J. Esche (ed.), *A Critical Edition of Thomas Middleton's The Witch* (New York: Garland, 1993); Elizabeth Schafer (ed.), *The Witch* (London: New Mermaids, 1994).

play's sources shows that it cannot have been written any earlier than 1614.[47] Lastly, *Titus Andronicus*'s added scene has also been hypothetically dated to 1616, the suggestion being that 'It may allude to the self-starvation and madness of Lady Arbella Stuart between summer 1613 and her death in September 1615', which 'would support composition soon after Shakespeare's death in April 1616.'[48] However, as Taylor and Loughnane acknowledge, 'the lexical tests make no such assumption'.[49] Each of Middleton's adaptations is therefore generally believed to have been undertaken between mid-1616 at the earliest and early 1622 at the latest.

Considering this, my thesis, the first study to focus exclusively upon Middleton's role as an adapter of Shakespeare, will examine what the attribution of these play-texts to Middleton's adapting hand means for our present-day understanding of Shakespeare's cultural standing among readers in late Jacobean England. It will also question how these texts can inform us about Middleton's own artistry as a dramatist, whose penchant for the creation of politically pointed, often caustically satirical works seemingly stands at odds with the social, political, and religious ambiguity which has so often been associated with Shakespeare's plays. While Middleton's work as an adapter would not have entirely reflected his own intentions as a dramatist, as he was driven by the desires of the theatre company that owned those plays itself, Middleton's own interests and aims as a dramatist do appear to have accorded particularly well with those of the King's Men during the period in which he undertook to produce these adaptations. With this in mind, it will be argued that by reading the implicated play-texts from a Middletonian, rather than purely Shakespearean, perspective, it will be possible to generate new readings of these plays which situate them in very different theatrical contexts. Specifically, this thesis considers the discovery of Middleton's role as an adapter of Shakespeare as being a revelation that unveils significant new directions in critical analysis for

[47] Pierre Kapitaniak, 'New Insights on the Sources for Thomas Middleton's *The Witch*', *Notes and Queries*, 257 (2012), pp. 91-2.
[48] Taylor and Loughnane, p. 491.
[49] Ibid.

the works in question, something which allows us to situate these plays firmly as existing in versions informed by the social, theatrical, and political concerns of the late 1610s and early 1620s.

Authorship Attribution and Shakespeare's Evolving Canon: From the First Folio (1623) to the New Oxford Shakespeare (2016)

When thinking of adaptation in the context of the study of Shakespeare, present-day readers might most immediately associate the term with the following definition from the online edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*): 'An altered or amended version of a text, musical composition, etc., (now *esp*.) one adapted for filming, broadcasting, or production on the stage from a novel or similar literary source' (*n*. 4).[50] In this sense, 'adaptation', as Christy Desmet and Sujata Iyengar note, has come to be most prominently associated with modern film studies.[51] When we consider adaptation as defined using the first part of this explanation, as 'An altered or amended version of a text,' however, it still appears that the term 'adaptation' characterises such texts as 'derivative and secondary' works, to quote from the analysis of Linda Hutcheon.[52] When specifically used in relation to Middleton's process of reshaping play-texts previously authored by Shakespeare, however, the word 'adaptation' can more suitably be understood in terms of a more recently developed definition: 'The action or process of altering, amending, or modifying something, esp. something that has been created for a particular purpose, so that it is suitable for a new use' (*n*. 5). The distinction is an important one. Indeed, such textual scholarship does not argue that Middleton wrote a new work 'based on' Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, for example; rather, the identification of Middleton's role in the surviving text of this play, as Margaret Jane Kidnie writes, 'seeks to revise substantially the distinction between work and adaptation with regard to past and future textual

[50] All definitions in this thesis have been sourced from *Oxford English Dictionary Online* <www.oed.com>
[51] Christy Desmet and Sujata Iyengar, 'Adaptation, Appropriation, or What You Will', *Shakespeare*, 11 (2015), pp. 10-19 (p. 11).
[52] Linda Hutcheon, with Siobhan O'Flynn, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), p. 31.

productions of *Measure for Measure*.'[53] It is thus important to distinguish between an adaptation as a new yet derivative creative work, and an adaptation as an existing text reshaped at a later point in time by a separate dramatist (or possibly multiple dramatists, as observable in the manuscript of *Sir Thomas More*). Both kinds of adaptation are valid works of art, but they also take on very distinctly different forms.

Yet it is this understanding of adaptation in the Renaissance theatres which has caused a good deal of consternation among certain critics. Indeed, John Kerrigan stresses a distinction between the terms 'revision', which is most commonly used to describe a play-text being reworked by its original author, and 'adaptation', which is used to describe the specifically non-authorial rewriting of a work.[54] When an adapted text exists only in one textual version – just as *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and *Macbeth* exist only in the versions included in the 1623 Folio – the implications of such a revelation might be troubling to certain readers: arguably, the original author's authority over that text has become somewhat decentred, creative control having been usurped by the separate figure of the adapter.

It is perhaps largely for this reason that Middleton's likely adaptation of Shakespearean plays has been met with such strident opposition from certain critical voices. Of course, disagreement has always been present, and rightly so: all new revelations in authorship study should be subject to criticism and independent assessment. As Gabriel Egan writes, 'Authorship attribution claims are empirical and should be replicable'.[55] Scholars are encouraged to replicate the work of others to test and assess its accuracy and persuasiveness. However, many critics have proved particularly vocal in their opposition to these findings.

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[53] Margaret Jane Kidnie, *Shakespeare and the Problem of Adaptation* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), p. 148.
[54] John Kerrigan, 'Revision, Adaptation, and the Fool in *King Lear*', in *The Division of the Kingdoms: Shakespeare's Two Versions of King Lear*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Michael Warren (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 195-245 (p. 195).
[55] Gabriel Egan, 'A History of Shakespearean Authorship Attribution', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 27-47 (p. 46).

Dahl, for example, illustrates this particularly well when he responds to Middleton's adaptation work having been enshrined in modern critical editions by confidently stating that 'the "evidence" and "methodology" […] is far from being agreed upon, nor the wider implications, results and objectivity of this scholarly and editorial venture objectively verifiable.'[56] Similar doubts have recently been voiced by Darren Freebury-Jones (working in collaboration with Dahl) and Pervez Rizvi over Taylor's championing of 'microattribution' methods to explore Middleton's role as an adapter of Shakespeare,[57] while David Benjamin Auerbach has even gone so far as to specifically accuse the editors of the New Oxford Shakespeare of 'scientific sloppiness' in their attribution work.[58] Vickers has even directly accused Taylor of 'disintegrating' *Macbeth*, instead channelling J. M. Nosworthy's contention that the introduction of the witches' songs into the text was part of Shakespeare's own revision, and undertaken around 1611.[59]

It thus seems likely that the quarrel over the extent of Middleton's role in reshaping Shakespeare's works will continue for quite some time to come. However, the recent expansion in the New Oxford edition of Middleton's role as an adapter of Shakespeare is only part of a long history of new revelations concerning the Shakespeare canon and the authorship of the works that may be encompassed by such terminology. Of course, that this would lead to some degree of disquiet is not entirely surprising. Shakespeare's perceived status as the dominating individual author figure at the heart of the Western canon has long been established, both in literary criticism and in present-day popular culture. As Michael Dobson writes, from around the turn of the eighteenth century Shakespeare, once considered one of many respected

[56] Marcus Dahl, 'Authors of the Mind', *Journal of Early Modern Studies*, 5 (2016), pp. 157-73 (p. 171).
[57] Darren Freebury-Jones and Marcus Dahl, 'The Limitations of Microattribution', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 60 (2018), pp. 467-95; Pervez Rizvi, 'The Problem of Microattribution', *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, 34 (2019), pp. 606-15.
[58] David Benjamin Auerbach, 'Statistical Infelicities in *The New Oxford Shakespeare Authorship Companion*', *American Notes and Queries*, 33 (2020), pp. 28-31 (p. 30).
[59] Brian Vickers, 'Disintegrated: Did Thomas Middleton Really Adapt *Macbeth*?', *Times Literary Supplement* (28 May 2010), pp. 14-15; J. M. Nosworthy, *Shakespeare's Occasional Plays: Their Origin and Transmission* (London: Edward Arnold, 1965), pp. 8-53.

playwrights who worked within the environs of the early modern commercial theatre industry, has come to be transformed into 'the paradigmatic figure of literary authority (making him into "the bard", a "hero").'[60] Arguably, this perception is largely predicated upon the manner in which the playwright's labours were communicated to readers within the pages of the 1623 First Folio, the canonising volume that Smith has evocatively described as 'the book that reified Shakespeare's posthumous reputation'.[61] Prefaced by the famous engraving of the playwright made by the artist Martin Droeshout, and boldly declaring Shakespeare's creative authority over the volume's contents through the title positioned immediately above the author's image, *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies*, the Folio characterises Shakespeare as a singular and solitary figure of literary authority, the sole progenitor of the plays which are included within its pages. Nowhere in the Folio is any mention made of the fact that many of these plays contain writing by more than one author, nor are readers ever informed that all of these plays are the property of a specific theatre company, the King's Men. Rather, Shakespeare is implicitly represented as simultaneously being both creator and owner of these works, and the one individual with a legitimate claim to have exerted an authoritative influence over their writing. Hence, to quote from the work of George Donaldson, 'The First Folio's full audacity is to claim that it puts its readers directly in touch not only with his hand, but also with Shakespeare's mind.'[62]

Naturally, however, by attributing parts of these plays to Middleton, not even as a direct co-author, but instead as a posthumous adapter, Shakespeare's singular authority seemingly becomes diminished even further. Harry Newman, although he accepts the arguments for

[60] Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation, and Authorship, 1660-1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 1.
[61] Emma Smith, *Shakespeare's First Folio: Four Centuries of an Iconic Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 21.
[62] George Donaldson, 'The First Folio: "My Shakespeare"/"Our Shakespeare": Whose Shakespeare?', in *Shakespeare's Book: Essays in Reading, Writing and Reception*, ed. by Richard Meek, Jane Rickard, and Richard Wilson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), pp. 187-206 (p. 204).

Middleton as Shakespeare's adapter, has provocatively compared this attribution to the concept of counterfeiting in relation to coinage. To quote from Newman's analysis, although 'Middleton's contribution […] has been positively characterised as textual "reshaping" or "reformation" […] the language of impurity, corruption and debasement persists in discussions of collaboration and revision, and debates about who wrote what and why it matters continue to be coloured by morally inflected language about the payment of "credit" and "tribute" to authors.'[63] Newman continues by responding to the disagreements voiced by figures such as Vickers and Dahl, writing that 'Some see the Middletonian "finger prints" detected in *Measure*, *Macbeth* and – most recently – *All's Well* as counterfeit stamps fabricated by those intent on disintegrating (and thus devaluing) Shakespeare's canon'.[64] The language of devaluation in terms of the Shakespeare canon is certainly interesting. Middleton's identified work in adapting such play-texts is here argued to have been perceived in some quarters as not only being an attempt to remove certain portions of Shakespeare's texts from the auspices of Shakespeare's authority, but also as an attempt to debase the very nature of the canon itself, the authority over the creative direction of such texts having been displaced onto the control of another author, namely Middleton. These plays are thus somehow no longer 'genuine' Shakespearean artefacts, their value having become corrupted by the attribution to outside influences.

And yet, it remains the case that Shakespeare's First Folio has not been considered the definitive collection of Shakespearean plays for many centuries. Not every critic would go so far as Bruce Danner in accusing the volume of 'omissions, errors, and outright lies',[65] but as Egan writes 'there are undoubtedly more plays [other than the Folio plays] to which Shakespeare contributed parts, and substantial parts of plays in the 1623 First Folio are not

[63] Harry Newman, *Impressive Shakespeare: Identity, Authority and the Imprint in Shakespearean Drama* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019), p. 111.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Bruce Danner, 'The Anonymous Shakespeare: Heresy, Authorship, and the Anxiety of Orthodoxy', in *Anonymity in Early Modern England: 'What's in a Name?'*, ed. by Janet Wright Starner and Barbara Howard Traister (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 143-58 (p. 147).

his.'[66] It is of course important to note that the Folio makes no claims to canonical completeness. The thirty-six plays included within its pages are never said at any point in the volume to represent the full corpus of dramatic writing that was produced by Shakespeare during his career. As Peter Kirwan puts it, 'The claims of the First Folio to completeness are limited, the word "complete" appearing nowhere in the preliminaries to the volume.'[67] Ignoring the fact that the Folio conspicuously excludes Shakespeare's narrative poems *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), as well as his 154 sonnets (published in 1609), *A Lover's Complaint* (published with the sonnets), *The Phoenix and the Turtle* (published as part of Robert Chester's collection *Love's Martyr* in 1601), and all the other poems attributed to his authorship, even as a catalogue of purely dramatic writing the Folio has long been recognised as having made obvious oversights. Certainly, while claims for Shakespeare's involvement in other plays continue to be debated, all scholars agree on Shakespeare's authorship (or at the very least his part-authorship) of at least four other plays in addition to the thirty-six included in the Folio: the two plays which (as noted above) were excluded from the Folio, but which nevertheless survive in separate quarto editions, namely *Pericles* (printed for Henry Gosson in 1609) and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (printed by Thomas Cotes in 1634), as well as a further two lost plays, *Love's Labour's Won* (*c.*1596) and *Cardenio* (*c.*1612), the latter of which is usually thought to have been another collaboration with Fletcher, as suggested in a Stationers' Register entry made by the bookseller Humphrey Moseley in 1653, although it should be noted, as Tiffany Stern observes, that this is a rather uncertain attribution: 'Moseley […] was the only early modern writer to suggest Shakespeare's connection with *Cardenio*, and he did so by cataloguing […] *Cardenio* under "F" for Fletcher […] while under "S" he placed "The merry Devill of Edmonton" (by "Wm: Shakespeare") and "Henry ye. first, & Hen: ye

[66] Egan, 'History', p. 28.
[67] Peter Kirwan, '"Complete" Works: The Folio and All of Shakespeare', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's First Folio*, ed. by Emma Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 86-102 (p. 88).

2d." (by "Shakespeare, & [Robert] Davenport"); all designations that also show how questionable were Moseley's attributions with respect to Shakespeare.'[68] Yet the Folio's status as something of a 'definitive' Shakespearean volume has persisted in informing critical interpretations of Shakespeare's dramatic canon even into the twenty-first century; this can be observed, for example, in Anthony James West's statement in the introduction to his monumental 2001 study of the Folio that this volume contains 'all of the traditionally accepted dramatic canon except *Pericles*'.[69] The Folio is hereby taken to represent Shakespeare's dramatic output in near totality, the remaining additional works easily being accounted for. But it is the question of how many non-Folio plays can be assigned to Shakespeare's hand that modern collected editions most obviously disagree on. The 1986 Oxford Shakespeare, for one, included 39 individual plays (although *Sir Thomas More* was only represented by the inclusion of the identified Shakespearean passages), but the 2005 second edition increased this to 40 (adding *Edward III* to its contents). The Royal Shakespeare Company's edition (2007) again gives us 39 plays. The most recent collected Arden edition (2021) offers 41. And yet, all of these examples share the same claim in their titles: they are all, somehow, able to claim to constitute Shakespeare's *Complete Works*.[70]

The boundaries of what many today grandiosely term 'the Shakespeare canon', then, are far from fixed, having been refined and redefined repeatedly in the almost four centuries since the Folio's first publication. Indeed, earlier critics of the Restoration era and beyond

[68] Tiffany Stern, '"Whether one did Contrive, the Other Write, / Or one Fram'd the Plot, the Other did Indite": Fletcher and Theobald as Collaborative Writers', in *The Quest for Cardenio: Shakespeare, Fletcher, Cervantes, and the Lost Play*, ed. by David Carnegie and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 115-30 (p. 121). For Moseley's attribution of *Cardenio* to Fletcher, see e.g. Gary Taylor, 'A History of *The History of Cardenio*', in *The Quest for Cardenio: Shakespeare, Fletcher, Cervantes, and the Lost Play*, ed. by David Carnegie and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 11-61.

[69] Anthony James West, *The Shakespeare First Folio: The History of the Book*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 1.

[70] Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (eds), *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986); Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (eds), *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen (eds), *William Shakespeare: Complete Works* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Richard Proudfoot, Ann Thompson, David Scott Kastan, and H. R. Woudhuysen (eds), *William Shakespeare: Complete Works* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2021).

regularly engaged in their own personal redrawing of the limits of the accepted canon, although as Egan writes this very often resulted in them 'attributing plays using little more than personal poetical taste', an approach which he notes 'was followed by others across the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.'[71] Specifically, Egan leads with the example of Alexander Pope's *Complete Works* of 1725, in which he not only excluded *Pericles* from the canon, but 'also dismissed the Folio's *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Titus Andronicus* as having "only some characters, single scenes, or perhaps a few particular passages" by Shakespeare'.[72] Such an approach to Shakespeare's authorship can effectively be viewed as the diminution of 'the Bard', seeking to remove from the auspices of his writerly authority those parts of the canon which go against the editor's individual preferences. Considering such an example as Pope's edition, these early efforts in canon definition and authorship attribution can often appear to have been the dominion of 'bardolators' who, to quote from an analysis by Jackson, 'wished to foist poor passages in Shakespeare Folio plays onto lesser playwrights'.[73]

More recently, however, major advances in the study of authorship, especially following the advent of modern computing, have enabled analysts to expand the historically accepted limits of Shakespeare's known canon to a substantial extent. In this sense, the radical argument of the New Oxford Shakespeare concerning Shakespeare's identity as a collaborative author communicates powerfully the value which has come to be placed upon authorship analysis today, and exemplifies how such research continues to reshape our present understanding of the nature of Shakespeare's career as a writer. Indeed, as Hugh Craig and Brett Greatley-Hirsch convincingly argue, the New Oxford Shakespeare can essentially be considered 'the first edition of the complete works to be predicated on a series of new inclusions

[71] Egan, 'History', p. 28.
[72] Ibid.
[73] MacDonald P. Jackson, *Defining Shakespeare: Pericles as Test Case* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 2.

and exclusions determined by quantitative study.'[74] Whereas the 1986 Oxford Shakespeare had contained edited texts of 39 plays – the 36 included in the Folio, plus *Pericles*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and the passages attributed to Shakespeare in *Sir Thomas More* – the New Oxford edition presents a noticeably expanded canon of no fewer than 43 surviving plays.

One major difference between the New Oxford Shakespeare and the first edition of the original 1986 Oxford Shakespeare is that the New Oxford edition opted to include among its contents *Edward III* – a play described by Ward E. Y. Elliott and Robert J. Valenza as having latterly experienced a 'sudden, universal promotion' to Shakespearean status[75] – from the moment of the edition's initial publication. Based on numerous stylistic analyses undertaken throughout the twenty-first century, however, the New Oxford Shakespeare also promotes the anonymous domestic tragedy *Arden of Faversham* (*c*.1590) as a partially Shakespearean collaboration,[76] includes Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (*c*.1587) on the basis that Shakespeare was the author of at least some of the 'new additions' that first appeared in the 1602 fourth quarto (Q4),[77] and argues that Lewis Theobald's *Double Falsehood* (1727), which

[74] Hugh Craig and Brett Greatley-Hirsch, *Style, Computers, and Early Modern Drama: Beyond Authorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 10.
[75] Ward E. Y. Elliott and Robert J. Valenza, 'Two Tough Nuts to Crack: Did Shakespeare Write the "Shakespeare" Portions of *Sir Thomas More* and *Edward III*? Part I', *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 25 (2010), pp. 67-83 (p. 69).
[76] Key studies include: MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Shakespeare and the Quarrel Scene in *Arden of Faversham*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 57 (2006), pp. 249-93; MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Compound Adjectives in *Arden of Faversham*', *Notes and Queries*, 251 (2006), pp. 51-5; Arthur F. Kinney, 'Authoring *Arden of Faversham*', in *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, ed. by Hugh Craig and Arthur F. Kinney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 78-99; MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Gentle Shakespeare and the Authorship of *Arden of Faversham*', *Shakespearean International Yearbook*, 11 (2011), pp. 25-40; MacDonald P. Jackson, *Determining the Shakespeare Canon: Arden of Faversham and A Lover's Complaint* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), esp. pp. 7-125; MacDonald P. Jackson, '*Arden of Faversham* and Shakespeare's Early Collaborations: The Evidence of Meter', *Style*, 50 (2016), pp. 65-79; Jack Elliott and Brett Greatley-Hirsch, '*Arden of Faversham*, Shakespearean Authorship, and "The Print of Many"', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 139-81; MacDonald P. Jackson, 'A Supplementary Lexical Test for *Arden of Faversham*', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 182-93; and MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Reconsidering a Lexical Test of *Arden of Faversham*: A Response to a Critique', *Shakespeare*, 16 (2020), pp. 182-7.
[77] Key studies include: Warren Stevenson, *Shakespeare's Additions to Thomas Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy: A Fresh Look at the Evidence Regarding the 1602 Additions* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 2008); Hugh Craig, 'The 1602 Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy*', in *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, ed. by Hugh Craig and Arthur F. Kinney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 162-80; Brian Vickers,

he himself claimed to be a play by Shakespeare of which he had acquired several manuscript copies,[78] is an adaptation of Shakespeare and Fletcher's lost *Cardenio*.[79] In the New Oxford discussion of 'Canon and Chronology', Taylor and Loughnane also attribute a third 'lost' work to Shakespeare's part-authorship: the original 1603 version of Ben Jonson's *Sejanus His Fall*, first published in 1605 in a quarto edition which, according to Jonson himself, 'is not the same with that which was acted on the public stage, wherein a second pen had good share; in place of which I have rather chosen to put weaker (and no doubt less pleasing) of mine own' (To the Readers 31-4).[80] As previous scholars have hypothesised, Taylor and Loughnane suggest that Jonson's obscured co-author may have been Shakespeare himself.[81]

Reflecting upon the implications of the publication of the New Oxford edition for future studies of Shakespeare, Jakub Boguszak intriguingly observes that 'As the number of plays considered merely touched up by Shakespeare grows, as more and more of these plays find their way into established series and volumes of complete works, the once-clear boundaries of

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'Shakespeare and Authorship Studies in the Twenty-First Century', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 62 (2011), pp. 106-42; Brian Vickers, 'Identifying Shakespeare's Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy* (1602): A New(er) Approach', *Shakespeare*, 8 (2012), pp. 13-43; Douglas Bruster, 'Shakespearean Spellings and Handwriting in the Additional Passages Printed in the 1602 *Spanish Tragedy*', *Notes and Queries*, 258 (2013), pp. 420-4; José Rodríguez Herrera, 'Much Ado About Whose Fingerprints?: Shakespeare's Hand in the 1602 Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy*', *Neophilologus*, 99 (2015), pp. 505-20; Brian Vickers, 'Shakespeare and the 1602 Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy*: A Method Vindicated', *Shakespeare*, 13 (2017), pp. 101-6; and Gary Taylor, 'Did Shakespeare Write *The Spanish Tragedy* Additions?', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 246-60.

[78] See Theobald's 'Preface of the Editor' in Lewis Theobald, *Double Falsehood*, ed. by Brean Hammond (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2010), pp. 167-71.

[79] Key studies include: MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Looking for Shakespeare in *Double Falsehood*: Stylistic Evidence', in *The Quest for Cardenio: Shakespeare, Fletcher, Cervantes, and the Lost Play*, ed. by David Carnegie and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 133-61; Richard Proudfoot, 'Can *Double Falsehood* Be Merely a Forgery By Lewis Theobald?', in *The Quest for Cardenio: Shakespeare, Fletcher, Cervantes, and the Lost Play*, ed. by David Carnegie and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 162-79; John V. Nance, 'Shakespeare, Theobald, and the Prose Problem in *Double Falsehood*', in *The Creation and Re-Creation of Cardenio: Performing Shakespeare, Transforming Cervantes*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Terri Bourus (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 109-24; Marina Tarlinskaja, 'The Versification of *Double Falsehood* Compared to Restoration and Early Classical Adaptations', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 385-406; and Giuliano Pascucci, 'Using Compressibility as a Proxy for Shannon Entropy in the Analysis of *Double Falsehood*', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 407-16.

[80] All quotations from the works of Jonson are keyed to David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson (eds), *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, 7 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[81] Taylor and Loughnane, pp. 538-42.

the canon become less distinct as well as less important.'[82] Boguszak's argument is certainly thought-provoking, to say the least. There can be no denying that recent advances in editorial practice and stylistic analysis have resulted in the large-scale reinterpretation of the authorial limits of what we today consider to constitute Shakespeare's canon, but it is also true that such a canon is itself largely a modern construct, which has been changed, expanded, and refined over the four centuries separating the 1623 First Folio from the 2016 New Oxford Shakespeare. As Smith observes, publications such as the New Oxford edition thus make 'The borders of the Shakespeare canon look distinctly porous.'[83]

But if authorship studies can be said to have significantly increased our understanding of the number of works to which Shakespeare likely contributed, the corollary of such research has been that Shakespeare's authoritative dominance over his own canon has become significantly diminished. At any rate, Shakespeare's perceived responsibility for the writing of his plays now sits at much less than the 100% which was implied by the First Folio in 1623. As Taylor argued in an article of 2014, in fact, 'Modern scholarship gives us a larger Shakespeare canon, but also a larger proportion of collaborative work […] That leaves just twenty-eight plays that survive in texts written entirely by Shakespeare. Shakespeare's is the only hand in less than two-thirds of the plays that Shakespeare had a hand in.'[84] The figure of 28 surviving solo-authored Shakespearean plays has more recently been reiterated in a separate computerised study of early modern authorship conducted by Mark Eisen, Alejandro Ribeiro, Santiago Segarra, and Gabriel Egan published in 2017.[85]

It is worth noting, however, that Taylor's calculation was made two years before the New Oxford Shakespeare appeared in print, and consequently two years before that edition's

[82] Jakub Boguszak, '"Scarlet Experiment!": *The New Oxford Shakespeare* and the Importance of Authorship', *Shakespeare*, 13 (2017), pp. 309-12 (p. 310).
[83] Emma Smith, 'Shakespeare's Changing Canon: Introduction', *Shakespeare*, 13 (2017), p. 291.
[84] Gary Taylor, 'Why Did Shakespeare Collaborate?', *Shakespeare Survey*, 67 (2014), pp. 1-17 (pp. 1-2).
[85] Mark Eisen, Alejandro Ribeiro, Santiago Segarra, and Gabriel Egan, 'Stylometric Analysis of Early Modern Period English Plays', *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, 33 (2018), pp. 500-28 (p. 505).

research into co-authorship in the Shakespeare canon was fully complete. In total, Taylor and Loughane give sixteen out of forty-three surviving plays in which Shakespeare had a hand contain writing by other dramatists, either through processes of orthodox collaboration, posthumous adaptation, or Shakespeare himself revising older works left behind by other dramatists. The edition reinforces the claims for *Arden of Faversham*, *1 Henry VI*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Edward III*, *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Sir Thomas More*, *Timon of Athens*, *Pericles*, *All is True*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and *Double Falsehood* as part-Shakespearean collaborations, and maintains that Middleton adapted *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth* after the original author's death; but this edition also reduces the extent of Shakespeare's authorship in the plays of First Folio further, not only adding Middleton's name as an adapter to the included texts of *Titus Andronicus* and *All's Well that Ends Well*, but by also following evidence adduced by previous stylistic studies to argue that Christopher Marlowe may have contributed to the writing of Shakespeare's *Henry VI* trilogy of plays (in addition to Nashe's part-authorship of *Part 1*).[86] By this ratio, co-authorship (of varying kinds) has thus now been argued to implicate at least 37.78% (by my calculation) of the plays in which Shakespeare is currently thought to have been involved. Multiple authorship may thus account for just under two-fifths of the established Shakespeare canon.

As this overview of the major scholarly advances in understanding Shakespeare's status as a co-author, as an adapter, and as one whose own works were subject to adaptation clearly

[86] Key studies include: Paul Vincent, 'Inconsistencies in *2 Henry VI*', *Notes and Queries*, 246 (2001), pp. 270-4; Hugh Craig, 'The Three Parts of *Henry VI*', in *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, ed. by Hugh Craig and Arthur F. Kinney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 40-77; Hugh Craig and John Burrows, 'A Collaboration About a Collaboration: The Authorship of *King Henry VI, Part Three*', in *Collaborative Research in the Digital Humanities*, ed. by Marilyn Deegan and Willard McCarty (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 27-65; Gary Taylor and John V. Nance, 'Imitation or Collaboration?: Marlowe and the Early Shakespeare Canon', *Shakespeare Survey*, 68 (2015), pp. 32-47; Santiago Segarra, Mark Eisen, Gabriel Egan, and Alejandro Ribeiro, 'Attributing the Authorship of the *Henry VI* Plays by Word Adjacency', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 67 (2016), pp. 232-56; John V. Nance, '"We, John Cade": Shakespeare, Marlowe, and the Authorship of 4.2.33-189 *2 Henry VI*', *Shakespeare*, 13 (2017), pp. 30-51; and John Burrows and Hugh Craig, 'The Joker in the Pack? Marlowe, Kyd, and the Co-Authorship of *Henry VI, Part 3*', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 194-217.

shows, a monumental shift has latterly occurred in literary scholarship regarding our perception of Shakespeare's canon as a thoroughly collaborative corpus of writings. Disregarding the obvious connotations of literary ownership which are implied by such commonly used terminology as 'the complete works of Shakespeare', modern scholarship presently offers as many as 44 extant plays which to varying extents likely contain (or in the case of *Sejanus*, possibly formerly contained) some form of Shakespearean authorial involvement. Moreover, the catalogue of dramatists alongside whose work Shakespeare's writing seems to be present appears to be increasingly diverse, including not only long-recognised co-authors like Middleton, Fletcher, Nashe, Peele, and Wilkins, but also the four other dramatists identifiable in the *Sir Thomas More* manuscript (Munday, Chettle, Dekker, and Heywood); Kyd, to whose *Spanish Tragedy* Shakespeare likely supplied additions; Jonson, if Shakespeare was indeed the obscured co-author of the original *Sejanus*; as well as such a famous figure as Marlowe. Furthermore, if recent analyses by Taylor are to be believed, we can also add to these co-authors an additional, far more obscure dramatist, Thomas Watson, who may possibly have been Shakespeare's collaborator in the writing of *Arden of Faversham*.[87] Conceptualised thus, it is evident that the once clear-cut definition of Shakespeare's authorship has undergone a significant metamorphosis in present-day criticism, of which the radical argument of an edition such as the New Oxford Shakespeare may still not represent an endpoint; indeed, even as this thesis was approaching completion, John V. Nance published work arguing for Marlowe's

[87] See Gary Taylor, 'Finding "Anonymous" in the Digital Archives: The Problem of *Arden of Faversham*', *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, 34 (2019), pp. 855-73, and Gary Taylor, 'Shakespeare, *Arden of Faversham*, and Four Forgotten Playwrights', *Review of English Studies*, 71 (2020), pp. 867-95. Taylor's research in this direction has only just been published, and future scholars will have to independently test his results in order to assess the persuasiveness of his findings. For an article written in strong disagreement, see Darren Freebury-Jones, 'Unsound Deductions in Early Modern Attribution: The Case of Thomas Watson', *American Notes and Queries*, 33 (2020), pp. 164-71.

involvement in the writing of *The Taming of the Shrew* (*c*.1592).[88] It is clear that the final word on Shakespeare's changing canon has still not been uttered.

It should therefore seem plausible to one attentive to these continuing developments in Shakespearean authorship study that new discoveries may yet be waiting to be made with regard to Shakespeare's canon as we presently understand it. Indeed, Shakespeare is now viewed as a writer who wrote both as an active co-author on a few select texts with a limited number of collaborators (in addition to his known work as a solitary dramatist) and as a writer who supplied minimal material to plays which had been written in the main by other dramatists, and adapted texts which had been left behind by older playwrights. Hence, the identification of Middleton's adapting hand in as many as four of Shakespeare's known plays should simply be considered an expected part of this ongoing redefinition of the boundaries of the surviving canon.

Entire Hands and Main Fingers:
Adaptation and Literary Authority

Accessing the First Folio in the seventeenth century, early readers of Shakespeare were provided with no indication that the plays contained therein were anything other than a body of works produced by a single authorial entity, and reproduced in the very forms in which he had originally conceived them. This is something which is strongly implied by Shakespeare's actor colleagues John Heminges and Henry Condell in their prefatory address 'To the Great Variety of Readers' which prominently introduces the volume's contents:

[88] John V. Nance, 'Early Shakespeare and the Authorship of *The Taming of the Shrew*', in *Early Shakespeare, 1588-1594*, ed. by Rory Loughnane and Andrew J. Power (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp. 261-83.

> where (before) you were abus'd with diuerse stolne, and surreptitious copies, maimed, and deformed by the frauds and stealthes of iniurious impostors, that expos'd them: euen those, are now offer'd to your view cur'd, and perfect of their limbes; and all the rest, absolute in their numbers, as he conceiued thē.
>
> (ll. 20-4)[89]

As with all of the paratextual material in the Folio, Heminges and Condell take no pains to rectify the given impression that the included plays should be considered to be anything other than the intellectual property of Shakespeare alone. As Will Sharpe puts it, the Folio's editors thus engage in a complete obscuration of the role played by co-authorship in the composition of many of the works presented therein, 'possibly through [their] desire to market the image of an isolated genius'.[90] Of course, the volume's stance on the matter of authorship can to a certain extent be attributed to the very nature of the folio format itself. As Jane Rickard comments, during the English Renaissance such collected editions were typically 'associated with the notion of a singular author, with posterity, with literary greatness, with the educative function of literature, and with classical and monarchical authority'; Rickard thus invokes two contemporaneous folio editions, those of Jonson and King James VI and I (both published in 1616), to bolster her argument.[91] From this viewpoint, the Folio was never intended to communicate to readers the realities of early modern play production. It was instead simply designed to exude the idea of a dominant, independent author-figure. Shakespeare 'the Bard' is thus the book's overriding theme, and the accurate identification of the contributions of several different hands to the construction of the works included within its pages is therefore irrelevant to its editors' presentation of a core 36-play Shakespearean canon.

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[89] John Heminges and Henry Condell, 'To the Great Variety of Readers', ed. by Francis X. Connor, in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Critical Reference Edition*, ed. by Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus, and Gabriel Egan, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. lxxvi-lxxvii.

[90] Will Sharpe, 'Framing Shakespeare's Collaborative Authorship', *Shakespeare Survey*, 67 (2014), pp. 29-43 (p. 35).

[91] Jane Rickard, 'The "First" Folio in Context: The Folio Collections of Shakespeare, Jonson and King James', in *Shakespeare's Book: Essays in Reading, Writing and Reception*, ed. by Richard Meek, Jane Rickard, and Richard Wilson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), pp. 207-32 (p. 210).

As discussed above, as we enter the second decade of the twenty-first century the boundaries of the Shakespeare canon seem far less fixed than such terminology might appear to imply, such perceived boundaries only existing in a precarious state of flux. It is in this climate of the redrawing of the Shakespearean canonical limits that we can situate the partial attribution of four of Shakespeare's plays to the adapting hand of Middleton. Indeed, the New Oxford Shakespeare – at the time of writing the most recent critical edition of Shakespeare's collected works to have reached publication – has explicitly moved scholarship much further away from the far more limited canon of works which Heminges and Condell had assured their readers were 'absolute in their numbers' back in 1623. But far more curious with regard to Middleton's apparent involvement in *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and *Titus Andronicus* is Heminges and Condell's assertion that the plays of the First Folio are presented exactly 'as [Shakespeare] conceiued thē.' Such phrasing implies a certain level of singularity with regards to Shakespeare's texts which is not supported by the surviving historical evidence. Notably, several of the Folio plays had previously been published in unsatisfactory quarto editions, often referred to as the 'bad' quartos: these include the 1597 quarto of *Romeo and Juliet* (*c*.1595), the 1600 quarto of *Henry V* (1599), the 1602 quarto of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (*c*.1597), and the 1603 quarto of *Hamlet* (*c*.1600). It has often been argued that many of these divergences between quarto and Folio were likely the result of pirated texts being reproduced through memorial reconstruction – as Heminges and Condell's reference to previous 'stolne, and surreptitious copies' seems to imply – but the concept of memorial reconstruction itself has been strongly challenged by Stern, who points out that there is no evidence for memorial reconstruction during this period, as opposed to the abundance of evidence for groups recording texts in both short- and longhand and jointly publishing their

results.[92] Other critics, however, have attempted to argue that these texts instead represent Shakespeare's early versions of these plays, which he subsequently revised as time went on. Richard Dutton has even suggested that the later, 'good' texts may well be expanded versions revised specifically for delivery before the court.[93] While the legitimacy of many of these 'bad' texts may continue to be debated, however, the differences between certain Folio texts and their earlier printings have indeed been shown to most likely be the result of Shakespeare revising his earlier works at a later point in time. Most famously, such a process is now generally believed to account for the substantial differences that exist between the Folio version of Shakespeare's *c*.1605 tragedy *King Lear* and the earlier version of the play which had been printed in a quarto edition of 1608.[94] Bourus has also made similar claims for revision to account for the changes between the 1603, 1604-5, and 1623 texts of *Hamlet*,[95] although it is important to note that her arguments relating to the 1603 quarto version being an early form of the tragedy have not been agreed upon by all.[96]

Dramatists of the time, then, certainly seem to have often undertaken to revise their own texts at dates later than the original period of their composition. However, such work implicitly maintains the creative authority of the original dramatist(s) over the implicated play-text. Adaptation, however, the reshaping of an older text at the hand of a writer not involved in its original composition, is a very different issue for present-day critics to engage with. It is often said that adaptation was a very common occurrence in the early modern theatres; yet

[92] See Tiffany Stern, 'Sermons, Plays and Note-Takers: *Hamlet* Q1 as a "Noted" Text', *Shakespeare Survey*, 66 (2013), pp. 1-23.
[93] See Richard Dutton, *Shakespeare, Court Dramatist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).
[94] See Gary Taylor, '*King Lear*: The Date and Authorship of the Folio Version', in *The Division of the Kingdoms: Shakespeare's Two Versions of King Lear*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Michael Warren (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 351-468.
[95] Terri Bourus, *Young Shakespeare's Young Hamlet: Print, Piracy, and Performance* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). See also Gary Taylor, 'Shakespeare's Early Gothic *Hamlet*', *Critical Survey*, 31 (2019), pp. 4-25.
[96] MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Vocabulary, Chronology, and the First Quarto (1603) of *Hamlet*', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 31 (2018), pp. 17-42; John Jowett, 'Whose Hamlet Mocks the Warm Clown?', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 113 (2019), pp. 341-70.

although I have stated earlier in this Introduction that the status of *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, and *All's Well that Ends Well* as adaptations can only have been determined through textual analysis, there being no alternative versions of these plays with which to compare the Folio texts, it is also true that the availability of an alternative text offering a pre- or post-adaptation possibility is a luxury to which, more often than not, present-day critics do have access. The evidence for adaptation's repeated occurrence, however, is evidenced further by surviving documentary records from the period, including Henslowe's *Diary*. By way of illustration, here is a complete list of all items in Henslowe's *Diary* which unequivocally represent commissions for non-authorial adaptation of this kind:

> Lent vnto m[r] alleyn the 25 of septmbȝ 1601 to lend vnto Bengemen Johnson vpon [his] writtinge of his adicians in geronymo [Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*] [40s][97]
>
> pd vnto Thomas deckers at th*e* apoyntmente of the company for A prologe & a epiloge for th*e* play*e* of ponescioue*s* pillet [i.e. Pontius Pilate] th*e* 12 of Janewary 1601 [10s][98]
>
> Lent vnto bengemy Johnsone at the A poyntment of EAlleyn & w[m] birde th*e* 22 of June 1602 in earneste of A Boocke called Richard crockbacke & for new adicyons for Jeronymo [£10][99]
>
> Lent vnto the companye the 17 of aguste 1602 to pay*e* vnto thomas deckers for new A dicyons in owldcastelle [Anthony Munday, Michael Drayton, Richard Hathway, and Robert Wilson's *Sir John Oldcastle*, 1599] [40s][100]
>
> Lente vnto John thare the 7 of septmbȝ 1602 to geue vnto Thomas decke*r*s for his adicions in owld castell [10s][101]
>
> pd vnto Thomas hewode th*e* 20 of septmbȝ [1602] for the new a dicyons of cvttyng dicke [20s][102]
>
> Lent vnto the companye the 22 of novmbȝ 1602 to paye vnto w[m] Bvrde & Samwell Rowle for ther adicyones in docter fostes [Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, *c*.1588] [£4][103]

[97] Henslowe, p. 182.
[98] Ibid., p. 187.
[99] Ibid., p. 203.
[100] Ibid., p. 213.
[101] Ibid., p. 216.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid., p. 206.

> Lent vnto Thomas downton the 14 of desembȝ 1602 to paye vnto m^r^ mydelton for a prologe & A epeloge for th*e* playe of bacon for th*e* corte [5s][104]
>
> Lent vnto Thomas downton the 29 of desembȝ 1602 to paye vnto harey chettell for a prologe & a epyloge for th*e* corte [play not specified] [5s][105]
>
> Lent vnto Thomas blacke wode the 21 of febrea*r*y 1602 to geue vnto th*e* 4 poetes in earnest*e* of ther adi*c*yones for th*e* 2 pte of th*e* blacke dog [10s][106]
>
> Lent vnto Thomas blacke wode the 24 of fe*b*rea*r*y *1602* to geue vnto the 4 poetes in pte of paymente for ther adycyons in the 2 pt*e* of th*e* blacke doge [10s][107]

Further evidence for adaptation can also be adduced from the title pages of published plays from this period. The two most famous instances of this are also recorded in Henslowe's accounts, namely Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, the fourth quarto (Q4) of which (1602) advertised it as being 'enlarged with new Additions', and Q4 (1619) of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, presented 'With new Additions'.[108] Other examples include John Marston's *The Malcontent* (1603), the title page of Q2 (1604) advertising 'new Additions […] Written by John Webster',[109] and the anonymous Elizabethan romance *Mucedorus* (*c*.1591), Q3 of which (1610) was 'Amplified with new additions.'[110] Furthermore, there were many more examples of such adaptation for which clear external evidence of this process does not exist, adaptation in these cases having been detected by the examination of internal evidence, in terms of textual, historical, and authorial analysis. It is clear, then, that companies often resorted to adaptation of their play-texts at various points throughout the lifetime of early modern London's commercial theatre industry.

Can plays for the early modern commercial theatre industry, then, ever be said to have existed in a single, authoritative state? Prior scholarship has suggested that the issue may be

[104] Ibid., p. 207.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid., p. 224.
[107] Ibid.
[108] These additions were present in the 1616 quarto, but were not advertised on the title page until the 1619 quarto.
[109] John Marston, *The Malcontent*, ed. by W. David Kay, 2nd edn (London: New Mermaids, 1998).
[110] Details from the title pages of these publications have been sourced from Dutton, *Court Dramatist*, pp. 126-8.

more complex than we might assume. Indeed, Gerald Eades Bentley has even suggested that any play which remained in a company's repertory for an extended period of time could be expected to undergo a process of revision or adaptation at some point.[111] Perhaps revealingly, Middleton himself took the time to reflect upon the apparent commonality of theatrical adaptation in his history play *Hengist, King of Kent; or, The Mayor of Queenborough* (probably originally written *c*.1620, during the years in which he was also probably engaged in adapting works by Shakespeare), when one character wryly comments that 'the Cheater has learned more tricks since, sir, and gulls the Clown with new additions' (5.1.117-18), and again later in the following exchange between the characters of Simon and the Second Cheater:

> SECOND CHEATER
> Therefore I beseech your worship pardon me, the part has more knavery than when your worship saw it at first, I assure you, you'll be deceived in't, sir, the new additions will take any man's purse in Kent or Christendom.
> SIMON
> An thou canst take mine now, I'll give't thee freely; and do thy worst, I charge you, as thou'lt answer't.
> SECOND CHEATER
> I shall offend your worship.
> Simon Knave, do't quickly.
> SECOND CHEATER
> Say you so? Then, there's for you and here's for me then.
> [*He*] *throws meal in* [*Simon's*] *face, takes his purse and exits*
> SIMON
> O bless me neighbours, I am in a fog,
> A cheater's fog, I can see nobody.
> GLOVER
> Run, follow him, officers. [*Exit Clerk and Officers*]
> SIMON
> Away, let him go, for he'll have all your purses and he come back. A pox of your new additions! They spoil all the plays that ever they come in! The old way had no such roguery in't, remember! (5.1.311-27)

[111] Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 257.

Many dramatists of the time are known to have engaged in adaptation work of this kind. We might here consider the case of Heywood, for example, who famously claimed in the 1633 quarto edition of his tragicomedy *The English Traveller* (*c*.1624) to 'have had either an entire hand or at the least a main finger' in a staggering 220 plays (To the Reader 3-4).[112] As Grace Ioppolo reminds us, if this is a factual statement 'Only about one quarter of Heywood's 220 works survive in print or manuscript form.'[113] Yet just as Heywood is now known to have made additions to the text of *Sir Thomas More* alongside Shakespeare, it is equally possible that Heywood's work involved making interpolations in numerous pre-existing play-texts. While there is nothing to suggest that Shakespeare was quite so productive as to contribute to anything approaching 220 plays, it is important to note that he has increasingly tended to be recognised as having worked as an adapter of plays by other dramatists himself, particularly during the early years of his career. Indeed, aside from the aforementioned examples of *Sir Thomas More* and *The Spanish Tragedy*, Shakespeare's involvement in both *1 Henry VI* and *Titus Andronicus* has in recent years been suggested as examples of Shakespeare adapting work left behind by other writers.[114] The same has even more recently been suggested by Richard Proudfoot and Nicola Bennett as accounting for Shakespeare's involvement in the text of *Edward III*.[115]

And yet, as discussed above, the suggestion that Middleton may in a similar manner have been a regular adapter of Shakespearean drama has not been received favourably by all, at least not to the same extent that Middleton's co-authorship of *Timon of Athens*, for example, is now widely accepted. Indeed, opposition to such findings as those of the Oxford Shakespeare, the Oxford Middleton, and the New Oxford Shakespeare has been voiced by various researchers in recent years. It is Vickers, however, who has arguably made the most

[112] Thomas Heywood, *The English Traveller*, in *A Woman Killed with Kindness and Other Domestic Plays*, ed. by Martin Wiggins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 199-283.
[113] Grace Ioppolo, 'Thomas Heywood, Just in Time', *Early Theatre*, 17 (2014), pp. 122-33 (p. 129).
[114] Taylor and Loughnane, pp. 490-3 and pp. 513-17.
[115] Richard Proudfoot and Nicola Bennett (eds), *King Edward III* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2017), pp. 62-8.

interesting statement of disagreement. Indeed, Vickers has even attempted to dismiss scholarship of this kind by appropriating the pejorative language of 'disintegration', terminology which is today most closely associated with E. K. Chambers's infamous lecture to the British Academy of 1924, which he provocatively titled 'The Disintegration of Shakespeare'.[116] Specifically, Vickers has accused Taylor, who edited *Macbeth* for the Oxford Middleton, of 'disintegrating *Macbeth*,'[117] and in their response to Maguire and Smith's research into *All's Well that Ends Well* Vickers and Dahl condemn all proponents of the Middleton adaptation hypothesis as the 'new disintegrators'.[118]

Chambers's reluctance to accept the evidence for the presence of other hands in the Shakespeare canon, however, has frequently been misrepresented, or even exaggerated, in modern literary criticism. As Jowett clarifies, 'For Chambers, the textual disintegrators were chipping away at the Shakespeare canon by attributing various parts of it to other dramatists, known and unknown', his predominant fear being that 'the name Shakespeare might be reduced to a mere place-holder, an author function in which the notion of a biographical author has been eroded to the point of meaninglessness.'[119] To a certain extent, Chambers was justified in his concerns. As Hugh Grady has commented, at the disintegrators' greatest extreme J. M. Robertson even launched an attack 'against "the orthodox" and "Foliolaters" for their pig-headedness in not recognizing that, of all the works of the Shakespeare canon, perhaps only *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was completely and entirely Shakespeare's own creation.'[120] As Jowett points out, then, Vickers is somewhat misguided in utilising the concept of 'disintegration' as a means to 'castigate and condemn unwelcome propositions' in such a way

[116] See E. K. Chambers, 'The Disintegration of Shakespeare', in *Aspects of Shakespeare: Being British Academy Lectures*, ed. by J. W. Mackail (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), pp. 23-48.
[117] Vickers, 'Disintegrated', p. 14.
[118] Vickers and Dahl, p. 14.
[119] John Jowett, 'Disintegration, 1924', *Shakespeare*, 10 (2014), pp. 171-87 (p. 176).
[120] Hugh Grady, *The Modernist Shakespeare: Critical Texts in a Material World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 50. See also J. M. Robertson, *The Genuine in Shakespeare: A Conspectus* (London: Routledge, 1930).

that 'Any investigation branded with the term is charged with having an almost conspiratorial bad intent.'[121] On the contrary, scholars working on possible Middletonian intervention in the known Shakespeare canon have not sought to separate these plays entirely from Shakespeare's creative mind. As this thesis argues, their conclusions simply provide an alternative angle from which to approach the early performance history of the implicated works, specifically in the years immediately following their original author's death in April 1616.

The difficulty critics are faced with when trying to understand these plays as Middletonian adaptations, however, is that such analyses arguably position the original Shakespearean versions of *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, and *All's Well that Ends Well* to a certain extent alongside Shakespeare's lost plays. Indeed, this is an issue which has been raised by Matthew Steggle, who writes that 'If lostness is a continuum rather than an absolute state, then Shakespeare's lost plays include not merely "Love's Labour's Won" and "Cardenio", but also, rather higher up the continuum, *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth*.'[122] However, the form in which *Cardenio* might survive, *Double Falsehood*, is markedly different in nature from these other adapted play-texts. As Jackson explains, in the case of *Cardenio* it would seem that 'scarcely a line of Shakespeare's verse survives intact into *Double Falsehood*.'[123] *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, and *All's Well that Ends Well*, however, remain much more obviously 'Shakespearean' in their composition, Middleton's interpolations consisting only of around 5 to 7 per cent of the surviving texts.

None of this, however, protects us from the fact that in the case of Middleton's adaptations, the point of writerly authority is unavoidably shifted. When the philosopher Michel Foucault asked 'What Is an Author?' in the title of a lecture first delivered at the Collège

[121] Jowett, 'Disintegration', p. 172.
[122] Matthew Steggle, 'Lost, or Rather Surviving as a Very Short Document', in *Lost Plays in Shakespeare's England*, ed. by David McInnis and Matthew Steggle (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 72-83 (p. 81).
[123] Jackson, 'Looking for Shakespeare', p. 160.

de France in Paris on 22 February 1969, he was ostensibly asking a question to which we should be able to supply an answer quite straightforwardly.[124] Indeed, an examination of the entry for the word 'author' in the *OED* provides first and foremost the definition 'The writer of a book or other work' (author, *n*. I.1.a), and gives as part of the word's etymology the classical Latin term '*auctor*', one 'with authority to take action or make a decision'. In the context of the early modern theatre industry, however, this association between the concept of 'authority' and the author(s) of an individual text or body of works is far less clear-cut than we might often assume in the context of present-day notions of copyright and intellectual property. As Jowett explains, 'Early modern playwrights were working in a commercial situation that accorded no intellectual prestige and no proprietary rights over the texts they delivered to the company.'[125] In spite of this historical context for the act of playwriting in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, however, the idea of the dramatist as a figure of authority whose presence looms large over the texts he is known to have produced has very much endured, and continues to influence much of the present-day interpretation of the attributable works of the early modern period. This is a fact which is especially true in relation to the established Shakespeare canon. As Heather Hirschfeld writes, 'Today's readers and viewers of Shakespeare inherit a view of the "Bard" conditioned by Romantic notions (now grown commonplace) of the poet and playwright as a respected, solitary artist whose conscious intentions and personality govern the meaning of a literary work.'[126] The lasting relevance of such an idea of 'the author' to considerations of Shakespeare, however, goes far beyond purely popular perceptions of his artistry.

[124] See Michel Foucault, 'What Is an Author?', in *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism*, ed. by Josuè V. Harari (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), pp. 141-60.
[125] John Jowett, *Shakespeare and Text*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 29.
[126] Heather Hirschfeld, 'Playwriting in Shakespeare's Time: Authorship, Collaboration, and Attribution', in *Shakespeare and Textual Studies*, ed. by Margaret Jane Kidnie and Sonia Massai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 13-26 (p. 14).

An excellent illustration of the prominence with which the author-figure has tended to be positioned within academic studies can be found in the opening paragraph of Vickers's highly influential monograph on the subject. As Vickers puts it,

> No issue within Shakespeare studies is more important than determining what he wrote. We cannot form any reliable impression of his work as a dramatist unless we can distinguish his authentic plays from those spuriously ascribed to him, whether by publishers in his own age or by scholars in the four centuries intervening, and unless we can identify those parts of collaborative plays that were written by him together with one or more fellow dramatists.[127]

Vickers's emphasis on the importance of authorship with regard to the study of Shakespeare certainly appears to have become increasingly accurate as scholarship has continued to progress during the first two decades of the twenty-first century. Indeed, such is the prominence of authorship attribution studies in present-day criticism that the 2016 *Complete Works* of the New Oxford Shakespeare was swiftly followed by the publication of a dedicated *Authorship Companion* early the following year, the introductory essay to which boldly states that 'By putting individual authorial texts together in a *Complete Works*, and by recognizing the variety of authorial voices in collaborative works, we massively increase the number of potential meanings in every dense phrase of every varied work', and that 'By respecting the singularity and otherness of each wrighter [*sic*], we are freed from the echoing prison chamber of our own thoughts.'[128] Such appeals to the virtues of the study of 'the author', however, do not instantly seem to accord with the prevalent attitudes that existed towards author-figures during the English Renaissance itself. Indeed, although Shakespeare is thought to have started working for London's commercial theatre industry at some point during the mid- to late-1580s,[129] his name was never explicitly attached to any of his published writings prior to its appearance at

[127] Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, p. 3.
[128] Gary Taylor, 'Artiginality: Authorship After Postmodernism', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 3-26 (p. 26).
[129] See Rory Loughnane, 'Shakespeare and the Idea of Early Authorship', in *Early Shakespeare, 1588-1594*, ed. by Rory Loughnane and Andrew J. Power (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp. 21-53.

the end of the prefatory dedications to Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton in the printed editions of his narrative poems *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, and did not appear on any title page until 1598, when it was featured on the title pages of the second quarto edition of *Richard III* (a history play originally written *c*.1593), the second and third quartos of *Richard II* (*c*.1595), and the second (though first surviving) quarto edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* (*c*.1596).[130] Furthermore, although many playwrights began increasingly to be recognised as the 'authors' of their printed works by the early seventeenth century, the accurate attribution of authorship was apparently not granted the level of respect it now receives in present-day literary scholarship. As we have seen, for instance, when Shakespeare's First Folio was first published in 1623 none of his known co-authors received any credit whatsoever within the volume's pages.

To a degree, the present-day critical fascination with authorial attribution may stem from a very basic desire to understand how the surviving plays of the early modern theatre industry came to be put together. As Jeffrey Kahan expresses it, 'Even if the process (scientific or otherwise) eludes us, many, I think, hope that it might one day be possible to learn how the plays were made and, more pointedly, exactly what Shakespeare contributed to each of them. In many cases, we just don't know, and that bothers, I think, many bibliographers, biographers, and casual readers. We would like to impose order on chaos – we're not anarchists, after all.'[131] In a sense, we can detect in this view something of a revolt against arguments set forth by proponents of the so-called 'New Criticism' of the mid-twentieth century (whose advocates sought to separate analysis of literary texts from consideration of their authors), as well as by the philosopher Roland Barthes, who notoriously (if somewhat prematurely) undertook to celebrate 'The Death of the Author' in an essay of the same name of 1967, in which he argued

[130] See Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare and the Book Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 43.
[131] Jeffrey Kahan, '"I tell you what mine author says": A Brief History of Stylometrics', *English Literary History*, 82 (2015), pp. 815-44 (p. 837).

that 'To give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing'.[132] It was in this same climate that Foucault first delivered his lecture on the relationship of an author to both text and reader (referenced above), a paper which Vickers has notably lambasted as being both 'incoherent' and bearing 'no resemblance to historical argument.'[133] As Taylor explains, however,

> Foucault himself did not deny the historical existence of the individual author; Foucault was as shocked as Vickers by such a claim. Foucault questioned, not the existence of the individual author, but the importance that a culture attaches to attribution […] What is the importance, *to us*, four centuries after Shakespeare's death and burial, of the hypothesis that some scenes of the play *Edward III* were written by the same hand that wrote the long narrative poem *Lucrece*? Has the cultural importance of attribution, or anonymity, changed between Shakespeare's time and ours?[134]

While it could be argued that modern scholarship essentially takes something away from Shakespeare in attributing to various co-writers parts of *Henry VI*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Timon of Athens*, *Pericles*, and *All Is True*, and ratifying the claim of co-authorship presented on the title page of the 1634 quarto of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, while conversely granting him an expanded portfolio of works by identifying Shakespearean writing in *Arden of Faversham*, *Edward III*, *The Spanish Tragedy*, and *Sir Thomas More*, each of these plays can still be read in the light of what we might consider to be Shakespeare's literary authority. Indeed, this is certainly something critical considerations of the collaborative plays have often tended to suggest. As Trevor Cook has observed, 'Whenever Shakespeare is believed to have worked with another dramatist, he is generally presented as the lead author: Shakespeare and Thomas Middleton, Shakespeare and George Wilkins, Shakespeare and John Fletcher – to name just a

[132] Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in *Image, Music, Text*, ed. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977), pp. 142-8 (p. 147).
[133] Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, p. 508.
[134] Taylor, 'Artiginality', pp. 5-6.

few instances'.[135] Such a conception of Shakespeare as 'lead author', however, cannot remain applicable to those texts which are now suggested to have been posthumously adapted at the hand of Middleton. Excepting *Titus Andronicus*, each of these plays was originally written by Shakespeare alone between 1603 and 1606. Even *Titus*, a collaborative revenge tragedy of the early 1590s, is believed to have mostly been Shakespeare's work. But Middleton's involvement in each of these texts must have occurred under vastly different circumstances from Shakespeare's other, more orthodox collaborations. These texts, after all, all contain evidence of non-synchronous co-authorship, Middleton having added his material at a much later date, and completely independently of the authority of their original author, who, as mentioned previously, had been deceased since April 1616, and had probably retired from involvement in writing plays for the commercial theatre in late 1613 or early 1614. Thus, theatrical adaptation may have been a process which allowed certain plays to resonate better in the context of their revival often many years after their original composition and performance, but the identification of the adapter in the extant play-text also takes something away from the authority of the original author figure. In terms of the plays that will be examined in this doctoral thesis, the creative control over these plays has been moved away from the famous genius of Shakespeare, and handed instead to different creative authorities, namely the King's Men as the plays' owners, and Middleton as the plays' adapter.

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The hypothesis, then, that the Middletonian markers which certain scholars have detected in these works are most likely to be the result of a process of posthumous adaptation undertaken by the hand of Middleton between 1616 and 1622 thus places this particular kind of co-authored text in a category very different from Shakespeare's other recognised engagements with his

[135] Trevor Cook, 'Collaboration and Proprietary Authorship: Shakespeare *et al*', *Shakespeare Survey*, 67 (2014), pp. 44-59 (p. 44).

contemporary dramatists. Indeed, an adapted text is quite clearly not the same thing as a directly collaborative work. While there is reason to believe that collaborating partners may on occasion have gone back over and revised writing which had been submitted by their co-authors – as Jowett has argued Middleton may have done when working with Shakespeare on *Timon of Athens*, for example[136] – the division of labour in many of Shakespeare's collaborations does, by and large, appear to adhere to a logical pattern of composition.

Jeffrey Masten has famously argued that collaborating partners would have worked so closely together that 'the collaborative project in the theatre was predicated on erasing the perception of any differences that might have existed, for whatever reason, between collaborated parts'.[137] Such an erasure of difference, however – if it can ever be said to have truly existed – would certainly not have been as easily achievable in an adapted text as in a direct collaboration. Much of Middleton's identified interference in the surviving text of *Macbeth*, for example, is 'obviously disposable' (to use Jonathan Hope's phrasing),[138] and is demonstrably written in a conspicuously different style. Furthermore, Rasmussen has suggested that such features are to be expected from later additions to a work, describing such additions as 'large chunks of text [...] grafted onto an existing play that otherwise remained largely unchanged.'[139] It is in this vein that Anthony B. Dawson has observed how, in the surviving text of *Macbeth*, it is clear 'that the play, as originally composed, has been tampered with, abridged perhaps, adapted maybe, added to almost certainly, and in the process given what looks like a Middletonian twist.'[140] It is this 'Middletonian twist' which this thesis will

[136] See John Jowett, 'The Pattern of Collaboration in *Timon of Athens*', in *Words That Count: Essays on Early Modern Authorship in Honor of MacDonald P. Jackson*, ed. by Brian Boyd (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), pp. 181-205.
[137] Jeffrey Masten, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 17.
[138] Jonathan Hope, *The Authorship of Shakespeare's Plays: A Socio-Linguistic Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 105.
[139] Eric Rasmussen, 'The Revision of Scripts', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. by John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 441-60 (p. 448).
[140] Anthony B. Dawson, 'Notes and Queries Concerning the Text of *Macbeth*', in *Macbeth: The State of Play*, ed. by Ann Thompson (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2014), pp. 11-30 (p. 26).

interrogate when considering the texts of *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and *Titus Andronicus* as adaptations by Middleton. Through reading these play-texts from a specifically Middletonian perspective, this thesis argues that the process of adaptation, although almost certainly orchestrated to some extent by the King's Men, aligns the Folio versions of these plays far more with Middleton's interests and concerns as a dramatist in the context of the late 1610s and early 1620s, a period which exhibited both theatrical innovation and intense political concern.

Chapter 1 will consider how Middleton and Shakespeare's respective canons can be argued to intersect in ways other than the blurring of canonical boundaries which has been occasioned by the identification of Middleton as Shakespeare's co-author on *Timon of Athens* and as the adapter of his *Titus Andronicus*, *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and *Macbeth*. The chapter will examine the history of constructing the two writers' canons, both in terms of present-day editorial practice and the early printed book trade. By deploying methods in book history, canon construction, and linguistic analysis, it will be argued that the two dramatists at the heart of this doctoral thesis were never entirely separate, but have long been closely connected in terms of their respective careers, something which may shed further light on why Middleton, and no other dramatist of the time, seems to have been chosen by the King's Men after 1616 as the adapter of Shakespeare's works in preparation for their revival.

Chapter 2 then looks at the practice of adaptation itself in the context of the early modern commercial theatre industry. Arguing against the common notion that adaptation was usually occasioned by a work's popularity as signalled by its rate of reproduction in print, it will instead be shown, following a focus upon *Macbeth*, that for the King's Men in particular it was probably the acquisition of the Blackfriars Theatre in 1608 that provided the obvious impetus (and to some extent necessity) for such adaptation work to be undertaken.

Chapter 3 then moves on to examining the texts of Shakespeare's adaptations themselves. Starting with the play most recently attributed to Middleton as an adaptation, *Titus Andronicus*, it will be argued that this play displays many features indicative of it being a play adapted to make best use of the indoor playing space at Blackfriars. It will also be shown that, despite the inconclusive nature of the added scene's attribution to Middleton, the scene does function in the play in a way that makes most sense when compared to dramaturgical features of which Middleton was apparently particularly fond, and at which he demonstrated an obvious skill. Specifically, as an additional banquet scene which augments the presence of a suffering woman, this chapter will relate the added scene in *Titus Andronicus* to such elements of Middleton's theatrical style in order to suggest that the claim for Middleton's authorship of this addition is, at the very least, highly plausible.

In Chapter 4, I will examine *Measure for Measure* in the context of the printed news of October 1621. Agreeing with past research which has argued that the play was most likely adapted in order for it to reflect better upon concerns at this point in time regarding the eruption in Europe of what would come to be known as the Thirty Years' War, I present additional evidence which furthers such arguments, demonstrating that Middleton's adaptation of the play-text was specifically designed to exploit common popular anxieties, while at the same time itself becoming a part of the shaping of public opinion which had been occasioned by the new innovation in printed news of the early 1620s.

Finally, Chapter 5 will consider *All's Well that Ends Well* as a Shakespeare play adapted by Middleton. Although research in this regard is very new, it will be argued that the New Oxford Shakespeare is justified in presenting the play as a work latterly repurposed to reflect upon the Thirty Years' War, as has previously been argued concerning Middleton's adaptation of *Measure for Measure*. However, the critical analysis of the play in this chapter will further this argument, showing that the identified Middletonian additions may serve to relate the play

to other pressing matters, such as the Spanish Match controversy and the culture of royal favouritism at the court of King James I, a feature of his rule which was much criticised at the time.

By undertaking such readings of these plays, it will be demonstrated that Middleton's adaptations of Shakespeare have a significant impact upon critical interpretation of these plays which goes far beyond the purely quantitative methods for analysis associated with authorship study. In fact, Middleton's adaptations of Shakespeare force us to encounter the works not only in terms of alternative conditions of playing, but also in terms of their political importance in England at a time much later than their original periods of composition. In this final regard, the plays cannot only be considered in relation to their place in the established Shakespeare canon; they also fit in well as an important part of Middleton's own body of works produced during this period of time.

CHAPTER 1

‘OUR OTHER SHAKESPEARE’: COLLABORATION, INTERTEXTUALITY, AND CANONICAL BOUNDARIES

Towards the end of the penultimate act of Dekker and Middleton’s *The Bloody Banquet* (*c*.1610), the villainous King of Cilicia, Armatrites – usually referred to simply as ‘the Tyrant’ – imposes upon his adulterous young Queen a remarkably bizarre and horrifying punishment. Having uncovered her sexual liaisons with the Lydian prince Tymethes, who has himself been shot dead by his lover just over a hundred lines earlier (at 4.3.96.1), the Tyrant determines upon an exceptionally deranged course of action as retribution for her transgressions: ‘Thou shalt not die as long as this is meat. | Thou killed’st a buck which thou thyself shalt eat’ (4.3.213-14). So grotesque is the Tyrant’s demand that spectators to the play, as Paul Budra has remarked, may understandably seek to ‘reassure themselves that he cannot be serious, that he is speaking metaphorically.’[1] As the play hastens towards its bloody conclusion, however, such comforting thoughts as these must quickly disappear. As little as fifty-eight lines later (after 4.3.272), the Tyrant’s confederates, Sertorio and Lodovico, proceed to carry onto the stage the decidedly gruesome spectacle of Tymethes’s butchered remains.

The Tyrant’s unsettlingly descriptive commentary upon the presentation of this most heinous display can only begin to communicate to present-day readers the full visual horror of this scene as it would have been experienced by the play’s original Jacobean spectators, when it would possibly have been achieved through the use of prop body parts and copious amounts of stage blood.[2] His speech does not focus solely upon the highly unpleasant image of the carved-up pieces of human flesh that are now adorning the stage; he also takes the time to

[1] Paul Budra, ‘The Emotions of Tragedy: Middleton or Shakespeare?’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Thomas Middleton*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Trish Thomas Henley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 487-501 (p. 496).

[2] See Lucy Munro, ‘“*They eat each other’s arms*”: Stage Blood and Body Parts’, in *Shakespeare’s Theatres and the Effects of Performance*, ed. by Farah Karim-Cooper and Tiffany Stern (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2013), pp. 73-93 (pp. 73-6).

dwell, gleefully and almost clinically, upon his wife's personal digestive processes, which he evocatively imagines will soon be set in motion following her impending cannibalistic ordeal:

> So, bring 'em forward yet, there; there bestow 'em.
> Before her eyes lay the divided limbs
> Of her desirèd paramour. So. You're welcome,
> Lady, you see your cheer: fine flesh, coarse fare.
> Sweet was your lust; what can be bitter there?
> By heaven, no other food thy taste shall have,
> Till in thy bowels those corpse find a grave.
> Which to be sure of, come: I'll lock thee safe
> From the world's pity.—Hang those quarters up! (4.3.273-81)

In just nine lines of verse, the authors of *The Bloody Banquet* are successfully able to foreground the unflinching brutality of this tragedy's exceptionally graphic performance of theatrical violence. In so envisaging the stage imagery at this specific moment, it is easy to concur with Taylor's expressed belief that the play has so rarely found its way into modern theatrical repertories primarily because 'No one has wanted to touch something so revolting, so horrifying.'[3] The utterly repellent display of Tymethes's dehumanised flesh alone would surely be sufficient to communicate to audiences the gravity of the situation in which the Queen now finds herself. Arguably, we as spectators would not need to witness her actually consuming the disgusting meat for the play's horror to still have a highly profound effect upon our sensibilities. Middleton and Dekker are not quite ready to end their exploration of anthropophagy here, however. Rather, the dramatists appear determined to take their tragedy even to the next extreme, positioning the horrific feast of the play's title at the explicit forefront of the very next scene, in an extended sequence which commences with the deeply disquieting stage direction '*Sertorio brings in the flesh, with a skull all bloody*' (5.1.155.3-4). Upon this sickening meal the Queen obediently proceeds to feed, in full view of a group of horribly

[3] Gary Taylor, 'Gender, Hunger, Horror: The History and Significance of *The Bloody Banquet*', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 1 (2001), pp. 1-45 (p. 2).

transfixed onlookers. Enforcing his young wife to embark so publicly upon such a humiliating and unnatural act of contrition, the Tyrant is able to satiate his own extreme hunger for depraved revenge.

Although the graphic cannibalism of *The Bloody Banquet* might be shocking to present-day audiences, such on-stage representations of the consumption of human flesh were in fact part of a longstanding theatrical tradition popularised by such dramatic works as Seneca's first-century tragedy *Thyestes*, in which the title character is tricked by his brother Atreus into feasting upon a meal consisting of the flesh and blood of his own children. As Derek Dunne reminds us, throughout this era we can find numerous 'revenge dramatists who refer back to Seneca amid their own bloody plots',[4] and it is thus that Chris Meads interprets 'The final banquet scene' of *The Bloody Banquet* as 'a graphic and sweeping success, laden with portents and full of bloody spectacle, redolent of many banquet scenes from the years 1585 onwards.'[5] There are certainly several earlier plays containing cannibalistic sequences of which the unflinching brutality of Middleton and Dekker's tragedy could be considered 'redolent', such as Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar* (*c*.1588), where the Presenter informs us that Sebastian and his comrades enter to 'a bloody banquet' at the beginning of Act 4 (4.Prologue.6),[6] and Marston's *Antonio's Revenge* (*c*.1600), in which Antonio presents Piero with the butchered remains of his young son Julio with the words 'Here lies a dish to feast thy father's gorge. | Here's flesh and blood which I am sure thou lovest' (5.5.48-9).[7] Middleton himself would also make use of similar material again (albeit in a far less gory manner) in his *c*.1616 tragicomedy *The Witch*, in which a Duke encourages his new bride to drink 'A health in a strange cup'

[4] Derek Dunne, *Shakespeare, Revenge Tragedy and Early Modern Law: Vindictive Justice* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 83.
[5] Chris Meads, *Banquets Set Forth: Banqueting in English Renaissance Drama* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 154.
[6] George Peele, *The Battle of Alcazar*, in *The Stukeley Plays*, ed. by Charles Edelman (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 59-128.
[7] John Marston, *Antonio's Revenge*, ed. by W. Reavley Gair (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978).

(1.1.106), that 'cup' being the hollowed-out skull of her own recently slain father. Hence, as Meads comments,

> The sheer audacity of the echoes is enough to waken those suspicions of parody, yet this would seem to be a brand of satire of the highest order. [The playwrights are] not content to burlesque or lampoon the excesses of earlier playwrights of revenge tragedies; [they have] constructed a carefully, scrupulously (and indeed nostalgically if it is a late work) crafted pastiche as something of an *homage* to earlier theatre.[8]

Meads's use of such words as 'parody', 'pastiche', and '*homage*' in describing the action of *The Bloody Banquet* is certainly interesting, particularly in relation to the ideas of literary influence which such terms as these will inevitably invoke. Yet while the influence of the Thyestian feast can indeed be detected in several plays from the period, present-day audiences, usually far more attuned to the works of Shakespeare than they are with those of his contemporaries, might instead be tempted to connect *The Bloody Banquet* to a much more famous Shakespearean antecedent, *Titus Andronicus*, which notoriously concludes in a scene in which Tamora, the Queen of the Goths, is duped into eating 'two pasties' (5.2.188) which have been fashioned from the carcasses of her slaughtered sons Chiron and Demetrius, the two men guilty of the rape and mutilation of Titus's only daughter Lavinia. Indeed, Budra, Taylor, and Meads all consider such an association in their respective discussions of *The Bloody Banquet*,[9] while Arlynda Boyer, reviewing a 2015 production of the play by Brave Spirits Theatre, also offers *Titus* as the most familiar 'gory precedent' for Middleton and Dekker's work.[10] We might thus feel encouraged to imagine Middleton and Dekker actively recalling the graphic excesses of *Titus* in their own work on *The Bloody Banquet*. Middleton in particular was apparently very familiar with the earlier play. Indeed, just a few years earlier, in his early

[8] Meads, pp. 154-5.
[9] Budra, p. 496; Taylor, 'Gender, Hunger, Horror', pp. 11-12; Meads, pp. 156-7.
[10] Arlynda Boyer, '*The Bloody Banquet* Presented by Brave Spirits Theatre', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 34 (2016), pp. 323-7 (p. 323).

prose work *Father Hubbard's Tales; or, The Ant and the Nightingale* (1604), the titular Ant, returning wounded from war, had seemingly compared his plight directly to that of Shakespeare and Peele's tragic Roman general, whose sufferings had first been acted out on the stage more than a decade beforehand: 'for all my lamentable action of one arm like old Titus Andronicus, I could purchase no more than one month's pay for a ten-month's pain and peril' (ll. 946-9).

But the key word in this supposition of mine is, of course, 'imagine'. There is in actuality nothing in the text of *The Bloody Banquet* which is suggestive of *Titus Andronicus* being anything other than a thematic forebear, a tantalising point of comparison, but not necessarily a direct influence upon Middleton and Dekker's work. Furthermore, although Middleton appears to have been responsible for writing the majority of the play (specifically scenes 1.4, 2.3, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1-3, and 5.1 up to 110.1), the portion of the tragedy's finale that contains the actual cannibalistic material (i.e. all of 5.1 after 110.2) appears to instead be part of Dekker's contribution.[11] Yet the recent suggestion that it could have been Middleton who added the additional fly-killing scene (3.2) to the Folio text of *Titus Andronicus* might nevertheless encourage us to look further into the possible intertextual connections that may exist between these two plays. Indeed, this is a matter which Taylor and Duhaime themselves have considered in their stylistic and dramaturgical analysis of *Titus Andronicus* 3.2:

> As its title suggests, *The Bloody Banquet* culminates in a scene, like the final scene of *Titus Andronicus*, where an adulterous woman eats parts of a human body and drinks human blood. But in Middleton and Dekker's version of that horror story, the woman knows what she is doing, and she does it in a prolonged scene in which she remains completely, perhaps catatonically, silent [...] Lavinia, of course, is not committing cannibalism, at least not in 3.2. But like the Young Queen in the final scene of *The Bloody Banquet*, Lavinia in 3.2 is the centre of a riveting tragic spectacle: a silent female victim of male violence, for

[11] See Gary Taylor, 'Thomas Middleton, Thomas Dekker, and *The Bloody Banquet*', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 94 (2000), pp. 197-233.

> whom the normal social rituals of eating and drinking have turned into a nightmare.[12]

Taylor and Duhaime thus use their technique of 'Deep Reading' to emphasise a marked degree of association between *The Bloody Banquet* and the action of both the added scene 3.2 and the concluding scene 5.3 in *Titus Andronicus*. Of course, it is worth emphasising the fact that such deep reading is often necessarily a highly speculative and subjective exercise, largely based as it naturally is upon a particular reader's response to a given text. It is thus that Ed Pechter summarises the matter by stating that

> From computer analyses of unique and rare word strings, [Taylor and Duhaime] produce evidence that Middleton wrote the scene. But since this evidence is inconclusive, they ask whether a qualitatively 'Deep Reading' might reinforce the quantitative results [...] but, despite this tour de force of sharp observation and brilliant argument, the authors appreciate that they still haven't produced a fully convincing case.[13]

Indeed, Taylor and Duhaime do conclude their discussion by questioning whether 'eventually we may be able to quantify all these elements of style precisely, and compare Middleton's qualities with those of other early modern poets and playwrights, and tabulate and evaluate them as objectively as we can now tabulate and evaluate lexical strings.'[14] But even if their stylistic analysis was not 'fully convincing', when we consider the fact that Middleton has previously been identified as the adapter of three other plays by Shakespeare – *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, and *All's Well that Ends Well* – Taylor and Duhaime's claims should at the very least be considered credible. Further research will be required – as Jonathan Bate writes in response to Taylor and Duhaime's work, 'These are new results, which other scholars will have to test'[15] – but one of the greatest strengths of Taylor and Duhaime's 'Deep Reading'

[12] Taylor and Duhaime, pp. 88-9.
[13] Ed Pechter, 'Against Attribution', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 69 (2018), pp. 228-55 (pp. 246-7).
[14] Taylor and Duhaime, p. 90.
[15] Jonathan Bate (ed.), *Titus Andronicus*, 2nd edn (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2018), p. 146.

approach to authorship analysis in the case of F1 *Titus Andronicus* is that it suggestively encourages us to consider further the extent to which the influence of Shakespeare not only played a role in the creation of Middleton's own works, but also how this influence may have been a significant factor in Middleton's work as an adapter of plays by Shakespeare. Certainly, if Middleton has been correctly identified as the author of scene 3.2 in the Folio text of *Titus Andronicus*, then it also seems possible that Middleton's adaptation of this play could be indicative of an intricate level of intertextuality existing between *Titus* and Middleton's own established canon of works: in other words, the cannibalistic finale of the original *c*.1592 *Titus Andronicus* inspired Middleton and Dekker's work on *The Bloody Banquet* around 1610, which in turn inspired Middleton's own representation of a silenced, tragic woman in the creation of the earlier drama's new fly-killing scene at some point after mid-1616. If such a supposition is correct, then it raises the question of how important Middleton's early engagements with Shakespeare can be said to have been for his undertaking to adapt several of Shakespeare's plays following the event of the older playwright's death.

This chapter will be focused on determining the extent to which it may be argued that the selection of Middleton by the King's Men as the sole dramatist entrusted with adapting Shakespeare's works after 1616 could have been determined by the younger dramatist's interactions with the elder writer throughout his career, with a particular focus on how the two writers' canons can be seen to intersect with one another during the earliest years of Middleton's career writing for the stage, building up to the two dramatists collaborating with one another on the city-comedic satirical tragedy *Timon of Athens*. This will be achieved in three sections. The first will examine the canonisation of Middleton as a significant contributor to Renaissance drama, as enshrined in modern critical editions such as the 2007 Oxford Middleton. This section will consider twenty-first-century efforts to aggrandise Middleton as a writer whose own canon in many ways can be connected to that of his older contemporary,

but it will also provide a history of the two dramatists' canons being linked through the efforts of various publishers, not only with regard to present-day publications, but also through the early printed editions of Middleton's plays which, it will be shown, sometimes curiously attributed his works to Shakespeare instead. The second section will then examine how Middleton was heavily influenced by Shakespeare throughout his career, establishing that as an adapter of Shakespeare much later in his career, Middleton would have been equipped particularly well to undertake such a commission by the in-depth knowledge he had acquired of Shakespeare's works in earlier years. Finally, the third section questions how important the period 1603-7 in particular was for Middleton's professional interactions with Shakespeare. This is a particularly important period for examination of the two writers' respective canons side by side, as Middleton was not only engaging intimately with Shakespeare during these years, but Shakespeare was also intriguingly writing three of the plays that Middleton would one day go on to adapt – *Macbeth*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and *Measure for Measure* – during these years. By establishing the influence of Shakespeare upon Middleton's dramatic works during these few years, it will be argued that the two must have enjoyed a particularly close professional interaction during this period, one that establishes Middleton as a particularly important figure in the history of Shakespeare's collaborations. Indeed, whereas Fletcher is often thought to have been Shakespeare's most significant collaborator, even (tradition has it) succeeding him as the principal in-house playwright for the King's Men, this study will argue that Middleton was also a particularly important collaborator in Shakespeare's professional life, something that placed him in good stead for adapting several of the older playwright's works in the years after his death in April 1616.

Writers for the early modern commercial theatre industry did not ply their craft in a private echo chamber; they were part of a diverse literary culture, where theatrical influences were not hard to come by, and where writers routinely made use of what they had learned from

their colleagues and forebears in the undertaking of their own creative tasks. Indeed, as Sharpe writes, early modern theatre was 'a necessarily collaborative medium'.[16] Middleton's work was no exception to this. As Smith puts it, throughout his career 'Middleton's own plays show him to be a creative and responsive early reader and reviser of [Shakespeare's] work.'[17] As we might expect, Middleton was certainly not alone in his indebtedness to his great forebear, and Shakespeare is known to have forged professional relationships with a variety of writers, not only with famous figures such as Marlowe and Fletcher, but also with more obscure dramatists (possibly including, as discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, Thomas Watson); but as this chapter will demonstrate, despite only having worked directly together on one known collaboration, *Timon of Athens*, Middleton evidently enjoyed a career-spanning engagement with Shakespeare, a realisation which is not only important for understanding the development of Middleton's own canon of works, but which is also significant for understanding how Middleton may have come to be employed by the King's Men as the sole adapter of Shakespeare's works following the older dramatist's death in Stratford-upon-Avon on 23 April 1616.

Canons and Apocrypha: Company Repertories and the Blurring of Authorial Boundaries

Timon of Athens, Shakespeare and Middleton's only widely recognised direct collaboration, is certainly a curious work. As Dawson and Minton summarise the matter when introducing their Arden edition of the play:

> *Timon of Athens* is a peculiar and to some an unpalatable play: the plot is rather more allegorical than is typical of Shakespeare, there are many loose ends and insufficiently integrated episodes, several of the characters have generic rather than personal names, the verse is frequently uneven and the main character is

[16] Sharpe, 'Collaborative Authorship', p. 32.
[17] Smith, 'Middleton', p. 297.

> hard to sympathize with – he starts as pathologically generous and ends a misanthrope.[18]

The play also seems confused about its own generic category: for example, Robert B. Pierce interprets the play as what he calls 'a moral tragedy,'[19] yet as Kane points out 'several other scholars have observed connections between Middleton's city comedies and *Timon*.'[20] Indeed, to quote Amanda Bailey, various critics 'have recently put *Timon* into conversation with other works by Middleton featuring reversal of fortune like *Michaelmas Term* and *A Trick to Catch the Old One*.'[21] Yet if *Timon* combines elements characteristic of tragedy with those of early modern city comedy, then it does so in a way that serves to play to the writerly strengths of both of its collaborating authors. Jowett emphasises this particularly well when he writes of the play being divided 'into a world of gold and a world of debt', with Middleton being 'The leading poet of debt'.[22] Evidently, the division of labour in this collaborative work was shared between its two authors based upon their previous artistic achievements as playwrights. Maguire and Smith have even argued that it may have been Middleton's recent work on the city comedy *A Mad World, My Masters* that first attracted Shakespeare to the idea of hiring Middleton as his co-author on *Timon*, in particular highlighting the possible link between Timon and Middleton's earlier character Sir Bounteous Progress in *Mad World*. Indeed, Maguire and Smith even call Timon 'a tragic Sir Bounteous – or rather, a Sir Bounteous figure who is placed in a tragedy.'[23] This is therefore to be read as a play predicated upon combining the skills of two distinct playwrights, one who had recently completed work on his bleak

[18] Anthony B. Dawson and Gretchen E. Minton (eds), *Timon of Athens* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2008), p. 1.
[19] Robert B. Pierce, 'Tragedy and *Timon of Athens*', *Comparative Drama*, 36 (2002), pp. 75-90 (p. 82).
[20] Kane, p. 231.
[21] Amanda Bailey, '*Timon of Athens*, Forms of Payback, and the Genre of Debt', *English Literary Renaissance*, 41 (2011), pp. 375-400 (p. 375).
[22] John Jowett, 'Middleton and Debt in *Timon of Athens*', in *Money and the Age of Shakespeare: Essays in New Economic Criticism*, ed. by Linda Woodbridge (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 219-36 (p. 222).
[23] Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith, '"Time's Comic Sparks": The Dramaturgy of *A Mad World, My Masters* and *Timon of Athens*', in *The Oxford Handbook of Thomas Middleton*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Trish Thomas Henley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 181-95 (p. 189).

tragedy *King Lear*, and another, younger dramatist whose emergence onto London's theatre scene was closely tied to his success in the writing of a series of bitingly satirical city comedies. When we view the play thus, *Timon of Athens* emerges as an exemplary instance of two writers working very closely together to create a truly shared theatrical project. *Timon of Athens* can hence be argued to sit very comfortably between each writer's respective authorial canons.

The blurring of canonical boundaries signalled by such a collaborative work as *Timon of Athens*, however, is also demonstrably based on recognition of how these two writers are nonetheless quite unlike one another. Attending to this, it may therefore appear curious that when the *Collected Works* of the Oxford Middleton was first published in 2007, one of its most striking features was its editors' clear efforts to raise its principle author-figure to what we might consider to be an overtly 'Bard-like' status, which it sought to achieve via its prominent promotion of Middleton's authorship using the highly reverential epithet 'our other Shakespeare'.[24] The appropriateness of such a moniker to the *Collected Works* of Middleton is most obviously communicated to readers through the volume's physical presentation. Certainly, the Oxford Middleton is evidently modelled, in no small degree, upon the 1986 Oxford Shakespeare which preceded it. The Oxford Middleton noticeably imitates the earlier Shakespeare edition's double-column layout, as well as its two-volume presentation: just as the *Complete Works* of the 1986 Oxford Shakespeare was followed by a dedicated *Textual Companion* the following year, so the *Collected Works* of the Oxford Middleton was accompanied in the same year by the companion volume *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture*. Naturally, some similarity in editorial practice between the two projects might be expected to occur, especially given the noticeable overlap of editors: Taylor, who served as general editor of the Oxford Middleton alongside John Lavagnino, had also been a general

[24] See e.g. Gary Taylor, 'Thomas Middleton: Lives and Afterlives', in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino, with MacDonald P. Jackson, John Jowett, Valerie Wayne, and Adrian Weiss (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), pp. 25-58 (p. 58).

editor with Stanley Wells on the earlier Shakespeare edition from which the Middleton *Collected Works* so obviously takes its lead; another shared editor is Jowett, who worked as an associate editor on both projects.

More importantly, however, the Oxford Middleton also seeks to establish a substantial degree of overlap between the respective authorial canons of Middleton and Shakespeare, an overlap that goes far beyond the shared physical design of the two editions. Indeed, this aim becomes immediately apparent through an examination of the volume's contents. As Regina Buccola writes of the works included within the edition,

> the Oxford Middleton performs what some perceive as a sort of 'raid' on the terrain of *The Oxford Shakespeare*, claiming *Timon of Athens*, *Macbeth*, and *Measure for Measure* for both volumes on the basis of the conclusion (not at all conclusive with respect to *Macbeth* and *Measure*, in the view of some scholars) that Middleton either revised these plays for their 1623 publication in Shakespeare's First Folio, or collaborated with Shakespeare in their composition.[25]

Although certainly a provocative editorial choice, the decision to include fully edited texts of these three traditionally Shakespearean plays in an otherwise Middleton-oriented publication serves to highlight how advances in attribution scholarship over the past few decades have effectively served to blur the established boundaries between these two writers' respective canons. This is something upon which Kirwan has notably pondered, describing the Oxford Middleton as 'an unusual volume, that simultaneously canonises the author in a massive volume dominated by a single authorial name, but also disperses auctorial authority throughout'; Kirwan thus considers Middleton to have been transformed into 'a theme, or meme, within his own collected volume, a point of shared contact for a discursive culture rather

[25] Regina Buccola, '"Some Woman is the Father": Shakespeare, Middleton, and the Criss-Crossed Composition of *Measure for Measure* and *More Dissemblers Besides Women*', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 28 (2015), pp. 86-109 (p. 86).

than a dominating authorial figure.'[26] The inclusion of three plays by Shakespeare within Middleton's own *Collected Works* is a move which noticeably speaks against the idea of authorial canons as the dominion of solitary, independent author figures, metaphorically 'roped off' from the equally isolated creative portfolios of other writers. The Oxford Middleton thus grants its central author figure explicit ownership over a large body of works, while simultaneously presenting him as a writer whose own established canon displays multiple moments of clear crossover with the established canons of several other writers from the same period, not only including his most frequent writing partners Dekker and Rowley, but also including Heywood (on *The Old Law*, also co-written with Rowley, *c*.1619), John Webster (on *Anything for a Quiet Life*, c.1622), John Ford (on *The Spanish Gypsy*, also co-written with Dekker and Rowley, 1623), and even Shakespeare himself.[27]

A major problem with the Oxford Middleton's promotion of its central author figure using such a provocative descriptor as 'our other Shakespeare', however, is that this in effect encourages readers to principally consider Middleton through the lens of another, implicitly 'better' literary figure. It would perhaps be over-reductive for critics to condemn such terminology as having been devised solely as a means of marketing Middleton's *Collected Works* to a wider reading public; as a serious scholarly assessment of Middleton as a writer, the main intellectual points of such a slogan primarily concern Middleton's literary value in the twenty-first century, the historical lack of consolidated critical engagements with Middleton as a writer, and the prior absence of a canonising equivalent to the folio editions of dramatists such as Jonson (1616), Shakespeare (1623), and Beaumont and Fletcher (1647 and 1679) as a precondition for perceiving and evaluating the author's surviving body of works as

[26] Peter Kirwan, 'Canonising the Shakespeare Apocrypha: Shakespeare, Middleton and Co-Existent Canons', *Literature Compass*, 9 (2012), pp. 538-48 (p. 543).
[27] For a useful overview of Middleton's collaborative partnerships, see Heather Hirschfeld, 'Collaboration: Sustained Partnerships', in *Thomas Middleton in Context*, ed. by Suzanne Gossett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 219-28.

a whole. This last point is particularly important. Indeed, before the appearance of the Oxford Middleton the only collected volume of Middleton's works available was Alexander Dyce's highly inaccurate edition of 1840, an edition which included three plays in which Middleton is no longer believed to have been involved – *Blurt, Master Constable* (*c*.1601) and *2 The Honest Whore* (*c*.1605), now attributed solely to Dekker, and *The Family of Love* (*c*.1607), now attributed to Lording Barry[28] – while also excluding many plays in which Middleton actually did have a hand. It would thus be fair to say that for this reason 'most Middleton criticism, from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, has been based on pervasively shaky foundations', to quote from Taylor and Henley's assessment.[29]

As Rickard argues, 'Ever since the sixteenth century the collected edition has been central to the construction of authorial identity, literary reputation and the canon of individual authors, as well as the literary canon as a whole. Though it may not entirely determine an author's reputation, the production of a collected edition is a way of attempting to shape how posterity will view an author and his or her work.'[30] If the purpose of the seventeenth-century folio editions mentioned above is to canonise a particular named dramatist's corpus of works, and to establish that dramatist's claim to literary authority over the plays that bear their name, then Middleton was not afforded his own authoritative canonising volume until 380 years after the event of his death in 1627. To call Middleton 'our other Shakespeare', then, is also to position the 2007 *Collected Works* as essentially the Middletonian equivalent to the canonising Shakespeare First Folio of 1623.[31]

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[28] See MacDonald P. Jackson and Gary Taylor, 'Works Excluded From This Edition', in *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to the Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino, with MacDonald P. Jackson, John Jowett, Valerie Wayne, and Adrian Weiss (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), pp. 444-6.

[29] Gary Taylor and Trish Thomas Henley, 'Unintroduction: Middletonian Dissensus', in *The Oxford Handbook of Thomas Middleton*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Trish Thomas Henley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 1-15 (p. 13).

[30] Rickard, 'Folio Collections', p. 208.

[31] For a useful analysis of the critical treatment historically afforded to Middleton, see Sara Jayne Steen, *Ambrosia in an Earthen Vessel: Three Centuries of Audience and Reader Response to the Works of Thomas Middleton* (New York: AMS Press, 1993).

On the other hand, the efforts in the Oxford Middleton to characterise Middleton as 'our other Shakespeare' also seem designed retroactively to equate Middleton's literary significance in his own lifetime with that which was evidently enjoyed by Shakespeare during his. It is thus that the volume's opening chapter boldly informs its readers that 'Thomas Middleton and William Shakespeare were the only writers of the English Renaissance who created plays still considered masterpieces in four major dramatic genres: comedy, history, tragedy, and tragicomedy.'[32] Yet while comedies such as *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (1613) and tragedies such as *Women Beware Women* (*c*.1621) and *The Changeling* (1622, with Rowley) have continued to be regularly revived through modern performances,[33] it is difficult to believe that Middleton's only 'true' history play, *Hengist, King of Kent*, is well-known enough outside the scholarly study of Middleton to be considered a 'masterpiece' by a significant proportion of the present-day theatregoing public. Considering such arguments as these, Lukas Erne goes so far as to express the opinion that 'After a moment's reflection, several of [the Oxford Middleton's] claims for Middleton turn out to be tendentious and hyperbolic.'[34] But if 'hyperbolic', the phrase 'our other Shakespeare' is also undeniably evocative. In terms of marketing such a volume as the Oxford Middleton, the editorial effort to craft the perception of a close artistic connection between Middleton and Shakespeare is also a highly astute method of improving Middleton's standing in the eyes of a reading public which admittedly might be expected to be largely unfamiliar with many of the texts included within his *Collected Works*. To once again quote from the work of Kirwan, the Oxford Middleton thus 'utilis[es] Shakespeare's cultural prestige in order to elevate Middleton's by the same

[32] Taylor, 'Lives and Afterlives', p. 25.
[33] A good discussion of Middleton in modern performance is provided in Diana E. Henderson, 'Afterlives: Stages and Beyond', in *Thomas Middleton in Context*, ed. by Suzanne Gossett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 325-35.
[34] Lukas Erne, '"Our other Shakespeare": Thomas Middleton and the Canon', *Modern Philology*, 107 (2010), pp. 493-505 (p. 498).

standard'.[35] In other words, the inference of the Oxford Middleton's appeals to Shakespearean prestige is that Middleton should now be reappraised as an equally important figure in the present-day study of Renaissance drama.

It is nonetheless vital for readers to understand that the Oxford Middleton is not, in fact, the earliest publication that can be accused of attempting to deconstruct the distinctions between these two dramatists' authorial canons. Nor can this charge truly be levelled at the earlier Oxford Shakespeare, despite its being the first modern critical edition of Shakespeare's collected works to credit Middleton as both co-author of *Timon of Athens* and as adapter of both *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure*. Rather, such a process can be observed to have begun as early as 1607. In that year, the printer George Eld published a quarto edition of the city comedy *The Puritan; or, The Widow of Watling Street* (*c*.1606), suggestively claiming on its title page that it was the work of a mysterious dramatist identified only by the initials 'W. S.' Then, in 1608, the bookseller Thomas Pavier issued a quarto edition of the one-act play *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (*c*.1605), alleging (notably much more overtly than the title page of Eld's edition of *The Puritan*) that it was the work of one 'W. Shakspeare'. Modern scholarship by and large rejects both of these attributions, Middleton's authorship of each play having been firmly established by more recent analyses.

As Sharpe points out in his discussion of Eld's publication of *The Puritan*, the fact that the title page advertises the play as having been performed by the Children of Paul's – a company with which Shakespeare never worked, but for whom Middleton had previously written *The Phoenix* (*c*.1604), *Michaelmas Term* (*c*.1604), *A Trick to Catch the Old One* (*c*.1605), and *A Mad World, My Masters* (*c*.1605) – 'alone works strongly against Shakespeare's involvement' in the writing of the work; moreover, Sharpe continues by asserting that 'nobody has ever really agreed that the style of the play is reminiscent of

[35] Kirwan, 'Canonising', p. 544.

Shakespeare's works'.[36] Conversely, considering that Pavier's edition of *A Yorkshire Tragedy* does at least identify it as a King's Men play, Sharpe more charitably acknowledges that it cannot be entirely certain whether Pavier came to promote *A Yorkshire Tragedy* as the work of Shakespeare through 'a genuine mix up [...] a best guess or default attribution [...] or a cynical marketing ploy'.[37] Nevertheless, both works would go on to be included in the second impression of the Third Folio of Shakespeare, which was published by Philip Chetwinde in 1664; here, the plays appear alongside four other examples of Shakespearean dubitanda (*Locrine*, *The London Prodigal*, *Sir John Oldcastle*, and *Thomas Lord Cromwell*), plus Shakespeare and Wilkins's widely recognised collaboration *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*.

Obviously, the early attributions of *A Yorkshire Tragedy* to 'W. Shakspeare' and *The Puritan* to 'W. S.' should not be given any serious scholarly credence. Indeed, both attributions are now often considered by many critics to have been attempts by unscrupulous seventeenth-century booksellers to exploit Shakespeare's popular name for their own commercial purposes. Bibliographically speaking, however, these two examples from the so-called 'Shakespeare apocrypha' clearly demonstrate that the canons of Shakespeare and Middleton can be considered to have become intertwined at a very early date. In other words, if the Oxford Middleton can be accused of performing 'a sort of "raid" on the terrain of *The Oxford Shakespeare*' (to use Buccola's phrasing) through its inclusion of edited texts of *Timon of Athens*, *Macbeth*, and *Measure for Measure*, then Eld and Pavier's early editions arguably performed a similar 'raid' on Middleton's canon during the early seventeenth century, parcelling off two of Middleton's works using the claim of Shakespearean authorship – or, to use phrasing more appropriate to the example of *The Puritan*, the suggestion of Shakespearean authorship – as their primary selling point.

[36] Will Sharpe, 'Authorship and Attribution', in *William Shakespeare and Others: Collaborative Plays*, ed. by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, with Jan Sewell and Will Sharpe (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 641-745 (p. 727).
[37] Ibid., pp. 709-10.

Erne has attempted to rationalise the occurrence of these false attributions in greater detail, by considering *A Yorkshire Tragedy* alongside another King's Men play which had, in a quarto edition of 1605, been similarly misattributed to Shakespeare, *The London Prodigal*. As Erne comments:

> These company ascriptions are usually considered accurate and may partly explain the misattributions to Shakespeare: a play text from the King's Men which may have been anonymous or composed by a little-known playwright could be rendered more commercially attractive by an ascription to the well-known and well-published in-house dramatist of that company. A misascription to a company would have been easily detected by London's playgoers, but a misattribution of a King's Men's play to that company's leading playwright must have been less likely to be seen through.[38]

In Erne's scenario, these authorial attributions might be interpreted as little more than a publishing trick designed to help market the print editions of the implicated plays more effectively. Yet Erne's implication that the authors of *A Yorkshire Tragedy* and *The London Prodigal* were both 'little-known' playwrights is a claim which is certainly worth debating. Indeed, given the knowledge currently available to us it is not possible to state definitively how 'little-known' the author of *The London Prodigal* was. Additionally, by the end of 1608, the year of *A Yorkshire Tragedy*'s publication, Middleton had himself become a significant presence in London's literary marketplace. Other than *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, at least sixteen (or possibly seventeen, as noted below) of his works had by then reached publication in print.[39] Yet on the other hand, up until then Middleton's name had unequivocally appeared on just one title page, that of his early poetic work *The Wisdom of Solomon Paraphrased* in 1597; although it has been suggested that the undated quarto edition of *Your Five Gallants* (*c*.1607), with its

[38] Erne, *Book Trade*, p. 73.

[39] These were *The Wisdom of Solomon Paraphrased* (1597), *Microcynicon: Six Snarling Satires* (1599), *The Ghost of Lucrece* (1600), *The Penniless Parliament of Threadbare Poets* (annexed to *Jack of Dover His Quest of Inquirie*, 1604), *News from Gravesend* (1604), *The Meeting of Gallants at an Ordinary* (1604), *Father Hubbard's Tales* (1604), *Plato's Cap* (1604), *The Black Book* (1604), *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* (1604), *The Phoenix* (1607), *Michaelmas Term* (1607), *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1607), *The Puritan* (1607), *A Trick to Catch the Old One* (1608), and *A Mad World, My Masters* (1608).

unambiguous title page ascription to 'T. Middleton', might also date from 1608,[40] this only increases the number to two instances of explicit attribution to Middleton, each appearing over a decade apart. Of the others, five simply bore the initials 'T. M' (either on their title pages or in prefatory material), one (*The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*) was credited solely to Middleton's collaborator 'Tho: Dekker', and one (*The Puritan*) was, as discussed above, falsely ascribed to 'W. S'; the rest were presented as entirely anonymous.

As this chapter will proceed to argue, however, the publication of *A Yorkshire Tragedy* and *The Puritan* under such fraudulent pseudo-Shakespearean attributions should nonetheless encourage us to consider further the professional association between Shakespeare and Middleton at this point in time, an association which, as we have seen, would eventually lead to Middleton being commissioned by the King's Men to adapt *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and possibly also *Titus Andronicus* for revival in the years immediately following Shakespeare's death in 1616. *The Puritan* is arguably less useful in this regard: indeed, the 'W. S.' on the quarto's title page, usually assumed to be an attempt to denote Shakespeare's authorship of the work, could admittedly have been intended to signify any of the other playwrights with the same initials who are known to have been active in the commercial theatre industry at around the same period of time, such as Wentworth Smith, William Stanley, William Smith, and William Sly, although it should be noted that, if this were the case, the relatively minor standing of these figures would hardly seem to make a deliberately false attribution of this kind worthwhile. *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, conversely, explicitly promoted by Pavier as being the work of 'W. Shakspeare', is particularly noteworthy in that it was apparently originally a theatrical property of Shakespeare's own company, the King's Men. In terms of acts which further the history of Middleton being misleadingly marketed as Shakespeare during his lifetime, it is also interesting to note that Pavier later

[40] Taylor, 'Works Included', pp. 363-4.

included *A Yorkshire Tragedy* as part of his 'Shakespeare' collection of 1619, an assortment of plays which is often referred to as the 'False Folio', although Zachary Lesser has recently pointed out that Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1603) was also originally intended to be included in this collection, a detail which reveals the inaccuracy of the 'False Folio' terminology.[41]

Equally important for this discussion, however, is the fact that this play is usually dated to around 1605. It is with this in mind that we might consider how Kirwan connects *A Yorkshire Tragedy* to two other Shakespearean works produced during the same period, *Othello* (*c*.1604) and *King Lear* (*c*.1605).[42] Indeed, the former play shares *Yorkshire*'s generic concerns as a domestic tragedy, both including the depiction of the violence of a husband against his wife/family, whereas the latter shares *Yorkshire*'s focus on the theme of prodigality. Kirwan thus argues that *Yorkshire* is 'very much Shakespeare's kind of play,' sharing 'the motifs and generic complexity of his plays of the same period and act[ing] alongside them to tease out the ramifications of a popular set of stage figures.'[43] Kirwan also takes into account Roslyn L. Knutson's work in relating the play to other contemporaneous King's Men plays, including *A Warning for Fair Women* (1599) and *The Fair Maid of Bristow* (*c*.1604).[44] When this is considered, it is interesting to note that a play written by Middleton but falsely attributed to Shakespeare fits in so well with the wider theatrical repertory being performed by Shakespeare's company at that time. But in relation to these repertorial links, another vital detail relating to the tragedy's date should also be considered: the fact that *A Yorkshire Tragedy* also appears to have been written around the same period that Shakespeare was writing three

[41] Zachary Lesser, *Ghosts, Holes, Rips and Scrapes: Shakespeare in 1619, Bibliography in the Longue Durée* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021).
[42] See Peter Kirwan, *Shakespeare and the Idea of Apocrypha: Negotiating the Boundaries of the Dramatic Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 85-9.
[43] Ibid., p. 89.
[44] Roslyn L. Knutson, *The Repertory of Shakespeare's Company, 1594-1613* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1991), p. 45.

of the plays which Middleton went on to adapt for the King's Men around 1616-22, namely the original 1603-4 *Measure for Measure*, the original *c*.1605 *All's Well that Ends Well*, and the original *c*.1606 *Macbeth*. To this we can add the fact that this was also the period during which Middleton wrote the *Hamlet*-inspired *Revenger's Tragedy* for the same company (*c*.1606) and, at some point between 1605 and 1607 (depending on the scholar), directly collaborated with Shakespeare on *Timon of Athens*.

It is certainly worthy of our attention, then, to note that two Middleton-authored elements of the Shakespeare apocrypha (*A Yorkshire Tragedy* and *The Puritan*), two solo-authored (but Shakespeare-influenced) plays by Middleton (*A Yorkshire Tragedy* and *The Revenger's Tragedy*), three of the plays by Shakespeare which Middleton would later go on to adapt (*Measure for Measure*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and *Macbeth*), and Shakespeare and Middleton's only known surviving direct collaboration (*Timon of Athens*) were all being written at around the same time, between 1603 at the earliest and 1607 at the latest. This may suggest that Shakespeare and Middleton enjoyed something of a close professional association during this period of time, which might have some bearing upon the question of why it was Middleton in particular to whom the King's Men turned when the desire or need arose to adapt several of Shakespeare's plays for revival in the years immediately following the latter's death. In fact, as the next sections of this chapter argue, such is the strength of the influence of Shakespeare upon Middleton's artistry, particularly during the period 1603-7, that we might consider Middleton to have been a highly logical candidate for a commission to adapt Shakespeare's plays in the years immediately following the older playwright's death.

Shakespeare and Middleton: Collaboration and Intertextuality

In his review of the Oxford Middleton, responding to Taylor's claim that 'Middleton was the only playwright trusted by Shakespeare's company to adapt Shakespeare's plays after his

death',[45] Erne comments that 'the real consecration was surely not the choice of Shakespeare's adapter but that of his successor as in-house playwright, an honor that went to Fletcher, not Middleton.'[46] Indeed, Fletcher's interaction with Shakespeare has traditionally been viewed as one of the older playwright's most significant professional relationships. Certainly, Gordon McMullan describes Fletcher as 'a younger coadjutor who was being groomed to take over as principal playwright for the King's Men […] the sorcerer's apprentice, learning from his master only then to ease him out of his role.'[47] Indeed, after co-authoring *Cardenio*, *All Is True*, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* with Shakespeare, Fletcher proceeded to become one of the company's most frequent dramatists: as Lucy Munro writes, 'by 1619 [Fletcher] had taken his older colleague's role as the most regular playwright for the King's Men',[48] although whether any formal contract of this nature existed is unknown. When this is considered, then, it might appear strange that it was not Fletcher, but Middleton to whom the King's Men turned when seeking to adapt some of their deceased colleague's works, particularly those works adapted during the early 1620s. However, as this chapter will argue, Middleton does nevertheless stand out as a particularly attractive candidate for undertaking such a commission.

Readers and critics might be forgiven for assuming that, when compared with Shakespeare's known personal and professional relationships with other dramatists, Middleton's role in Shakespeare's career was relatively insignificant. As Bart van Es writes, especially during the late 1580s and early 1590s 'Shakespeare's writing […] like that of his contemporaries, is alive with the presence of other writers, both as co-authors and as a transformative influence',[49] but following the formation of the Lord Chamberlain's Men in 1594 'there is no respectable evidence that Shakespeare co-authored his playtexts' until 1605

[45] Taylor, 'Lives and Afterlives', p. 25.
[46] Erne, 'Our other Shakespeare', p. 499.
[47] Gordon McMullan, *Shakespeare and the Idea of Late Writing: Authorship in the Proximity of Death* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 231.
[48] Lucy Munro, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: The King's Men* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2020), p. 17.
[49] Bart van Es, *Shakespeare in Company* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 27.

at the earliest.[50] Indeed, if we were to discount Shakespeare's adaptation work on *1 Henry VI*, *The Spanish Tragedy*, and *Sir Thomas More*, then Shakespeare's collaboration with Middleton on *Timon of Athens* would constitute his first widely accepted co-authoring of a play in over a decade. However, although he would go on to form a three-play writing partnership with Fletcher just a few years later, he did not elect (or at least, he is not known to have elected) to work with Middleton as his co-author ever again. The only evidence for Shakespeare and Middleton having known one another personally, therefore, in effect derives predominantly from modern attribution scholarship, and is based on a play that is notoriously difficult to firmly date, which is accompanied by no extant record of performance, and which likely survives only in the form of a text derived from an authorial rough draft. Of course, the lack of documentation concerning the circumstances of the co-authorial composition of *Timon of Athens* is neither surprising nor unusual. As Hutchings and Bromham note, 'We do not know when Middleton and Shakespeare first met,' but 'nor would we expect this kind of information to survive'.[51] But when we compare the literary partnership of Shakespeare and Middleton to Shakespeare's identifiable interactions with many of his other contemporaries, the absence in this case of clear evidence for such a connection between the two playwrights does seem to be somewhat unusual.

There is, for example, a longstanding critical tradition of rivalry and influence having existed between Shakespeare and Marlowe, Shakespeare's probable collaborator on the *Henry VI* plays and perhaps also on *The Taming of the Shrew*. Such plays as Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* (*c*.1589) and *Edward II* (*c*.1592) are evidently echoed in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* (*c*.1596) and *Richard II* (*c*.1595), and Shakespeare may even have alluded to Marlowe's murder at the hands of Ingram Frizer on 30 May 1593, allegedly over the reckoning

[50] Ibid., p. 287.
[51] Mark Hutchings and A. A. Bromham, *Middleton and His Collaborators* (Tavistock: Northcote, 2008), p. 58.

of a bill, in *As You Like It* (*c*.1600), when Touchstone comments that 'When a man's verses cannot be understood […] it strikes a man more dead than a great reckoning in a little room' (3.3.9-11), lines which themselves apparently allude to Marlowe's 'infinite riches in a little room' from *The Jew of Malta* (1.1.36-7).[52] As Robert A. Logan puts it, then, 'it would be less conceivable that they did not meet than that they did'.[53]

Furthermore, Fletcher, the man who has long been thought of as Shakespeare's most frequent co-author (though recent scholarship may have replaced him with Marlowe in this estimation), is directly named on the title page of the 1634 quarto edition of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, a detail which, as Wells has remarked, makes Fletcher 'The only dramatist with whom, on the basis of evidence likely to be accepted in a court of law, it can confidently be said that Shakespeare collaborated'.[54] Additionally, Wilkins, several years after co-authoring *Pericles*, even appears alongside Shakespeare in the court records of the Bellott vs. Mountjoy case of May 1612.[55] Yet Middleton, conversely, remains perpetually absent from the historical documentary record of Shakespeare's life and works. Stylistic evidence may reveal these two playwrights as having worked together in the writing of *Timon of Athens*, and it is clear that the two were writing for the same company during the middle of the first decade of the 1600s; and yet, compared with Shakespeare's established relationships with Marlowe, Wilkins, and Fletcher, and even with other contemporaries such as Jonson, who contributed verses to Shakespeare's First Folio, the silence on the Middleton-Shakespeare partnership is deafening. Indeed, despite having apparently played such a vital role in preparing the versions of *Titus Andronicus*, *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and *Macbeth* which are included in the First Folio, Middleton, unlike Jonson, was not even asked (or if he was, did not take up

[52] Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, ed. by James R. Siemon (London: New Mermaids, 2009).
[53] Robert A. Logan, *Shakespeare's Marlowe: The Influence of Christopher Marlowe on Shakespeare's Artistry* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), p. 3.
[54] Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare and Co.: Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Dekker, Ben Jonson, Thomas Middleton, John Fletcher and the Other Players in His Story* (London: Allen Lane, 2006), p. 194.
[55] See Charles Nicholl, *The Lodger: Shakespeare on Silver Street* (London: Allen Lane, 2007).

the opportunity) to supply prefatory verses for the volume (although admittedly neither did Fletcher, the only other dramatist whose playwriting is present in a Folio play (*All Is True*) who was still alive in 1623). In fact, Middleton's only reference to the publication of the Folio might be his words in the poem 'In the just worth of that well deserver, Mr John Webster, and upon this masterpiece of tragedy', which introduces the 1623 quarto edition of Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (*c*.1613), where he praises Webster for the fact that 'Thy monument is raised in thy lifetime', in contrast to those celebrated in 'death's cathedral palaces' (ll. 8-12).[56] It is of course an unfortunate truth of Shakespeare scholarship that if we were to attempt to trace Middleton's professional interactions with Shakespeare using purely documentary sources, our efforts would inevitably prove to be fruitless; but considering all this, it certainly seems curious that it would be Middleton to whom the King's Men would have turned when the desire arose to select a dramatist to serve as the adapter of Shakespeare's plays following the original playwright's death in April 1616.

This has not, however, prevented critics from looking for evidence of a close personal association between the two writers. Todd Andrew Borlik, for one, considering John Ward's famous claim that Shakespeare died of a fever following a session of excessive drinking with Jonson and Michael Drayton – an event which S. Schoenbaum has suggested may have been related to the marriage of Shakespeare's daughter Judith to Richard Quiney in February 1616[57] – has toyed with the idea that Middleton's reference in *The Witch* to a gentleman who 'Taking a violent surfeit at a wedding, | Died' (3.2.72-3) may have been intended to be a reflection upon Shakespeare's recent passing, arguing that 'If there were an allusion to Shakespeare's demise in Jacobean drama, this would be precisely the place we might expect to find one.'[58] However, Borlik eventually decides against such an association: 'Middleton's gentleman who suffered a

[56] John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, ed. by Leah S. Marcus (London: Arden Early Modern Drama, 2009).
[57] S. Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 78.
[58] Todd Andrew Borlik, 'A Possible Allusion by Middleton to Shakespeare's Death?', *Notes and Queries*, 260 (2015), pp. 130-3 (p. 131).

fatal "surfeit at a wedding" is far more likely a sly topical reference to the murder of […] Sir Thomas Overbury – a scandal that commanded a great deal of public attention in 1616 – rather than a cryptic allusion to the passing of a retired playwright in the provinces.'[59] The hope that we might be able to locate evidence for a close personal friendship between Shakespeare and Middleton in Middleton's own writing thus remains unfulfilled.

From the way in which critics have tended to present the strong religious, social, and political positions of Shakespeare and Middleton, however, perhaps it would be more surprising if such evidence ever did emerge at all. After all, it may appear on the surface that Shakespeare and Middleton would not have made particularly obvious bedfellows. Taylor emphasises this particularly well in his witty observation that 'If Shakespeare were a moderate Puritan, Middleton is what he should look like.'[60] Richard Wilson outlines the differences between them in even starker (and more obviously oppositional) terms: 'Shakespeare and Middleton seem such strange bedfellows […] It is as if a Roundhead teamed up with a Cavalier.'[61] But despite these extreme religious points of comparison and metaphorical (if anachronistic) imagery derived from the English Civil War, Middleton was clearly a writer who was heavily attuned to the work of his older, more eminent collaborator. If the Oxford Middleton expects readers to reappraise Middleton as 'our other Shakespeare', it does so as part of a significant wave of scholarship which has in recent years intriguingly explored the strength of Shakespearean influence upon the works produced by his younger contemporary.

The most famous instance of Shakespearean appropriation in the Middleton canon is undoubtedly *The Revenger's Tragedy*. From its opening image of the tragic revenger broodingly soliloquising over the excarnated skull of his murdered fiancée Gloriana, Middleton

[59] Ibid., p. 133.
[60] Gary Taylor, 'Forms of Opposition: Middleton and Shakespeare', *English Literary Renaissance*, 24 (1994), pp. 283-314 (p. 290).
[61] Richard Wilson, '"As mice by lions": Political Theology and *Measure for Measure*', *Shakespeare*, 11 (2015), pp. 157-77 (p. 158).

very deliberately makes use of many of the most familiar elements of a specific Shakespearean precursor, *Hamlet*. Minton even supposes that 'The young author […] was holding a copy of *Hamlet* when he wrote this new revenge tragedy, for the intertextual references and allusions are unmistakable.'[62] Yet while criticism has often focused on *The Revenger's Tragedy* as a bitingly satirical Jacobean response to *Hamlet*, other instances of significant influence abound. Indeed, there are numerous examples in Middleton's writing which readily invite analyses to be undertaken in the light of their relation to a variety of Shakespearean points of comparison.

This is notable from before Middleton is even known to have begun working in London's commercial theatre industry. Indeed, in 1600 Middleton notably produced a follow-up to Shakespeare's narrative poem *The Rape of Lucrece*. This poem, *The Ghost of Lucrece*, is only Middleton's third surviving work, following 1597's *The Wisdom of Solomon Paraphrased* and 1599's *Microcynicon: Six Snarling Satires*. As Sarah Carter writes, 'Middleton's early work is evidently a response or sequel to Shakespeare's […] and contains many direct textual transpositions from the earlier text.'[63] In a similar study, Dee Anna Phares has also usefully foregrounded the role of *The Rape of Lucrece* as a stylistic and linguistic (rather than purely narrative) source for *The Ghost of Lucrece*, writing that 'Middleton's text […] complicates Shakespeare's presentation of the heroine and her attacker, as well as the reader who consumes her story […] In *The Ghost of Lucece*, Shakespeare's heroine is exhumed and her spirit called back by a conjuring poet intent on unsealing Lucrece's "virtuous monument" and forcing her not simply to remember, but to relive and re-articulate the rape.'[64] In this early example, the young Middleton was actively reconstituting Shakespeare's dark sexual narrative for his own

[62] Gretchen E. Minton (ed.), *The Revenger's Tragedy* (London: Arden Early Modern Drama, 2019), p. 1.
[63] Sarah Carter, *Ovidian Myth and Sexual Deviance in Early Modern English Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 66.
[64] Dee Anna Phares, '"The stage is down, and Philomela's choir is hushed from pricksong": Revising and (Re)membering in Middleton's *The Ghost of Lucrece*', in *Sexuality and Memory in Early Modern England: Literature and the Erotics of Recollection*, ed. by John S. Garrison and Kyle Pivetti (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), pp. 51-65 (p. 52).

purposes, creating a new interpretation of Lucrece as a strong female figure attempting to reclaim command of her own story.

Another example of such influence has been offered by Hutchings, who has detected echoes of the 'wooing scene' in Shakespeare's *Richard III* in two scenes of Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling* – 1.1, probably written by Rowley, and 2.1, probably written by Middleton – noting that De Flores's manipulation of Beatrice-Joanna 'recalls Richard's expression of love for Anne, and these male protagonists share similar characteristics'.[65] Certainly, the villainy of both Richard and De Flores is closely tied to descriptions of their ugliness. Hutchings hence remarks that 'In both scenes a deformed man, the killer of the man standing between him and the woman of his desire, seeks ostensibly to woo her, covertly to subject her to his power: his apparent sincerity conceals an ulterior motive. Rings feature in both scenes, as does the recurring image of seeing and sight. The female character expresses her distaste for the proposal, until finally won over; finally, the male confides to the audience his dastardly design.'[66] Hutchings also draws attention towards the linguistic links between these scenes. For example:

> Would they were basilisks, to strike thee dead. (*Richard III*, 1.2.150)
> The same that report speaks of the basilisk. (*The Changeling*, 1.1.115)

The shared use of the term 'basilisks' is alone interesting, but Hutchings provides another valuable example of shared language:

> Than I can wish to wolves, to spiders, toads (*Richard III*, 1.2.19)
> Thou standing toad-pool! (*The Changeling*, 2.1.58)

[65] Mark Hutchings, '*Richard III* and *The Changeling*', *Notes and Queries*, 250 (2005), pp. 229-30 (p. 229).
[66] Ibid.

Hutchings uses this as evidence that Middleton and Rowley were using *Richard III* as a significant linguistic and dramaturgical source for *The Changeling*. As Hutchings argues that 'Middleton and Rowley may have been influenced directly by the printing of the play, perhaps the sixth quarto (1622), when they came to write *The Changeling*, licensed on 7 May that year. But given Middleton's position as an established King's Men dramatist it is unlikely he was otherwise unfamiliar with *Richard III*.'[67] However, it is also important to note that appearances of the words 'basilisk' and 'toad' are not particularly unusual during this period: from my own corpus linguistics analysis of the word 'basilisk', I have found 618 uses between 1580 and 1642 alone; for 'toad', I found 1036.[68] Hutchings's observation in this final qualification is certainly worth attending to – after all, Middleton must surely have been recalling the start of *Richard III* when he wrote the opening soliloquy of *The Revenger's Tragedy*, for example – but to suggest that Middleton and Rowley were directly inspired to use this language because of their knowledge of *Richard III* seems to me to be taking such assertions too far.

The examples of *The Ghost of Lucrece*, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, and *The Changeling* do not necessarily prove that Middleton knew Shakespeare the man intimately; what they do show, however, is that there is certainly a case for Middleton having had a great familiarity with Shakespeare's works. Middleton was evidently a writer who was highly acquainted with and receptive to the works which had been produced by his great forebear.

Of course, this is not to suggest that Middleton was unique in his indebtedness to the works of Shakespeare. To use one of the examples provided above, the wooing scene in *Richard III* was also used as inspiration for Giovanni's wooing of his sister Annabella in Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (*c.*1631), a detail which has been pointed out in the work of Lisa

[67] Ibid.
[68] All corpus linguistics analyses undertaken in this thesis have been conducted using the 'Corpus Search' function at *Early Print Lab* <http://ada.artsci.wustl.edu:8080/corpus-frontend-1.2/eebotcp/search/>

Hopkins.[69] What this does show, however, is that Middleton's familiarity with Shakespeare's works was particularly great, something which may have a bearing upon our perception of Middleton's suitability to adapt the older writer's works. Just as Shakespeare is known to have been inspired by his revered predecessor Marlowe, so something similar can be suggested with regard to Middleton reading and rewriting Shakespeare.

Despite the blurring of the boundaries between Shakespeare and Middleton's respective canons, however, it appears that the direction of influence travelled in a single direction. As Taylor has stated in an article concerning Middleton's adaptation of *Macbeth*, for example, 'it seems likely that Shakespeare influenced Middleton (and every other dramatist of his time) more than Middleton influenced Shakespeare. Middleton wrote replies to Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece* and *Hamlet*, alluded to *Titus Andronicus*, and was demonstrably influenced by *1 Henry IV*, while there is no clear case of Shakespeare being influenced by Middleton'.[70] This assumption seems to be borne out by much of the existing scholarship on the issue of influence. Even Jackson, who intriguingly suggested that the references to a character named 'Spurio' in *All's Well that Ends Well* (at 2.1.41 and 4.3.166) were inspired by the name of the bastard son (also called Spurio) in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, now seems likely to have been using flawed contextual evidence.[71] Writing in the early 2000s, Jackson used as the basis for his argument a later dating of *All's Well* to 1606-7. Whereas *The Revenger's Tragedy* is usually dated to 1606, however, it now seems likely that *All's Well* dates from around 1605 at the latest. Thus, as Quentin Skinner argues in his rebuttal to Jackson's work, if the reference to 'Spurio' is indeed

[69] Lisa Hopkins, 'Wooing Scenes in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* and *Richard III*', *Notes and Queries*, 238 (1993), pp. 227-8. See 1.2.153-275 in John Ford, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ed. by Sonia Massai (London: Arden Early Modern Drama, 2011).
[70] Taylor, 'Empirical Middleton', p. 251.
[71] MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Spurio and the Date of *All's Well That Ends Well*', *Notes and Queries*, 246 (2001), pp. 298-9.

a case of one dramatist influencing the other, then it would seem that Middleton must surely once again have been the debtor.[72]

This does bring us to an interesting consideration, however: namely, that if Middleton was inspired in 1606 to use the name Spurio for the Duke's illegitimate son in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, having encountered it in *All's Well that Ends Well* shortly beforehand, then he managed to encounter it almost twenty years before that play first reached print publication in the First Folio in 1623. Of course, it is possible that he was simply struck by the name upon witnessing Shakespeare's comedy in performance; but the fact that the name Spurio appears in no other play until Thomas Nabbes's *The Unfortunate Mother* in 1639, as Jackson rightly acknowledges,[73] alongside the realisation that both *All's Well that Ends Well* and *The Revenger's Tragedy* were apparently being written in such close geographical and temporal proximity to one another (both for the same company, the King's Men, around 1605-6), might encourage us to attend more closely to how both writers' established canons intersect in other ways during a relatively short period of time.

Linguistic Links and Verbal Indebtedness:
Connecting the Canons, 1603-1607

The Oxford Middleton achieves its greatest success in connecting the canons of these two colleagues primarily by establishing Shakespeare's position as a major presence in many areas of the surviving Middleton canon, beyond simply his collaborative role in the composition of *Timon of Athens*. Hence, just as Shakespeare has long been understood to have been heavily inspired by his great predecessor Marlowe, so it seems logical to expect that a young Middleton would likewise have taken some degree of inspiration from the man who might be considered to have been his most noteworthy precursor. In other words, just as Shakespeare owed so much

[72] Quentin Skinner, 'A Spurious Dating for *All's Well That Ends Well*', *Notes and Queries*, 258 (2013), pp. 429-34.
[73] Jackson, 'Spurio', p. 299.

to his great contemporary Marlowe, so Middleton repeatedly returned to the influence of his renowned forebear, Shakespeare. However, by taking a more detailed look at how these two writers' respective canons interact during the period 1603-7, during which Shakespeare was writing many of the plays which Middleton would one day go on to adapt, and during which Middleton was first working with the King's Men as a writer of tragedies, it seems likely that Middleton's engagement with the older dramatist was more significant than it initially appears.

Much of the knowledge with which present-day critics have now been equipped to consider the question of Shakespeare and Middleton's professional relationship during any given period of time is indebted to the invaluable work currently being published on the entire corpus of the dramatic literature of the Renaissance era in Martin Wiggins and Catherine Richardson's ongoing research project *British Drama, 1533-1642: A Catalogue*. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to summarise every work produced by Shakespeare and Middleton during this period in a search for incidences of influence being exchanged between the two dramatists, but by focusing on a choice selection of plays, arranged according to Wiggins and Richardson's chronology, we can observe a notable clustering of connections between the two canons which are well worth attending to.

According to Wiggins and Richardson's detailed research, the plays of both dramatists staged during the earliest years of Middleton's theatrical career, and continuing until their first direct authorial collaboration (*Timon*), can be ordered as follows. Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* and Middleton's *The Phoenix*, both of which detail the adventures of a disguised ruler in a corrupt Italianate state, can be dated to around the same time, from late 1603 to early in 1604. The question of priority remains unclear, but it is almost certain that both dramatists produced each of their 'disguised ruler plays' soon after the accession of Scotland's King James VI to the English throne on 23 March 1603, this dramatic subgenre also being made use of by Marston in *The Malcontent* at around the same time. Then, after writing *Othello* later in 1604,

Shakespeare likely wrote *All's Well that Ends Well* in or around the first half of 1605, followed later that same year by Middleton's first work for Shakespeare's company, in the form of the short domestic drama *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (apparently the only surviving part of what we might call an anthology drama, consisting of 'four-plays-in-one'). Around the end of 1605, Shakespeare would then have finished working on *King Lear*, before producing *Macbeth* in 1606 as his response to the foiling of the Gunpowder Plot in November 1605. Middleton then contributed *The Puritan* to the repertory of the Children of Paul's (also in 1606), before returning to the King's Men later that same year with *The Revenger's Tragedy*, a play completed shortly after Shakespeare's second tragedy of 1606, *Antony and Cleopatra*. Both writers then collaborated on *Timon of Athens*, probably in or around 1607.

One problem with outlining such a chronology as this is that the establishment of a firm date of composition for many early modern plays is a decidedly inexact science. However, while the dating of some of these works continues to be debated, most estimates still place them within this 1603-7 period (whereas Wiggins and Richardson offer 1603 as the date of *Measure for Measure*, for example, Taylor and Loughnane suggest 'late 1604',[74] but still firmly within this 1603-7 period of Shakespeare-Middleton interaction). The most uncertain of these plays to date is *Timon of Athens*, although most scholars agree that this work was most likely produced either in '1605-1606' (the date suggested in the Oxford Middleton[75]), 'early 1606' (the date suggested in Taylor and Loughnane[76]), or 1607 (the date suggested in Wiggins and Richardson). An adjustment to the dating of this play does not affect the argument we can draw from a focus on this period of Middleton and Shakespeare's respective careers.

By looking at the chronology which has just been laid out before us, then, a few things should quickly draw our attention. First, the majority of the Shakespeare plays that Middleton

[74] Taylor and Loughnane, p. 554.
[75] Taylor et al., 'Works Included', p. 356.
[76] Taylor and Loughnane, p. 561.

is now generally believed to have gone on to revise after the original author's death – *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, and *All's Well that Ends Well* – were all originally written during the same few years, from late 1603 to mid-1606; only *Titus Andronicus*, which has been dated to between 1589 (Taylor and Loughnane[77]) and 1592 (Wiggins and Richardson), and to which Middleton has only been credited with the introduction of a single scene, originates from outside this period. Secondly, it was also during this short timeframe that Middleton is first known to have begun writing for the King's Men (the same company that exerted ownership over these three Shakespearean plays). This means that at the same time that Shakespeare was writing the plays that Middleton would one day adapt, Middleton was also engaging with the King's Men in producing both *A Yorkshire Tragedy* and *The Revenger's Tragedy*.

But there is a third point which is also of considerable interest: namely, that the two Middleton plays which were first published with false pseudo-Shakespearean attributions on their title pages – whether explicitly in the case of *A Yorkshire Tragedy* by 'W. Shakspeare' in 1608, or more ambiguously with regard to the crediting of 'W. S.' with *The Puritan* in 1607 – are both believed to have been written during this same period, in 1605 and 1606 respectively (these dates are given in both the Oxford Middleton and in Wiggins and Richardson's *Catalogue*[78]). Middleton might only be known to have collaborated directly with Shakespeare on a single play during both of their lifetimes, but an examination of the chronology of their dramatic output during the period 1603-7 brings to the surface enough curious coincidences for us to be encouraged to reconsider the extent of the two writers' professional relationship, especially during these early years of Middleton's career.

The important question is whether all of these connections are too coincidental to be pure happenstance. As this chapter will argue, by examining linguistic and thematic evidence

[77] Ibid., p. 490.
[78] See Taylor et al., 'Works Included', p. 355 and p. 358 respectively.

from around this period, there is good reason to believe that these connections are in fact very important for understanding how Middleton likely came to adapt the older dramatist's plays, starting around a decade later.

To summarise, during the period 1603-7 the established canons of Shakespeare and Middleton display a series of connections to one another. By examining the information put forth in Wiggins and Richardson's *Catalogue*, supplemented by the work on dating pursued in the Oxford Middleton and the New Oxford Shakespeare, the following chronology of key texts can be established:

Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure* (1603-4) – later adapted by Middleton
Middleton, *The Phoenix* (1603-4) – possibly influenced by *Measure*
Shakespeare, *Othello* (1604)
Shakespeare, *All's Well that Ends Well* (1605) – later adapted by Middleton
Middleton, *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (1605) – credited to W. Shakspeare
Shakespeare, *King Lear* (1605)
Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (1606) – later adapted by Middleton
Middleton, *The Puritan* (1606) – credited to W. S.
Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra* (1606)
Middleton, *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1606) – inspired by *Hamlet*
Shakespeare and Middleton, *Timon of Athens* (1607)

This chronology does not in and of itself prove that Middleton and Shakespeare were particularly closely associated; but we should now attend to the works of two scholars in particular who have each explored the idea of professional interaction between Shakespeare and Middleton during this period, by comparing the plays of one dramatist to one or more contemporaneous plays produced by the other.

The first of these critics whose work is worth mentioning is Lois Potter. Comparing 1604's *Othello* to 1605's *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, Potter points out that these two plays are very similar in terms of their subject matter, both being about jealous husbands committing violence

against their wives on the false expectation that they will prove to have been cuckolded, and with both wives seemingly forgiving their husbands at the end: indeed, just as Desdemona famously seems to occlude her husband's guilt in her murder, telling Emilia on her deathbed that 'Nobody' is responsible for her death save 'I myself' (5.2.133), so the Wife of *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, following the Husband's imprisonment for the murder of their children, states that 'Dearer than all is my poor husband's life […] I will kneel, | Sue for his life, number up all my friends, | To plead for pardon my dear husband's life' (8.65-9). Potter thus toys with the idea that a shorter version of *Othello* might have been worked into the sequence of short plays of which *A Yorkshire Tragedy* originally formed part.[79]

The second example comes from the work of Holdsworth. Arguably, no single scholar has done more in recent years to assess the closeness of the two writers' professional and creative interactions during this period than Holdsworth, in his contribution to the New Oxford Shakespeare's *Authorship Companion* of 2017.[80] Assessing the apparent connection between the two dramatists, his most substantial claims relate to the observable linguistic indebtedness of both 1605's *A Yorkshire Tragedy* and 1606's *The Revenger's Tragedy* to Shakespeare's *c*.1605 tragedy *King Lear*. (Intriguingly, Holdsworth uses for his analysis the Folio text of *King Lear*, a version of the play which is substantially different to the earlier quarto text, and which is often thought to represent a revision of the original play completed by Shakespeare around 1610. Nevertheless, by aligning the linguistic comparisons recounted in Holdsworth's chapter with Q1 *Lear* rather than F1 *Lear*, I find that the various linguistic connections provided by Holdsworth remain relevant, with only very minor alterations being observable.)

[79] Lois Potter, '"All's One": Cinthio, *Othello*, and *A Yorkshire Tragedy*', in *Othello: The State of Play*, ed. by Lena Cowen Orlin (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2014), pp. 45-62.
[80] See Roger Holdsworth, 'Shakespeare and Middleton: A Chronology for 1605-6', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 366-84. All linguistic links discussed in the following paragraph are taken from Holdsworth's study.

Holdsworth's linguistic connections are as follows: Middleton's 'thy pleasant sins' (*Yorkshire*, 4.55) being inspired by Shakespeare's 'our pleasant vices' (*Lear*, 24.166); 'Comst thou between my fury to question me? […] Have I no power?' (*Yorkshire*, 5.30-5) being inspired by 'Come not between the dragon and his wrath […] To come between our sentence and our power' (*Lear*, 1.114-60); 'more than barbarous: | The Scythians' (*Yorkshire*, 6.17-18) being inspired by 'the barbarous Scythian' (*Lear*, 1.109); 'this wheel comes about' (*Revenger's*, 2.1.70) being inspired by 'The wheel is come full circled' (*Lear*, 24.170); and 'Spout rain, we fear thee not, be hot or cold' (*Revenger's*, 3.5.62) being inspired by 'spit, fire; spout, rain. | Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire are my daughters' (*Lear*, 9.14-15).

The connections identified by Holdsworth do, however, remain open to debate. Indeed, some are not as unusual as Holdsworth implies. From my own search of *Early Print Lab*, for instance, I have found 208 instances of 'come' and 'between' being used within five words of each other, all before Shakespeare wrote *King Lear* and Middleton wrote *A Yorkshire Tragedy* in 1605. Furthermore, I have found 12 instances of 'barbarous' being used within five words of 'Scythian', again before 1605, in works by writers as varied as Augustin Marlorat, Rudolf Gwalther, William Tyndale, John Brooke, Gregory Martin, Vincentio Saviolo, Matthew Kellison, and Richard Broughton. From the evidence of *Early Print Lab*, it does not appear that all the connections Holdsworth detects are strong evidence for Middleton necessarily being inspired by Shakespeare.

Others may choose to expand upon Holdsworth's list, or may alternatively disagree with some of Holdsworth's identified linguistic associations. However, the closeness of some aspects of the language of *A Yorkshire Tragedy* and *The Revenger's Tragedy* to certain passages in *King Lear* should at the very least give us pause for thought, especially considering that all three plays date from the same 1605-6 period. Certain elements of Holdsworth's attempts to establish a Shakespeare-Middleton chronology of course remain open to debate.

His suggestive argument that *A Yorkshire Tragedy* post-dates the composition of *King Lear*, for example,[81] cannot easily be reconciled to the fact that *A Yorkshire Tragedy* makes no reference to the real-life manner of the death of Walter Calverley, upon whose crime the tragedy is based, by peine forte et dure (pressing to death) at York Castle on 15 August 1605, suggesting that the play likely pre-dates his execution. But Holdsworth does make an interesting point about how the identifiable indebtedness here to *King Lear* may have made its way into the text of *A Yorkshire Tragedy*: 'How did Middleton come by his knowledge of *Lear*, which was not in print until 1608? […] Even if *Lear* had passed the rehearsal phase by the time Middleton became involved with the company, Shakespeare might easily have allowed Middleton sight of the text of his most recently completed play'.[82] It is important to note that what Holdsworth calls 'the rehearsal phase' would have looked very different in the early modern theatres compared to the form rehearsal traditionally takes in present-day theatres: as Stern has shown, three weeks seems to have been a normal timeframe during which a company could prepare a play, but during this time there was likely only a single group rehearsal, with most actors learning their own lines through independent study, often involving a teacher, who could sometimes have been the playwright himself (in the case of senior actors) or senior members of the company (in the case of younger actors).[83] At any rate, it seems plausible that the linguistic links between the two plays are too strong to simply have derived from the author's memory of seeing *King Lear* in performance. If they do derive from Shakespeare's authorial foul papers of *King Lear*, then, this would suggest a closer professional relationship between Shakespeare and Middleton than many scholars have previously been equipped to suppose.

[81] Ibid., p. 368.
[82] Ibid., p. 371.
[83] See Tiffany Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), pp. 46-123.

Holdsworth's work on the linguistic connections between *King Lear* on the one hand and *A Yorkshire Tragedy* and *The Revenger's Tragedy* on the other might encourage us to reconsider Jackson's argument that 'Spurio' in *All's Well that Ends Well* was inspired by the similarly named bastard son in Middleton's *The Revenger's Tragedy*. These two plays, as discussed above, were both being produced around 1605-6. If Middleton had been permitted access to Shakespeare's authorial foul papers of *King Lear* (or, indeed, if he had been privileged to experience that play in rehearsal), then the same could be true of his experience with *All's Well that Ends Well*. This would, again, make Middleton the linguistic debtor, but it would also be further evidence of a close working relationship between the two playwrights during the period under consideration.

By examining *The Revenger's Tragedy* further, however, additional evidence for this close professional relationship can be identified. It is certainly suggestive that Middleton's second play for the King's Men was also a tragedy, despite his greatest expertise prior to the writing of *A Yorkshire Tragedy* having been in the realm of comedy. It is also suggestive that this second tragedy is so clearly a reworking of *Hamlet* for a thoroughly Jacobean context. This could be related to the belief of some critics, such as Bourus, that *Hamlet* might have been revised by Shakespeare as recently as 1604, something which might account for there being three different versions of that tragedy in existence. However, as this chapter will proceed to demonstrate, by examining just one word in the text of *The Revenger's Tragedy* it might be possible add to Holdsworth's work, and to posit that this play has a closer connection to another contemporaneous Shakespeare play, a connection which once again suggests intimate knowledge of a Shakespearean text prior to its performance or print publication.

The word in question is 'revenger', the noun deriving from the term 'revenge', signifying the individual who undertakes to exact vengeance. According to the *OED*, the word itself can be found in print as far back as 1522, in Gavin Douglas's translation of Virgil's

Aeneid: 'Of our levingis sum revengar mot spryng.' Furthermore, a search of *Early Print Lab* reveals 694 uses of this word before 1606. I do not mean to focus on this word as an 'invention' of either dramatist, however; instead, I wish to draw attention to the curious coincidence that both Shakespeare and Middleton use the term for the very first time in their respective careers in two plays which are both usually dated to the same year, 1606, a coincidence which I believe should give us pause for thought.

Despite the clear popularity of the subgenre of revenge tragedy to Elizabethan and Jacobean audiences, it would be almost a century before the noun 'revenger' was put at the forefront of a tragedy's title, in Middleton's *The Revenger's Tragedy* in 1606. Beyond the play's title, however, this specific form of the word also appears twice in speeches within the play.

The first occurrence is in 4.2, during the following exchange between Vindice and Lussurioso (for clarity, I here present the key word in **bold** typeface):

> LUSSURIOSO Thy name? I have forgot it.
> VINDICE Vindice, my lord.
> LUSSURIOSO 'Tis a good name that.
> VINDICE Ay, a **revenger**. (4.2.172-3)

The second occurrence is in 5.1, during Vindice's soliloquy in which he muses upon the very nature of revenge:

> Thus much by wit a deep **revenger** can,
> When murder's known, to be the clearest man. (5.1.93-4)

The printed quarto text of 1607 gives us two further uses, in the stage directions signifying the mock masque in 5.3:

> *Enter the masque of **revengers**, the two brothers Vindice and Hippolito, and two Lords more* […] *The **revengers** dance; at the end, steal out their swords, and these four kill the four at the table in their chairs.* (5.3.39-41)

Taken in and of itself, it is perhaps unsurprising that we should find Middleton's first uses in his career of the word 'revenger' in a play called *The Revenger's Tragedy*. Furthermore, the occurrences of this word in *The Revenger's Tragedy* are not Middleton's only uses of it: in *The Peacemaker; or, Great Britain's Blessing*, a 1618 treatise purporting to come from King James himself, but which the Oxford Middleton clearly demonstrates was ghost-written by Middleton,[84] the word can also be found in the line 'What blood shall the **Revenger** dare to shed?' (ll. 702-3). What is particularly interesting, however, is a comparison this begs with *Antony and Cleopatra*, a Shakespeare play which, as we have observed above, was probably being written at around the same time as *The Revenger's Tragedy*, and for the same company. Indeed, this tragedy also marks Shakespeare's only uses in his career of the noun 'revenger'. The word is spoken first by Pompey in 2.6:

> I do not know
> Wherefore my father should **revengers** want (2.6.10-11)

It is then uttered again, this time by Ventidius, in 3.1:

> Now, darting Parthia, art thou struck; and now
> Pleased fortune does of Marcus Crassus' death
> Make me **revenger**. (3.1.1-3)

How can we explain the curious fact that both Shakespeare and Middleton would elect to make use of the word 'revenger', each for the first time in their respective careers, in two plays which were in all likelihood being written in very close geographical and temporal proximity to one another? There are, of course, two likely possibilities. Either Middleton caught sight of Shakespeare's foul papers for *Antony and Cleopatra* at a time when he was once again working

[84] Taylor, 'Works Included', pp. 402-4.

for the company in composing *The Revenger's Tragedy*, was struck by the word 'revenger', and not only elected to use it himself in his own new tragedy, but also opted to include it in the play's title; or, Shakespeare took particular note of the title of Middleton's new play for his company, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, also possibly seeing the word being used in the text, and accordingly elected to include it in his own latest tragedy.

There is, unfortunately, no way to be certain of the direction of influence in this case. But it might appear marginally more likely that Shakespeare would have become aware of the title of the junior dramatist's *Revenger's Tragedy* before he became intimately acquainted with the minutiae of Middleton's choice of words within his script. Whatever conclusion we are likely to come to, the implications of this observation are clear: there is good reason to believe that Middleton may not simply have been a debtor to Shakespeare's genius, but may also have begun to influence the older dramatist in his turn as their association developed. Evidence for this close professional association between the two can be seen not only by the appearance of the word 'revenger' in the texts of both *The Revenger's Tragedy* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, but also in Middleton's use of the name 'Spurio' in *The Revenger's Tragedy* following its appearance in *All's Well that Ends Well*, in the close verbal associations of *A Yorkshire Tragedy* and *The Revenger's Tragedy* with *King Lear*, and, of course, in Shakespeare's desire to work with Middleton to benefit from his expertise in the writing of city comedy when composing *Timon of Athens*. More research is required; but what the connections explored above emphasise is that Middleton must have been a far more significant player in Shakespeare's professional life than critics have traditionally tended to assume. This is only achievable because of recent revelations, particularly those set forth by publications such as the Oxford Middleton and the New Oxford Shakespeare, concerning the extent of the likely Middletonian presence in the texts of the Shakespeare canon. Bearing this in mind, we should no longer

consider it so clear-cut to assume that Middleton never influenced Shakespeare, or, indeed, that he was only a minor figure in the older, more famous dramatist's illustrious career.

Wells writes that 'Middleton served [Shakespeare] at different times as an apprentice, as a journeyman, and as an equal collaborator.'[85] In this chapter, I have argued that the connection between Shakespeare and Middleton was likely strong enough that we should not find it at all surprising that Shakespeare's colleagues among the King's Men would have chosen to approach Middleton when the need arose the adapt a selection of works by their late colleague for revival under new theatrical conditions. Indeed, while interpolations introduced into play-texts through processes of adaptation are commonly easily detachable from the works in performance, it is clear that the adapter of *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and possibly also *Titus Andronicus* was an individual highly familiar with the works produced by his older colleague throughout his theatrical career, and in particular had a close professional and influential association with said colleague during the years 1603-7, during which, significantly, Shakespeare produced three of the four plays which this thesis will now proceed to examine in detail as later Middletonian adaptations. It can never be determined exactly how closely Shakespeare and Middleton knew one another throughout their careers, but as this chapter has shown, evidence derived from the historical connecting of these two writers in print publications, the clear influence of a variety of Shakespearean texts upon Middleton's own works, and the evidence of Shakespeare and Middleton likely sharing their work-in-progress scripts with one another when both were working for the King's Men around 1605-7, strongly suggests that Middleton was a figure prominently on Shakespeare's radar in the early years of the younger dramatist's career, something which may suggest to us why it would have been Middleton in particular to whom Shakespeare's colleagues in the King's Men would have turned after 1616 when searching for an adapter of their deceased's colleague's

[85] Wells, *Shakespeare and Co*, p. 168.

plays for revival. If the King's Men were looking for a writer with a substantial understanding of Shakespeare's works, then Middleton would surely have stood out as a very promising and attractive candidate.

CHAPTER 2

THE DRAMATURGY OF ADAPTATION: PRINT, POPULARITY, AND THE JACOBEAN PLAYING SPACE

In the Introduction to this thesis, it was shown that Renaissance theatre companies often deemed it advantageous for a play-text under their ownership to undergo processes of authorial revision or non-authorial adaptation in preparation for revivals, even though the amount of extant adapted texts does not appear to be particularly great in number. I have thus far been primarily concerned with the role played by the hired adapter – specifically Middleton – as an active participant in the posthumous reshaping of Shakespeare's works. However, a second critical focal point is equally relevant to these investigations: the way in which an adapted play-text can be seen to have functioned in relation to the theatrical playing space itself. This is not to suggest that analysing revised or adapted works specifically in terms of their literary status is not in itself a highly productive line of enquiry. Indeed, as Wiggins observes when considering processes of adaptation in relation to plays such as Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* and Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, it is evident that, 'Though once again bankable, these old classics still needed to be refashioned to take account of new tastes and new sensibilities,'[1] a rationale for adaptation which can be used to explain much of the style and content of the additions and revisions commonly supplied by adapting authors. Yet this represents just one aspect of how old texts such as these were reshaped for revival throughout the early modern period. We must not forget that whenever a company chose to submit a text to adaptation, the circumstances under which the affected work was set to receive its associated revival must also have been at the forefront of their creative motivations.

Considering the wider corpus of surviving early modern English drama, critics have often assumed that the revision or adaptation of older play-texts was commonly driven by a need to refine and refresh works which had been absent from a company's repertory for a

[1] Martin Wiggins, *Shakespeare and the Drama of His Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 56.

substantial amount of time, in order to make them more immediately saleable to potential new audiences. This is an argument notably pursued by Gerald Eades Bentley in his 1971 study *The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time*, in which he states that such 'refurbishing of old plays in the repertory seems to have been the universal practice in the London theatres from 1590 to 1642.'[2] The argument that such processes constituted standard theatrical convention has since been reiterated by numerous critics of more recent decades. Ioppolo, for one, writes that 'Revision of existing plays by company dramatists […] was commonplace, as plays belonging to an acting company could undergo alteration, expansion, revision, or cutting in order to serve the company's current needs or those of the censor, the Master of the Revels, or even the author'.[3] Similarly, Rasmussen argues that 'the insertion of fresh scenes and passages was the easiest and most efficient expedient for providing a revised version of a play'.[4] Marino likewise describes how 'strenuous competition and the demands of an insatiable theatrical market required the players to constantly revise older scripts: to keep up their supply of presentable material [...] and to keep their repertory from proving old-fashioned in an age of rapid theatrical innovation.'[5] It is thus demonstrable that the revival of play-texts during the early modern period also brought with it a variety of rationales for the economic and artistic benefits of adapting that play-text for such purposes.

It is reasonable to assume that many of the features which are considered characteristic of theatrical adaptation would have been intended to enable older elements of a particular company's repertory to conform to the desires and expectations of contemporaneous spectators, in order to maximise a play's chances of receiving the most enthusiastic reception possible at the hands of its new audiences. Knutson, however, analysing in detail the accounts recorded in Henslowe's *Diary*, concludes that 'the assumption that revision was necessary to

[2] Bentley, p. 263.
[3] Grace Ioppolo, *Revising Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 12.
[4] Rasmussen, p. 449.
[5] Marino, p. 94.

make old plays profitable cannot be supported [...] Only in a few isolated cases is there evidence that the plays being revived were also revised. In the dozens of cases where plays were returned to the stage without textual alteration, Henslowe recorded receipts that show the old plays to have been very good commercial properties. On the basis of evidence in *Henslowe's Diary*, therefore, revision for the occasion of revival was neither commonplace nor economically necessary.'[6] Knutson's analysis should be considered alongside certain caveats, however. Specifically, it is important to recognise that Henslowe's accounts may not necessarily be representative of early modern theatre as a whole. In particular, Henslowe was dealing with a company with a very large repertory; it is probable that companies with fewer plays may have turned to revision and adaptation more frequently. As this chapter will show, there were many occurrences that would have made adaptation necessary, and which would also have provided an excellent opportunity for more large-scale alterations than were strictly required. This is particularly true in circumstances where, like Middleton's adaptations of Shakespeare, there was a significant time gap between the original version of a play and the event of its adaptation. Indeed, adaptation was primarily a company-driven process – as I have already emphasised in the Introduction to this thesis – and significant attention should therefore be paid towards the relevance of new theatrical and dramaturgical innovations for the 'refurbishing' of older play-texts for revival during the early modern era.

This chapter will examine the motivations behind adaptation in the early modern theatre industry, with a view to considering how what we can learn through such an investigation might inform our understanding of the adaptation by Middleton of Shakespeare's plays. First, this chapter will consider the role played by popularity in determining which plays would be subjected to processes of adaptation at later points in time, questioning how accurate such

[6] Roslyn L. Knutson, '*Henslowe's Diary* and the Economics of Play Revision for Revival, 1592-1603', *Theatre Research International*, 10 (1985), pp. 1-18 (p. 1).

critical assumptions might be. The chapter will then move on to considering two different theatrical conditions under which a play might be adapted; first, performance before the court, and secondly, for a move to a different kind of playhouse. For this second consideration, attention will specifically be paid towards the acquisition by the King's Men of the Blackfriars Playhouse in 1608, arguing that the change in dramaturgical circumstances this brought about likely provided both a need and an opportunity for the adaptation of several of Shakespeare's plays. Finally, the chapter will look at one example of Middleton adapting of Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, a play which has often been argued to have been reshaped for presentation at court, instead suggesting that while the court may well have been in the King's Men's collective mind at the time of its adaptation, the acquisition of the Blackfriars may well have been a simultaneous, and more long-lasting, impetus.

'Newly Set Forth':
Rationalising Theatrical Adaptation in Renaissance England

Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Lesser have notably interrogated the concept of 'popularity' in the context of Renaissance England, particularly in terms of how such a notion can be related to an understanding of the Elizabethan book trade. Insightfully responding to past analyses of the issue, Farmer and Lesser determine that the surviving evidence for any particular work's rate of reproduction in print during this period cannot necessarily be used as a direct measure of that work's popularity or otherwise, but they nevertheless lament that this has not prevented critics from attempting to make such judgements about specific plays: 'scholars have nonetheless been eager to assess the relative popularity – that is, economic performance – of different kinds of books in early modern England, because the circulation of print remains one of our best avenues of investigation in this field.'[7] It is for this reason that such methods for

[7] Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Lesser, 'What Is Print Popularity?: A Map of the Elizabethan Book Trade', in *The Elizabethan Top Ten: Defining Print Popularity in Early Modern England*, ed. by Andy Kesson and Emma Smith (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 19-54 (p. 20).

determining the 'economic performance' of dramatic texts have also been made use of by scholars studying theatrical adaptation in early modern England. A good example of this is the common assumption that the incorporation of the five 'new additions' in the quarto editions of *The Spanish Tragedy* published from 1602 onwards resulted from the continuing theatrical and financial success of this highly influential play.

One critic whose work has equated the additions to *The Spanish Tragedy* with that play's enduring popularity is Vickers, in a 2012 article seeking to establish the extent of Shakespeare's involvement in the work's adaptation. Considering first the undisputed evidence that Henslowe commissioned not Shakespeare, but Jonson to provide such additions for a revival of the play in 1601 – 'Lent vnto m^{r} alleyn the 25 of septmbȝ 1601 to lend vnto Bengemen Johnson vpon [his] writtinge of his adicians in geronymo the some of xxxxs'[8] – Vickers proceeds to make the following statement:

> It is worth observing that we do not know whether Jonson […] ever delivered these additions, but at least the payments show that Henslowe found it worth his while to dress up Kyd's old play yet again. *The Spanish Tragedy* enjoyed great popularity not only with theatregoers but with the reading public. Quarto editions appeared in 1592, 1594, 1599, 1602, 1603, 1610-11, 1615, 1618, 1623, [and] 1633, ten in all; only *Mucedorus*, with 13 dated quarto editions between 1598 and 1639 (and perhaps another undated), exceeded it in popularity.[9]

There can be little doubt that *The Spanish Tragedy*, which as Vickers rightly points out went through ten separate quarto editions between *c*.1592 (Q1 is in fact undated) and 1633 – plus an unsurviving pre-1592 'Q0' – was a very successful work. As Wiggins puts it, 'vengeful Hieronimo' was eventually 'to become part of the period's common cultural discourse, as familiar in casual allusion as figures like Hercules and Aeneas, Adam and Jesus, from England's inherited mythologies.'[10] From this example, then, it might seem as though the early

[8] Henslowe, p. 182.
[9] Brian Vickers, 'Identifying Shakespeare's Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy* (1602): A New(er) Approach', *Shakespeare*, 8 (2012), pp. 13-43 (p. 14).
[10] Wiggins, *His Time*, p. 32.

modern theatrical adaptation of commercial drama might often have been closely associated with the established popularity of the earlier version of the play. Evidence for this particular tragedy's ongoing high regard among audiences is, after all, also provided by Jonson's mockery in *Cynthia's Revels; or, The Fountain of Self-Love* (1600) of one 'whom it hath pleased nature to furnish with more beard than brain' who 'swears […] "that the old *Hieronimo*", as it was first acted, "was the only, best, and judiciously penned play of Europe"' (Praeludium 163-7), as well as by his criticism in *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) of 'He that will swear *Jeronimo* or *Andronicus* are the best plays yet […] these five and twenty or thirty years' (Induction 79-82). When all this is considered, it might thus seem reasonable to assume that the text of a 'popular' play such as this would have been far more likely to receive later revisions and/or other 'new additions' in later years than a less successful one would have been.

In attending to the wider corpus of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, however, it is apparent that the situation was never quite so simple. While it certainly seems plausible that certain plays (such as *The Spanish Tragedy*) would have received their 'new additions' in response to the enduring popularity of the original versions, many similarly successful plays went on to enjoy later revivals without any substantial alteration or expansion being made to the existing version whatsoever. Knutson emphasises as much in her consideration of the payments for the revision of plays recorded in Henslowe's *Diary*, where she observes that 'Normally, the Admiral's men brought plays back into production without significant expenditures. In a few cases they bought some new apparel, and on the occasion of a play's presentation at Court they may have ordered a prologue and epilogue. Yet out of as many as fifty revivals between 1594 and 1603, *Henslowe's Diary* does not record a substantial fee for textual alterations except for the revivals of *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Dr. Faustus*.'[11] In

[11] Roslyn L. Knutson, 'Influence of the Repertory System on the Revival and Revision of *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Dr. Faustus*', *English Literary Renaissance*, 18 (1988), pp. 257-74 (p. 258).

assessing the popularity of any particular dramatic work, then, we should instead look to more meaningful signifiers of continued economic success than occasional incidences of textual augmentation.

An excellent example through which to explore this line of enquiry is the anonymous Elizabethan romance *Mucedorus*, a comedy which may originally have been written as early as *c*.1591. This may seem to be an unusual choice of text with which to argue that theatrical adaptation should be considered independently of a work's prior record of success both onstage and in print. Indeed, as Vickers (quoted above) observes, *Mucedorus* is noteworthy for being the most frequently reprinted drama in early modern England, going through eighteen separate quarto editions between 1598 and 1668.[12] This is undeniably a very high rate of reproduction, and has often been taken as evidence for a kind of continuous success for the play over an extraordinarily long period of time. Indeed, Erne, for one, cites the sheer number of known quarto editions of the work as clear proof of the comedy's 'astounding popularity' among Renaissance audiences.[13] As Holger Schott Syme writes, 'the fact that a stationer was willing to buy a play and pay for its registration at all ought to be considered prima facie evidence for its marketability [...] The challenge was not how to give theatrically faded plays a new life as books but how to choose those plays whose stage popularity could be translated into print popularity.'[14] Yet what has been far less commonly noted is the possibility that *Mucedorus* may only have achieved this 'astounding popularity' following the incorporation into the text of the 'new additions' which were first included in Q3 in 1610.

[12] This number includes the recently rediscovered quarto of *c*.1615-18. See Richard Proudfoot, '"Modernizing" the Printed Play-Text in Jacobean London: Some Early Reprints of *Mucedorus*', in *'A Certain Text': Close Readings and Textual Studies on Shakespeare and Others*, ed. by Linda Anderson and Janis Lull (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2002), pp. 18-28.
[13] Erne, *Book Trade*, p. 82.
[14] Holger Schott Syme, 'Thomas Creede, William Barley, and the Venture of Printing Plays', in *Shakespeare's Stationers: Studies in Cultural Bibliography*, ed. by Marta Straznicky (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2013), pp. 28-46 (p. 31).

Little is known about the circumstances under which these additions came to be commissioned, nor do we know for certain the identity of the playwright(s) responsible for supplying them. Although certain early critics, following an attribution provided by Edward Archer in his dubious 1656 list of play-texts – a 'wholly unreliable' document, in the words of Taylor and Loughnane[15] – have argued that they could be the work of Shakespeare himself, few present-day scholars have expressed support for this attribution; Jackson (in an early article) seems to be the only notable exception.[16] As Sharpe writes, 'The case is very much in need of reopening; Literature Online and similar databases can test the uniqueness or literary provenance of a word much more accurately than the *OED*, and until such work is done on the passages we cannot claim with any kind of certainty that Shakespeare was their author.'[17] Nevertheless, Hugh Craig has more recently reassessed the available internal evidence and found it impossible to justify claiming the passages as Shakespeare's.[18] What we do know, however, is that at some point prior to 1610 the King's Men (into whose ownership the text had at some point been transferred) determined that this old play should be repurposed with the introduction of these five new passages. Yet as Kirwan points out, this does not necessarily mean that *Mucedorus* was particularly successful prior to this point in the play's stage history: the very fact that fifteen of the comedy's eighteen editions appeared in the years following the appearance of Q3, at a rate of approximately one every two years between 1610 and 1626, whereas the first two quartos were each separated by a span of eight years, appearing in 1598 and 1606 respectively, and with the first of these not appearing until around eight years after

[15] Taylor and Loughnane, p. 600.
[16] MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Edward Archer's Ascription of *Mucedorus* to Shakespeare', *Journal of the Australasian Universities Language and Literature Association*, 22 (1964), pp. 233-48.
[17] Sharpe, 'Attribution', p. 716.
[18] Hugh Craig, 'Shakespeare and Three Sets of Additions', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 241-5.

the play probably received its first performances, might imply that *Mucedorus* was not initially as successful as its subsequent publication record appears to suggest.[19]

Regardless, there can be little doubt that *Mucedorus* was at one time a very popular play, even if, to quote from Sharpe's discussion of the work, it may have been 'some twenty years in the wake of its inception before interest in the play began to snowball.'[20] When the example of *Mucedorus* is considered, then, adaptation emerges more simply as a process principally designed to repurpose a work for the specific requirements of later, and arguably entirely independent, contexts of performance. When Marino argues that 'When the company changed the texts of the plays, they were not adapting them' but rather 'continuing the process of creating them',[21] he is making a perfectly persuasive statement; but we should not assume that 'continuing the process of creating' these works necessarily means that any future adaptations should never be considered as fundamentally separate texts from the earlier versions of that play.

Approaching the concept of theatrical adaptation with such issues as these in mind, it is clear that the revising dramatist's commission was an artistic undertaking which, whether or not the affected play-text had been a success during its original appearances on stage, would predominantly have been centred upon repurposing the text in accordance with the varied theatrical requirements and expectations demanded by the specific moment (and medium) of its revival. As Jowett reminds us, however, while it would be true to say that 'Revision and adaptation return the play to dramatists', it is important for us to remember that in such cases these dramatists were involved in 'particular kinds of alteration that, in the first instance at least, reflect the needs of the theatre company rather than the aspirations of the reviser.'[22] This

[19] Peter Kirwan, '*Mucedorus*', in *The Elizabethan Top Ten: Defining Print Popularity in Early Modern England*, ed. by Andy Kesson and Emma Smith (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 223-34 (p. 231).
[20] Sharpe, 'Attribution', p. 710.
[21] Marino, p. 12.
[22] Jowett, *Text*, p. 44.

is supported by Marino's observation that members of the King's Men, rather than simply being the actors responsible for embodying Shakespeare's works in performance, were also 'owners and masters' of those works, whose 'ownership of the text gave them authority both to change it and to refine it.'[23] A play such as *Mucedorus* was of course most likely reshaped specifically for new dramatic circumstances, a textual evolution which would have originated not in the adapter's creative mind, but in the practical environs of the projected playing space itself.

This is especially true with regard to the adapted play-texts upon which this thesis is primarily focused. Unless critics were to attempt to claim that such processes of adaptation as are identifiable in texts such as *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and F1 *Titus Andronicus* were created purely with the intention of preparing the works for their impending appearance in the medium of print, we should question how consideration of the intended playing space would have impacted upon the nature of the identifiable textual modifications. After all, if we were to continue using a play's recurrence in print as a marker of the economic popularity which may have been the impetus for the orchestration of its later adaptation, these Shakespearean works would seemingly not qualify. Prior to their appearance in the First Folio in 1623, *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, and *All's Well that Ends Well* had never been printed before, whereas *Titus Andronicus*, although certainly a popular tragedy, was never reproduced as frequently as plays such as *Richard III* (eight quarto editions between 1597 and 1634) and *1 Henry IV* (eight quartos between 1598 and 1639, plus a pre-1598 'Q0' surviving only as a fragment). But as texts principally designed for performance, it is reasonable for us to assume that such adaptations, in all probability prepared expressly for revival, would have been created with specific theatrical circumstances and requirements in mind.

[23] Marino, p. 10.

Of course, it is well known that from 1599 Shakespeare's company was performing their plays regularly at the outdoor Globe Theatre on Bankside; but it is also quite clear that they were not based there exclusively, even for the relatively short remainder of Shakespeare's career. As this chapter will demonstrate, two other venues should be considered when approaching the concept of theatrical adaptation: the move to the indoor Blackfriars, and performance before the court itself.

Court or Playhouse?:
Exploring the Conditions of Adaptation

To begin, let us first examine the relationship between theatrical revision/adaptation and the preparation of plays for performance at court. Although he ultimately finds the evidence to be unconvincing overall, Dutton has considered the potentiality that the surviving version of *Macbeth* may derive from a script which was prepared for a prospective court performance. Indeed, as part of his account of Shakespeare as a 'court dramatist', Dutton argues that the '*show of eight kings*' in *Macbeth* 'would have been most effective with King James present, Banquo's heir'; Dutton likewise adds that 'James was also known to be interested in witchcraft'.[24] As will be discussed below, the idea that the surviving version of *Macbeth* derives from a court performance is not new. Alvin Kernan has even discussed at length the possibility that a performance given by the King's Men at Hampton Court on 7 August 1606 was of this tragedy,[25] although there is no proof to back up his claims. Furthermore, this would have been around a decade before the surviving adapted text of the play is thought to have been produced.

What is certain, however, is that performance before the court was a regular feature in the careers of many theatrical personages of the time, including those of Shakespeare and his

[24] Dutton, *Court Dramatist*, p. 37.
[25] Alvin Kernan, *Shakespeare, the King's Playwright: Theater in the Stuart Court, 1603-1613* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 71-88.

fellow sharers in the Chamberlain's/King's Men. As Dutton points out in the course of his wider interpretation of Shakespeare as a 'court dramatist', in fact, 'In Elizabeth's reign Shakespeare's company might expect to play at court three or four times a year,' an arrangement which 'doubled and trebled under James'.[26] Furthermore, there is good reason for us to understand that plays were often adapted, or at the very least refined, ahead of their prospective presentation before the royal household. This is something already touched on in my earlier consideration of Middleton's commission, in December 1602, to contribute 'a prologe & A epeloge for th*e* playe of bacon for th*e* corte'.[27] Regardless of the previously discussed uncertainty as to whether this refers to *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* or to *John of Bordeaux*, it is clear that Middleton's labours in this regard have not survived. Nevertheless, we do know that directives such as this were certainly not uncommon. As Dutton points out, in fact, 'The *only* reason ever given for additions, mendings, alterings, or commissioning prologues and epilogues' in Henslowe's *Diary* 'is that they are "for the court".'[28]

It is apparent that such short textual modifications as these served a very specific purpose. By way of illustration, here is the added court prologue to *Mucedorus* as it first appeared in the 1610 imprint, Q3, the first edition of the play to present the text as an adaptation through the advertisement on its title page of the inclusion of its 'new additions':

> Most sacred majesty, whose great deserts
> Thy subject England, nay, the world admires,
> Which heaven grant still increase: O may your praise,
> Multiplying with your hours, your fame still raise,
> Embrace your Council, love with faith them guide
> That both, as one bench by each other's side,
> So may your life pass on and run so even
> That your firm zeal plant you a throne in heaven,
> Where smiling angels shall your guardians be
> From blemished traitors stained with perjury.
> And, as the night's inferior to the day,

[26] Dutton, *Court Dramatist*, p. 13.
[27] Henslowe, p. 207.
[28] Dutton, *Court Dramatist*, p. 102.

So be all earthly regions to your sway:
Be as the sun to day, the day to night,
For from your beams Europe shall borrow light:
Mirth drown your bosom, fair delight your mind
And may our pastime your contentment find. (Prologue 1-16)[29]

The prologue to *Mucedorus* does not have a considerable effect upon the performance of the play itself, but the purpose of its inclusion is clear from its content: this is an alteration to the text which was specifically intended to repurpose the existing play in order for it to suit the expectations attendant upon presentation before the monarch. It is apparent, then, that there was an impetus for companies to seek to revise or adapt a work prior to its transposition from the public stage to the court. The key difference between Middleton's lost additions to 'th*e* playe of bacon' and his later work in revising certain of the works of Shakespeare, however, should be clear from Henslowe's specification that Middleton was only asked to provide 'a prologe & A epeloge […] for th*e* corte'. It seems reasonable for us to infer from this that Middleton's contribution would have constituted a relatively minor act of textual augmentation which was likely intended for use in just a single performance. As Douglas Bruster and Robert Weimann have pointed out, 'The majority of prologues from dramas of the commercial playhouses are between 15 and 35 lines long, with some early prologues for these venues shorter than that', whereas 'Prologues delivered at court appear to have been much shorter than their public counterparts – in many cases, almost exactly half the length.'[30] Indeed, the added prologue in *Mucedorus* only runs to sixteen lines of verse in total. Furthermore, as Stern has emphasised, the existing evidence makes it overwhelmingly clear that '"occasional" and "court" prologues and epilogues were all temporary.'[31] In addition to this, Henslowe provides

[29] Anonymous, *Mucedorus*, in *William Shakespeare and Others: Collaborative Plays*, ed. by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, with Jan Sewell and Will Sharpe (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 503-50.
[30] Douglas Bruster and Robert Weimann, *Prologues to Shakespeare's Theatre: Performance and Liminality in Early Modern Drama* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), pp. 8-10.
[31] Tiffany Stern, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 83.

no good reason for us to believe that Middleton made any alterations to the remainder of the existing text of 'th*e* playe of bacon'.

Nevertheless, the new prologue for the Jacobean court was not the only alteration made to the text of *Mucedorus*. The play had of course been altered before. As Richard T. Thornberry first pointed out in an article of 1977, the comedy was revised between Q1 (1598) and Q2 (1606), with all references specific to Queen Elizabeth I in the play's epilogue being altered to describe the recently crowned King James.[32] The 1610 imprint, however – the first to feature the aforementioned prologue – also boasts five new passages inserted into the pre-existing text. Yet quite unlike the additions to *The Spanish Tragedy*, which for the most part do not have a significant impact upon the plot of the play as a whole – they are, as Bourus and Karim-Cooper characterise such additions, 'dispensable'[33] – the additions in Q3 *Mucedorus* have a very substantial effect indeed. As Kirwan writes,

> The additions serve to reveal from the start that Mucedorus is a prince, where the original text has the prince only reveal his true identity to his onstage and offstage audience at the play's end, and to add some comic business for the clown, Mouse, and the bear who dominates the play's opening action. A new Prologue dedicates the play to James, and an extended Epilogue creates a masque-like finale in which the allegorical character Envy promises defiance but is defeated by the splendour of James. The 1610 quarto boasts of these additions and also of the play's performance at Whitehall, for which it seems reasonable to assume that they were written. The presentation of the play at court is, of course, further evidence of the company's ongoing investment and interest in the play.[34]

Kirwan's analysis accords with a more general acceptance that the changes evident in Q3 represent a version of the play as it was prepared for the court, something which is seemingly supported by the title page acknowledgment of this version of *Mucedorus* having been recently

[32] Richard T. Thornberry, 'A Seventeenth-Century Revival of *Mucedorus* in London Before 1610', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 28 (1977), pp. 362-4.
[33] Terri Bourus and Farah Karim-Cooper, '*All's Well that Ends Well* 4.3: Dramaturgy', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 303-6 (p. 305).
[34] Kirwan, '*Mucedorus*', p. 230.

performed at Whitehall. Furthermore, some scholars have argued that the nature of the additions may be indicative of a courtly audience. Most notably, Teresa Grant has argued that the play's additions may have been designed to complement other plays involving bears which were being produced around the same time, including, most famously, Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* (1611), with its infamous stage direction '*Exit, pursued by a bear*' (3.3.57.1), but also Jonson's courtly masque of *Oberon, The Fairy Prince* (also 1611), which depicts Oberon '*in a chariot* […] *drawn by two white bears*' (ll. 213-14).[35] Such plays might reflect upon a royal interest in bears at this time, particularly given the fact that Edward Alleyn and Philip Henslowe had been granted a royal warrant to keep two white bears on 20 March 1611.[36]

But is it really plausible that the King's Men would have commissioned such a significant amount of new writing for *Mucedorus* (approximately 215 lines) for a single court performance? After all, we cannot even be certain that the Jacobean court prologue and the other five additions were all produced by the same author at the same time. Is it not equally possible, then, that the additions were written at some point between the appearance of Q2 in 1606 and that of Q3 in 1610 as part of a more general reshaping of the play for its introduction into the King's Men's repertory, whereas the prologue was commissioned separately for a specific court performance, also during this period, and that both simply appeared for the first time in Q3? Sharpe, for one, does not feel that we should be so confident in assuming that Q3 is a specifically courtly text:

> Going by the logic of the printing date, the period between 1 January and 20 February is quite short, and it would have been normal at this time anyway for the company to iron out plays before a private, paying audience in their Blackfriars repertory before taking them to court. The material in the play's Epilogue, which seems to combine both anti-masque disorder and masque-like resolution by the attendant monarch, was clearly written exclusively for the court performance designated by the title-page. But it is entirely possible that

[35] Teresa Grant, 'White Bears in *Mucedorus*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Oberon, The Fairy Prince*', *Notes and Queries*, 246 (2001), pp. 311-13.
[36] Ibid., p. 311.

> the rest of the additional passages were written late 1609 to early 1610, with the play first performed sans Prologue and Epilogue at the Blackfriars.[37]

Although Dutton is certainly correct to note that Henslowe only ever gave projected court performance as the reason for hiring writers to supply such additions, then, we should not use this as a reason to assume that the transportation of a play-text from the public theatres to the performance spaces of the court was the only change in dramaturgical circumstances that would have provided an impetus for a theatre company to make substantial changes to an existing work. There are, after all, many instances where Henslowe provides no explicit recognition of the reasoning behind the commissioning of 'new additions' whatsoever. Indeed, when we consider such adapted play-texts as *Macbeth*, for instance, the case for adaptation for the court is far less convincing than some critics have felt confident enough to claim.

Bringing Shakespeare Indoors:
The Evidence of the Folio Texts

When we return to the example of Middleton's later Shakespearean adaptations with which this thesis is primarily concerned, a more sustained alteration in the circumstances of performance stands out in particular as being especially vital to our considerations: the 1596 purchase, for £600, of a significant space within the former Dominican monastery situated within the wealthy Blackfriars district of London by the noted theatrical entrepreneur James Burbage (father of Richard, the lead actor among the King's Men).[38] Chris Laoutaris has analysed in great detail the early challenges that were faced by Burbage's venture, when local residents petitioned the Privy Council with the hope that the associated players – Shakespeare's company – would be prohibited from using the space for theatrical performances, an endeavour

[37] Sharpe, 'Attribution', pp. 711-12.
[38] Mary Edmond, 'Burbage, James (*c*.1531-1597)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (23 September 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-3950> [accessed 12 February 2019].

which ultimately proved to be successful.[39] As a consequence of this action, from 1600 the new Blackfriars Theatre came alternatively to be associated with a more 'upmarket' company, the Children of the Queen's Revels, often referred to as the Children of the Chapel prior to their being granted royal patronage in 1603.[40] As John H. Astington writes of this turn of events, 'As to why a playhouse banned through local resistance in 1596 managed to open for business four years later, we can only guess that the Chapel children were seen as a less disruptive presence.'[41] It may be true that this company would have caused less disruption to the area from the theatregoers attending their plays, but in terms of the content of their play-texts the reputation of the Children as 'a less disruptive presence' could only have been temporary. By the end of the first decade of the seventeenth century, the Children had spectacularly fallen out of favour. This followed a series of significant controversies, which even included offending the French Ambassador, Antoine Lefèvre de la Boderie, through their depiction of the Queen of France being struck by the French King's mistress, Madame de Verneuil, in George Chapman's two-part drama *The Conspiracy and Tragedy of Charles Duke of Byron* (1608), in a scene which has tellingly been excised from the extant text.[42] It was soon afterwards that the Children's manager, Henry Evans, handed over the lease of the theatre to the King's Men.[43] Hence, from 1609 Burbage's company were able to begin utilising the new indoor playhouse as a dedicated, more 'exclusive' winter home, in contrast to the more 'popular' appeal of the Globe.

[39] Chris Laoutaris, *Shakespeare and the Countess: The Battle That Gave Birth to the Globe* (London: Fig Tree, 2014).
[40] See Lucy Munro, *Children of the Queen's Revels: A Jacobean Theatre Repertory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 15-17.
[41] John H. Astington, 'Why the Theatres Changed', in *Moving Shakespeare Indoors: Performance and Repertoire in the Jacobean Playhouse*, ed. by Andrew Gurr and Farah Karim-Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 15-31 (p. 23).
[42] Dorothy Auchter, *Dictionary of Literary and Dramatic Censorship in Tudor and Stuart England* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. 63-5. See also George Chapman, *The Conspiracy and Tragedy of Charles Duke of Byron*, ed. by John Margeson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988).
[43] Munro, *Queen's Revels*, pp. 20-3.

Modern scholarship has already established that the acquisition of the Blackfriars Theatre constituted a significant impetus for the revision and adaptation of many of the company's existing play-texts, as the move to an indoor playing space would also have necessitated alterations to the structure of many of the company's earlier works. As Taylor has recognised, whereas the majority of Shakespeare's plays produced prior to 1608 had been written using only scene divisions, plays performed following the company's move to Blackfriars typically began to employ the five-act structure which is more familiar to present-day readers of Shakespeare who primarily access his works through modern critical editions.[44] One of the main reasons for permitting such repeated pauses in the action of a performance was the requirement for candles to provide light within the enclosed indoor space, which needed to be trimmed or replaced regularly in order to avoid the build-up of smoke and the dripping of wax, something which Gurr notes 'was essential if the customers below were not to have their clothes suffer from the wax that would always drip from them.'[45] Thus, repeated gaps between sections of the drama were both desirable and necessary.

In many instances, the introduction of act-breaks appears to have been a very straightforward process. A good example occurs in the Folio text of Shakespeare's *c*.1596 comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, following the conclusion of 3.2, at which point the characters Helena, Hermia, Demetrius, and Lysander are all depicted as falling asleep. Here, we are confronted with the stage direction 'They sleepe all the Act' (TLN 1507). As Mariko Ichikawa explains, here 'the sleeping characters are instructed to remain onstage during the interval between Acts III and IV […] The actors were not allowed to leave the stage at the end of Act III and then return at the beginning of Act IV after taking a rest in the tiring-house during

[44] See Gary Taylor, 'The Structure of Performance: Act-Intervals in the London Theatres, 1576–1642', in *Shakespeare Reshaped 1606-1623*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Jowett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 3-50 (pp. 30-50).
[45] Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage, 1574-1642*, 4th edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 217.

the interval.'[46] Exhibiting such an explicit call for the continuation of the stage action throughout the interval between the acts, F1 *Dream* makes clear its origins as a theatrical, rather than a literary, text.

More importantly, this text of the play also provides us at this point with a clear indication that we are reading a version of the comedy which has been marked-up for use in the very different circumstances of the newly acquired indoor space. As Taylor has argued, this is not merely a case 'where act-divisions were simply slotted in to an existing structure, but […] where the structure itself was altered, perhaps in part to accommodate the new convention.'[47] Indeed, there would have been no interval at this moment for the characters to 'sleepe' through when the play was performed at outdoor playhouses such as the Theatre, the Curtain, or the Globe, something which is reflected by the stage direction's absence in the quarto editions of 1600 and 1619. F1 *Dream* can thus be considered an illustrative example of how the existing structure of a work was changed to accommodate the different requirements for playing in an alternative theatrical space.

However, while it is certainly worth considering the case of F1 *Dream* as evidence for the manner in which the King's Men altered the structure of their works in order for them to suit the alternative conditions of playing following their acquisition of the indoor Blackfriars, it is not necessarily representative of the whole story. Indeed, while we are able here to identify a clear point of textual revision in the inclusion of the stage direction 'They sleepe all the Act' – signalling the introduction of an act-break in the middle of what was originally the play's long fifth scene – the rest of the play's content remained largely unchanged. In other cases, however, we do know that a play's division into acts was accompanied by significant alterations to the author's original writing of the work itself.

[46] Mariko Ichikawa, 'What To Do With a Corpse?: Physical Reality and the Fictional World in the Shakespearean Theatre', *Theatre Research International*, 29 (2004), pp. 201-15 (p. 213).
[47] Taylor, 'Structure', p. 47.

Indeed, we might here consider once again the example of *King Lear*, which was likely reworked by Shakespeare himself into the substantially different Folio version sometime around 1610. Deriving from approximately five years after Shakespeare's original composition of the play in 1605, and around two years after the company's acquisition of the Blackfriars, it can be suggested that the decision to rework the play so significantly was closely related to efforts to reshape the play so as to make it conform to the newly required five-act structure. This is an idea discussed at length by Taylor, who points out that such a date of revision would closely associate a purported revival of the tragedy with 'the opening of the Blackfriars, in the winter of 1609-10':

> That opening would not of course have compelled Shakespeare to revise any of his plays; but it might have *permitted* it, the opportunity to advertise the play as 'with additions and revisions' compensating for the trouble involved in preparing a new prompt-book and new actors' parts. At least, if Shakespeare for any reason wanted to return to the play, I see no reason to dismiss – at this stage in his career, and particularly at a juncture when the company so clearly needed him – the possibility that the King's Men would have been willing to restage it. For both Shakespeare and the company, the opening of the Blackfriars would have provided an opportunity and an excuse.[48]

Taylor's contention here is certainly worth considering. Textually, the differences between the Q1 and F1 versions of *Lear* are considerable: F1 contains approximately 100 new lines which are not present in Q1, while also dispensing with around 285 lines which in their turn are found only in Q1. Furthermore, the presentation of the play as a whole has been reshaped substantially, and Taylor is thus even compelled to compare F1 *Lear* to other of Shakespeare's later works, including a memorable observation that 'the interrelated changes in the Folio's dramatization of the ending of *King Lear* produce an effect strikingly similar to the resonant emotional complexity of the most memorable scenes in *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*.'[49]

[48] Gary Taylor, '*King Lear*: The Date and Authorship of the Folio Version', in *The Division of the Kingdoms: Shakespeare's Two Versions of King Lear*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Michael Warren (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 351-468 (p. 428).
[49] Ibid., p. 427.

Gordon McMullan has provided an interesting commentary upon both these aspects of Taylor's analysis, considering the creative accord he identifies between *Lear* and other Shakespeare plays produced after *c*.1609 (the 'late plays') as well as his more practical observations concerning the importance of the move to Blackfriars in understanding the revision of the text:

> the emphasis on the relationship of *Lear* with the late plays is in fact underlined by the institutional factor […] since, as we have seen, critics have frequently cited the move to the Blackfriars as one of the primary factors in the late-play caesura […] In other words, the reoccupation of the Blackfriars prompted two outcroppings of Shakespearean creativity: the late plays and the revised *Lear*. Even the theatrical, institutional impetus Taylor suggests for the Folio revisions, then, matching as it does one of the principal arguments for the difference of the late plays from the other plays in the Shakespeare canon, turns us back to the late phase. Underpinning the critical emphasis on the authorial nature of the revisions to the text of *Lear* is the shadow of the late plays, because such revision allows Shakespeare to be responsible for the increased redemptive quality of the Folio text and thus its unexpected tonal proximity to the late plays.[50]

Shakespeare's revision of *King Lear*, then, goes far beyond the relatively simple textual alterations that were made to F1 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (whether they were made by Shakespeare himself or by another playhouse annotator). Not for *Lear* something as straightforward as the introduction of a new stage direction such as 'They sleepe all the Act.' As both Taylor and McMullan recognise, the acquisition of the Blackfriars likely served as the impetus for something far more significant: the wholesale reworking of the text of *Lear*, introducing new material while cutting certain of the play's original elements.

'And show the best of our delights': Experiencing *Macbeth* at the Blackfriars Playhouse

Thus far, my thesis has been primarily focused upon those works which might be read in relation to the Shakespearean texts identified as having been adapted at the hand of Middleton,

[50] McMullan, *Late Writing*, pp. 305-6.

as a means of illuminating Middleton's processes with regard to this undertaking. However, I will now turn to one of these adapted play-texts in particular, *Macbeth*, which is thought to have been reworked by Middleton only a matter of months after the original dramatist's death, perhaps as early as mid-1616. Although establishing a date for Middleton's adaptation of *Macbeth* is not an entirely straightforward matter – the text as it survives does not contain any firm internal evidence that might be of assistance to scholars in determining the timeframe during which Middleton would most likely have been engaged in such work (quite unlike the late 1621 dating of the Middletonian *Measure for Measure*, for example) – a date of 1616 does fit in with the period of Middleton's return to working with the King's Men after a four-year gap (following his previous work for the company, *The Lady's Tragedy*, in 1611), with *The Widow* in 1615 and then, more relevantly, *The Witch* in early 1616. Such a date also accords with the King's Men's continuing use of the Blackfriars, something which seems to be recalled by the changes which were apparently made to the surviving play-text. As Ichikawa points out, 'Although the F1 *Macbeth* may be a version prepared for a court performance, the text appears to reflect the normal practice of the Globe/Blackfriars stage as well.'[51] As we will see, consideration of the Blackfriars proves very fruitful for understanding how Middleton altered the dramaturgical presentation of *Macbeth* at around this point in time, and why.

As discussed previously in this thesis, no documentary information survives concerning the postulated revivals of the plays for which Middleton likely undertook his work as an adapter. In fact, when Simon Forman recorded his attendance at a Globe performance of *Macbeth* in 1611, he provided future researchers with the only existing evidence that the tragedy was ever performed at all during Shakespeare's lifetime. Of course, there is no justifiable reason for us to believe that a play which is clearly so much a part of the sequence

[51] Mariko Ichikawa, *The Shakespearean Stage Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 67.

of 'Gunpowder' dramas produced during 1606, to use Garry Wills's terminology,[52] would have lain dormant in the King's Men's repertory until as late as 1611, but it remains the case that what we do know of the performance history of the play is decidedly minimal, and that our understanding of a *c*.1616 revival must largely be based upon analysis of the text itself as it ultimately survives.

The 1611 account, however, can still be said to illuminate the nature of Middleton's alterations, not by what Forman discusses, but more by what he omits. In his description of *Macbeth*, he makes no mention of some of the more conspicuous elements of the witches' scenes, scenes which we would expect would to have been of considerable interest to him. That an early modern eyewitness has failed to record something which present-day critics would prefer him to have included in his reflections is not by itself evidence that these elements were not present in the play's original performances. As Charles Whitney reminds us, Forman's intention here was not to provide a detailed account of the King's Men's plays in performance; rather, 'The intention revealed by Forman's title, "The Bocke of Plaies and Notes therof per formane for Common Pollicie," was apparently to adapt the commonplace notebook practice of recording passages gleaned from plays and placing them under moral subject headings for edification and future use.'[53] Nevertheless, it is certainly curious that these scenes, written in a distinctively Middletonian style, and containing musical material transposed from a Middletonian tragicomedy, *The Witch*, were seemingly ignored in their entirety by Forman, a man who was otherwise intensely interested in matters of the occult and the supernatural.[54]

[52] Garry Wills, *Witches and Jesuits: Shakespeare's Macbeth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
[53] Charles Whitney, *Early Responses to Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 149.
[54] Two interesting discussions of Forman's experience of *Macbeth* are provided in the work of Ingrid Benecke: 'Simon Forman's Notes on *Macbeth* – The Alternative Reading', *Notes and Queries*, 255 (2010), pp. 389-93, and 'The Shorter Stage Version of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* as Seen Through Simon Forman's Eyes', *Notes and Queries*, 259 (2014), pp. 246-53.

If we accept that these play-texts as they are presented in the Folio exist in forms which were revised for revival many years after their original appearances on the public stage, the question of where these revivals took place must give us pause. As indicated above, we cannot know for certain what conditions of performance necessitated these textual changes, but various scholars have attempted to illuminate this aspect of the works' performance histories. To return to the example of *Macbeth*, it is notable that the concept of the Jacobean court has often appeared in discussions of the play's status as an adaptation. Stephen Orgel, for one, finds the possibility that F1 *Macbeth* represents a text which has been marked-up for a 1610s revival at court highly plausible due to the tragedy's clear connection with the immediate interests of the monarch, not only witchcraft, but also a representation of his purported ancestor Banquo. As Orgel writes, 'though there is no record of a court performance, King James surely must have wanted to see a play that included both witches and his ancestors.'[55] Stern likewise finds favour in such a proposition, and focuses upon the dumb show of the eight kings depicted in Act 4 as being most suggestive of this possibility:

> ALL WITCHES Show his eyes, and grieve his heart.
> Come like shadows; so depart.
> *A show of eight kings, [the] last with a glass in his hand, and Banquo*
> MACBETH Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo. Down!
> Thy crown does sear mine eyeballs.—And thy hair,
> Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.—
> A third is like the former. Filthy hags,
> Why do you show me this?—A fourth? Start eyes!
> What, will the line stretch out to th' crack of doom?—
> Another yet?—A seventh? I'll see no more.—
> And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass
> Which shows me many more; and some I see
> That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry. (4.1.108-19)

As Stern observes, 'the fact that Banquo heads a succession of kings has already been made by the procession, provoking a question as to why the mirror ['*glass*'] is needed. The answer may

[55] Stephen Orgel, 'Macbeth and the Antic Round', *Shakespeare Survey*, 52 (1999), pp. 143-53 (p. 144).

be that this version of *Macbeth* is to be played before King James, a direct lineal descendant from Banquo.'[56] The suggestion here is that James may have been intended to see himself reflected in the glass held by the eighth king, a dramaturgical feature which would certainly have amplified the flattering nature of this hypothetical court performance. With James believing Banquo to be his ancestor, it would make sense for the players to want to highlight their royal patron's supposed lineage in their performance of the witches' prophecy.[57]

Aside from this, Orgel identifies another element of 4.1 which he believes to be indicative of a court performance, in Hecate's words to Macbeth following the procession of the kings:

> Ay, sir, all this is so. But why
> Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?
> Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
> And show the best of our delights.
> I'll charm the air to give a sound,
> While you perform your antic round,
> That this great king may kindly say
> Our duties did his welcome pay. (4.1.123-30)

As Orgel writes,

> The tone of the scene here changes significantly: the witches are not professional and peremptory any more, they are lighthearted, gracious, and deferential. We may choose to treat this as a moment of heavy irony, though Macbeth does not seem to respond to it as such; but if it is not ironic, the change of tone suggests that the 'great king' addressed in this passage is not the king on stage, but instead a real king in the audience, Banquo's descendant and the king of both Scotland and England.[58]

Stern's suggestion, in accordance with Orgel's, is certainly tantalising. There are indeed certain aspects of this passage which may be suggestive of the expectation that King James himself

[56] Tiffany Stern, *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), p. 33.
[57] For the importance of James I's belief in his relation to Banquo to the staging of the show of eight kings, see e.g. Laura Shamas, *'We Three': The Mythology of Shakespeare's Weird Sisters* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), p. 23.
[58] Orgel, 'Antic Round', p. 144.

was attending the performance. The reference to the 'two-fold balls' may recall the orbs carried by James during his coronations in the two countries of which he was monarch, first Scotland, and later England, while the 'treble sceptres' may be a reference to James's claim to be ruler over the three kingdoms of Britain, France, and Ireland. When this is considered, the idea that the '*glass*' or mirror wielded by the eighth king in the procession would have been turned so as to reflect the real monarch in attendance at the play may be signalled by Macbeth's observation that 'the eighth appears, who bears a glass | Which shows me many more'. Yet it is also possible that the glass could be used simply to reflect the other actors currently onstage portraying the kingly spectres, thus providing an illusion of other rulers signifying a royal lineage that will 'stretch out to th' crack of doom', or it could even be, more basically, a mere prop, its ability to reflect images of royalty being bestowed upon it entirely by the words of the actor who is portraying Macbeth.

Furthermore, while the possibility that this sequence was introduced into the text as part of its adaptation should not be rejected entirely – occurring as it does in 4.1, a scene which certainly displays some Middletonian involvement elsewhere, with the conspicuous introduction of the song beginning 'Black spirits' after 4.1.43 – it does not seem likely that the show as a whole is itself a Middletonian addition: as Heidi Brayman Hackel writes, despite the fact that 'Middleton arguably wrote more plays with dumb shows than any other playwright […] the show of eight kings probably existed in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*'.[59] Yet it would be difficult to make any such judgment based solely upon the description of the dumb show as it appears in the Folio, as the stage direction describing the show, '*A shew of eight Kings, and Banquo last, with a glasse in his hand*' (TLN 1657-8), noticeably contradicts the text of the play itself, in which Macbeth says that it is the first that is 'too like the spirit of Banquo',

[59] Heidi Brayman Hackel, 'Staging Muteness in Middleton', in *The Oxford Handbook of Thomas Middleton*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Trish Thomas Henley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 330-45 (pp. 334-5).

whereas 'the eighth […] who bears a glass' is an entirely separate entity: it is probable, therefore, that the stage direction is designed for the Folio's readers, rather than being a reflection of something written by either Shakespeare or Middleton.[60] Nevertheless, Taylor hypothesises that 'certain lines originally associated with the show of kings have been moved to the apparitions sequence,' and thus, 'as adapted, it has become a longer, more spectacular, much more important scene […] Middleton's changes have made this scene the centre of the play.'[61] However, as Taylor rightly acknowledges, this assertion 'is (necessarily) speculative.'[62] As such, the show of kings cannot be used by itself as evidence that the adaptation of *Macbeth* (or any other of the adapted plays, for that matter) was created specifically with performance at the Jacobean court in the King's Men's collective mind.

Although past critics have suggested that the adaptation of the play was for presentation before the court, the surviving evidence does not unequivocally suggest this. The possibility of court performance may well have been in the minds of the play's adapter and the company, but this chapter has also suggested that it is just as plausible that a more permanent change in dramaturgical circumstances, namely the move to the Blackfriars, could have occasioned these changes. As the next chapter will show, the dramaturgical conditions at Blackfriars may well be suggested by how Middleton's suggested alterations to these play-texts in some cases also appears to have changed their dramatic structure. Indeed, Chapter 3 will pursue this idea further, by considering the example of the addition of 3.2 into the text of Shakespeare and Peele's *Titus Andronicus*.

[60] See Tiffany Stern, 'Inventing Stage Directions; Demoting Dumb Shows', in *Stage Directions and Shakespearean Theatre*, ed. by Sarah Dustagheer and Gillian Woods (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2018), pp. 19-43 (p. 33).
[61] Taylor, 'Works Included', p. 393.
[62] Ibid.

CHAPTER 3[1]

'SUCH VIOLENT HANDS': CANNIBALISM AND THE AUTHORSHIP OF *TITUS ANDRONICUS*

In the title of this chapter, I quote from words that are uttered by the titular character's brother, Marcus, in the possibly Middleton-authored fly-killing scene (3.2) in Shakespeare and Peele's collaborative Elizabethan tragedy *Titus Andronicus*: 'Fie, brother, fie, teach her not thus to lay | Such violent hands upon her tender life' (3.2.21-2). Ostensibly, Marcus's imagery is here quite literally one of human hands as what the *OED* calls 'The terminal part of the human arm beyond the wrist' (*n*., I.1.a). As enabling human appendages, hands help us to work, to eat, and, perhaps most appropriately to a play of such a sanguineous nature as *Titus Andronicus*, hands can be used to commit acts of unspeakable violence, both against other persons and, in certain tragic circumstances, even against the owner of those hands themself. Although the object of his concerns no longer has any hands by this point in the play, it is this last possibility that Marcus is warning Titus against encouraging. Considering that Marcus is speaking with regard to his raped and atrociously mutilated niece Lavinia, his words can be construed as both extremely insensitive and darkly comedic. Certainly, critics have connected the tragedy of *Titus* to comedy before, most recently in the work of Misha Teramura, who argues that this is a tragedy which 'immediately betrays the influence of comic structures',[2] and the author of 3.2 seems to be furthering this marked combination of tone, combining a focus on Lavinia's immense suffering with repeated unsubtle punning on the subject of 'hands' throughout. Indeed, Marcus's lines have been directly occasioned by words Titus has just spoken to Lavinia, words which Marcus clearly interprets as an encouragement to commit suicide:

[1] An earlier, shorter version of this chapter was previously published as the article William David Green, '"Such violent hands": The Theme of Cannibalism and the Implications of Authorship in the 1623 Text of *Titus Andronicus*', *Exchanges*, 7 (2020), pp. 182-99.

[2] Misha Teramura, 'Black Comedy: Shakespeare, Terence, and *Titus Andronicus*', *English Literary History*, 85 (2018), pp. 877-908 (p. 891).

Thou map of woe, that thus dost talk in signs,
When thy poor heart beats with outrageous beating
Thou canst not strike it thus to make it still.
Wound it with sighing, girl, kill it with groans,
Or get some little knife between thy teeth
And just against thy heart make thou a hole,
That all the tears that thy poor eyes let fall
May run into that sink and, soaking in,
Drown the lamenting fool in sea-salt tears. (3.2.12-20)

Yet I have also used Marcus's words to title this chapter fully conscious of the fact that, especially for a doctoral thesis of this kind, the idea of 'hands' can have an obvious alternative significance. When we locate signs of multiple authorship in the plays of Shakespeare, for example, we might say that the play has been found to contain many 'hands'. In a co-written play like *Titus Andronicus*, such terminology recalls how, as the play was being drafted, the original foul papers would likely have been composed of two different sets of handwriting, Peele's, which would have made up 1.1 and 2.1 (and perhaps 4.1), and Shakespeare's, which would have made up the rest. Indeed, the handwriting on such manuscripts can be described as the authors' 'hands', as expressed in the *OED* definition 'The action of the hand in writing; style, or a style, of handwriting, *esp*. as belonging to a particular person' (*n*., IV.16.a). As Karim-Cooper notes, it is thus that Claudius, when asked by Laertes 'Know you the hand?' in the letter he is reading, responds ''Tis Hamlet's character' (4.4.48), and it is also how Malvolio in *Twelfth Night; or, What You Will* (*c*.1601) describes the handwriting of the forged letter he believes to have come from Olivia: 'By my life, this is my lady's hand. These be her very c's, her u's, and her t's, and thus makes she her great p's. It is in contempt of question her hand' (2.5.73-5).[3]

'Hands', however, can also be used to refer more specifically to the authors themselves. So Jeffrey Knapp argues that writing in *Hamlet* is 'repeatedly depict[ed] […] as the work of

[3] Farah Karim-Cooper, *The Hand on the Shakespearean Stage: Gesture, Touch and the Spectacle of Dismemberment* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2016), p. 208.

more than one hand,'[4] whereas Jowett has similarly written of *3 Henry VI* as a play now 'suspected of […] containing traces of a hand other than Shakespeare's.'[5] It is highly apposite, therefore, that *Titus Andronicus*, a play in which no fewer than three hands are severed from the bodies of their owners, should also be a play which has had its text divided between at least three different authors in modern editorial criticism: Shakespeare, Peele and, latterly, Middleton. As the bodies in *Titus* are increasingly fragmented and (to utilise the language of Chambers) disintegrated, so the authorship of *Titus* has become increasingly fragmented in recent literary analysis.

Whoever did author the fly-killing scene, Taylor and Duhaime seek to support their attribution of the scene to Middleton by searching for evidence that its addition could have come about after Shakespeare's death in 1616. There are many possibilities for what might have inspired a revival of such a sensational cannibalism-themed drama so soon after Shakespeare's death, but Taylor and Duhaime seek to connect the content of the play's additional scene to the contemporaneous plight of Lady Arbella Stuart:

> A niece of Mary, Queen of Scots, Arbella was a potential heir to the English throne and therefore a threat to King James. Without the King's consent, she married in secret William Seymour (also with a claim to the throne), and in June 1611 they attempted to flee to France together. Arbella was captured, and imprisoned in the Tower of London […] Arbella remained in prison for the rest of her life […] In 1613, the infamous London gossip John Chamberlain described her as 'crackt in her braine'; witnesses in the Tower described 'fyttes of distemper and convulsyons', and reported that Arbella refused to eat or to speak. She recovered from this episode, but Chamberlain on 7 July 1614 described her as still 'far out of frame', and she died on 25 September 1615.[6]

To Taylor and Duhaime, strong resonances of Lady Arbella's plight might be observable in the presentation of the character of Lavinia, particularly during 3.2:

[4] Jeffrey Knapp, *Shakespeare Only* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), p. 123.
[5] John Jowett, 'Shakespeare as Collaborator', in *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt: Evidence, Argument, Controversy*, ed. by Paul Edmondson and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 88-99 (p. 91).
[6] Taylor and Duhaime, p. 89

> Like Arbella, the grieving, educated noblewoman Lavinia has lost her husband. Unlike any other passage in *Titus Andronicus*, the Fly Scene focuses on Lavinia's rejection of food and drink. Arbella stubbornly refused to speak; Lavinia cannot speak. Some of these comparisons between Arbella and Lavinia were, of course, present in the original play; but anyone watching or adapting the play after Arbella's imprisonment might have made the connection, and completed the link by adding to Lavinia's tragic, grieving silence a refusal to eat.[7]

Taylor and Duhaime's reading is primarily thematic and, it could be argued, highly subjective. While interesting, it is also important to be aware that Taylor and Duhaime need to establish that the scene was added post-1616 in order to strengthen the likelihood that it could have been supplied by Middleton, or indeed by anyone other than Shakespeare. Furthermore, Taylor and Loughnane's dating of the addition of 3.2 to 'soon after Shakespeare's death in April 1616'[8] is far from conclusive: indeed, in the case of *Titus Andronicus*, there is (as of yet) no entirely convincing evidence, internal or external, which testifies to any particular date of adaptation, unlike with (for example) *Measure for Measure*. Nevertheless, as discussed below, this is at the very least a thought-provoking suggestion, especially considering the separate work undertaken by past critics in connecting other plays of the 1610s with popular interest in Lady Arbella's plight.

It has been claimed that audiences at this time would have had a significant interest in plays which could be related to the case of Lady Arbella Stuart. As Swapan Chakravorty has commented, 'There was a wave of public sympathy for her after her arrest, not least because of her unwavering Protestantism',[9] and it would certainly be believable that acting companies working in the commercial theatre industry might have sought to exploit such a 'wave of public sympathy'. One of the more famous examples of such a play is perhaps Webster's *The Duchess*

[7] Ibid.
[8] Taylor and Loughnane, p. 491
[9] Chakravorty, p. 81.

of Malfi, which has been interpreted by Sara Jayne Steen as a reflection upon Arbella's plight: to quote from Steen's analysis of this play,

> In Webster's play, the young Duchess ignores her brothers' wishes and secretly marries her steward Antonio Bologna, with whom she has three children. After her brothers discover the truth, the Duchess tries to escape by feigning a pilgrimage, but she is apprehended by her brother Ferdinand's men and committed to prison, where Ferdinand tries to drive her to despair and madness and finally has her executed. Like the Duchess, Stuart was a woman of noble birth with her own entourage, a woman generally perceived as virtuous in comparison with her male relatives (both brothers in the Duchess's case, a cousin in Stuart's). She was a woman of rank with public responsibilities who married someone of lower degree clandestinely against the declared edict of her ranking male relative, who lied and deceived others, who attempted to flee after the marriage was discovered, who was captured and imprisoned without trial for her crime, and who died while incarcerated by the male relative.[10]

Although Steen's analysis of possible audience responses to *Malfi* is based on interpretation, not documented fact, the parallels she draws between the experiences of Webster's Duchess and the real-world sufferings of Lady Arbella are certainly striking. Another example of more immediate interest to a study of Middleton is Anne Lancashire's work in connecting Middleton's *The Lady's Tragedy* directly to the case of Lady Arbella. Lancashire argues that the additions to that play's text – written on slips of paper which were subsequently pasted into the manuscript – serve to strengthen the similarities between the story of the Lady and the experiences of Lady Arbella and her husband William Seymour; in particular, the first addition (B.1.1.208-15) alters the couple's joint imprisonment to separate incarceration, while the second (B.2.1.3-10) establishes that they are still permitted to enjoy one another's company by virtue of having 'got that friendship | E'en of the guard that [the Tyrant] has placed about us' (B.2.1.4-5), dramatic changes which do correspond to Arbella and William's imprisonment, who were likewise incarcerated separately and who were also popularly rumoured to be

[10] Sara Jayne Steen, 'The Crime of Marriage: Arbella Stuart and *The Duchess of Malfi*', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 22 (1991), pp. 61-76 (p. 63).

allowed to occasionally meet through bribing their jailers.[11] If Middleton can indeed be observed to have chosen to reflect upon Arbella's persecution in a King's Men play of 1611 (*The Lady's Tragedy*), Taylor and Duhaime's argument may seem quite plausible when considering his adaptation of another King's Men play (*Titus Andronicus*) later in the same decade.

The problem with extrapolating such a reading to connect the play to Middleton's own apparent interest in Lady Arbella's plight is that Middleton's authorship of 3.2 is still far from certain. In this, I do not intend to cast aspersions upon Taylor and Duhaime's work. Rather, the attribution of the scene to Middleton is still a very new argument, based almost entirely on the evidence presented in Taylor and Duhaime's single chapter on the subject. Furthermore, as Eisen, Ribeiro, Segarra, and Egan write following their own analysis of this scene, their own strictly stylistic results 'do not support this claim' for Middleton's authorship.[12] Nevertheless, the scene itself is dramaturgically interesting when we interpret it as a later addition to the text, and, as this chapter will show, there are certain aspects of it which do speak to it possibly being a Middletonian intervention in Shakespeare and Peele's work. Although further stylistic analysis will need to be undertaken, this chapter will consider the scene's role as a later addition to the play, and will explore further how the recent attribution of the scene to Middleton might illuminate its function in the overall play in present-day critical interpretations of F1 *Titus Andronicus*.

In this chapter, I will read the Folio text of *Titus Andronicus* in terms of its possible status as a later Middletonian adaptation. While acknowledging that the evidence for Middleton's adaptation of this play is very new, and therefore unlikely to yet be accepted by a

[11] Anne Lancashire (ed.), *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978), p. 279. The significance of these additions to the case of Lady Arbella Stuart and William Seymour has more recently been discussed in James Purkis, *Shakespeare and Manuscript Drama: Canon, Collaboration and Text* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 118-21.
[12] Eisen, Ribeiro, Segarra, and Egan, p. 525.

majority of critics, I will provide new dramaturgical evidence for this scene's likely being a later addition to the work, while also suggesting how this scene may further be considered very Middletonian in its nature. First, I will consider how 3.2 is characteristic of theatrical additions during the early modern period, in particular considering how the added scene can be compared to the additions from one of the most famous adapted texts from the period, Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*. I will then consider the dramaturgical significance of 3.2, interrogating how the scene functions in its position in the play, and how its inclusion affects the overall structure and performability of the play as a whole. The third section of this chapter will then look at the scene from the perspective of Middletonian drama itself, arguing that its function in the context of the overall play can be related to Middleton's own familiarity with the use of paired scenes of feasting, as depicted in *Timon of Athens* and in a selection of his own works from various points in his career. Finally, the chapter ends by considering how 3.2 is characteristic of Middleton's other adaptations of Shakespeare, particularly in terms of its expansion of a female role (something which is comparable to his adaptations of *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well that Ends Well*); through this final point, the chapter considers further the narrative effect of the inclusion of 3.2 upon the wider play. Ultimately, this chapter argues that 3.2 is far more than a dispensable later addition to the text, but rather has been carefully designed to amplify the major themes of Shakespeare and Peele's original work, complimenting the overall narrative rather than simply adding more violent material to an already disturbing text.

The Disposability of the Fly:
Authorship, Dramatic Integrity, and the Adaptation of *Titus Andronicus*

'O handle not the theme, to talk of hands, | Lest we remember still that we have none' (3.2.29-30). These lines, which are spoken by the play's titular hero almost midway through the added scene 3.2, underscore perfectly this notoriously gruesome drama's characteristic integration of moments of unspeakable violence with instances of equally macabre comedy. Having been

vindictively tricked in the previous scene (3.1 in F1) into permitting the severance of his own left hand on the false promise that doing so would secure the release of his imprisoned sons Martius and Quintus, at this moment Titus Andronicus appears to be resorting to an unseemly degree of levity in an attempt to raise the morale both of himself and of his horribly suffering family. In other contexts, such an approach as this might be perceived as admirable, an expression of defiant contempt for even the most malicious of his enemies. When we begin to interpret this joke within the wider context of the scene in which it occurs, however, Titus's attempts at humour might appear to be considerably more troubling.

As Jeremy Lopez has noted, there are several moments in *Titus Andronicus* where humour and laughter appear to be deliberately designed to come across as inappropriate, often being starkly juxtaposed with the tragedy's dark subject matter.[13] Worryingly, however, the company to which Titus is delivering his jokes in 3.2 includes his horrendously mutilated daughter Lavinia, a young woman who, following the murder of her husband Bassianus, has not only been brutally raped by the villainous brothers Chiron and Demetrius, but has also been subjected by them to the torturous punishment of having her tongue cut out and both of her hands removed in a vicious attempt to prevent her from revealing the identities of her attackers. It is at this point that she is first subjected to the cruel jibes of other characters, being mockingly taunted by her assailants after she has been forced to endure these deplorable acts:

DEMETRIUS
So now go tell, an if thy tongue can speak,
Who 'twas that cut thy tongue and ravished thee.
CHIRON
Write down thy mind, bewray thy meaning so,
An if thy stumps will let thee play the scribe.
DEMETRIUS
See how with signs and tokens she can scrawl.
CHIRON
Go home, call for sweet water, wash thy hands.

[13] Jeremy Lopez, *Theatrical Convention and Audience Response in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 174.

DEMETRIUS
She hath no tongue to call, nor hands to wash,
And so let's leave her to her silent walks. (2.4.1-8)

Read in this light, her father's use throughout 3.2 of witticisms constructed around the concept of the human hand seems at the very least to be a highly insensitive, perhaps even downright callous course of action. Indeed, Titus's language in this scene has been starkly condemned by David Ellis, who powerfully describes Titus's words as his 'obsessive punning on his daughter's handlessness'.[14] We might additionally detect parallels within Titus's speech to the taunts of Chiron and Demetrius following their sickening deed, that 'An 'twere my cause, I should go hang myself', if only Lavinia 'hadst hands to help [her] knit the cord' (2.4.9-10). Certainly, the extent of Titus's 'obsessive punning' in this scene is particularly observable in the exchange beginning with Marcus's voiced opposition to a possible act of suicide by Lavinia, as I have quoted above – 'Fie, brother, fie, teach her not thus to lay | Such violent hands upon her tender life' – lines which encourage Titus's pedantic rejoinder 'What violent hands can she lay on her life?' (3.2.21-5). Surely, if there is ever an individual from whose plight it would never be permissible to attempt to derive edgy comedy, it is a young woman who has just been subjected both to an act of violent rape and to extreme physical mutilation.

The wordplay which is present in 3.2 provides just one example of how *Titus Andronicus* could be argued to fail in maintaining what might be considered to be an appropriately even emotive tone throughout its tragic narrative. In a play in which so much blood is spilt, and in which the physical suffering of many of its characters is presented so shockingly before the eyes of its spectators, any laughter its humour is likely to provoke must surely be of a decidedly uncomfortable and problematic nature. It is for this reason that, to quote from the recent analysis of Goran Stanivukovic, 'More than any other play in the

[14] David Ellis, 'Black Comedy in Shakespeare', *Essays in Criticism*, 51 (2001), pp. 385-403 (p. 398).

Shakespeare canon, *Titus Andronicus* has provoked diametrically opposed responses from critics'.[15] *Titus Andronicus* is a play of notable tonal extremes, in which ostensibly comedic moments sit uneasily within the context of a drama which infamously culminates in a sickening and protracted depiction of a cannibalistic banquet, in which the mother of Chiron and Demetrius, Tamora, is tricked into feeding upon the 'two pasties' (5.2.188) which Titus and Lavinia have fashioned from the butchered carcasses of her slaughtered sons. Earlier critics of the play were often so revolted by the work's extreme content that many readers famously even attempted to absolve Shakespeare of the primary responsibility for the writing of such material, such as Edward Ravenscroft, who in the printed edition of his 1686 adaptation of the play, *Titus Andronicus; or, The Rape of Lavinia*, notably recounted that

> I have been told by some anciently conversant with the Stage, that it was not Originally his, but brought by a private Author to be Acted, and he only gave some Master-touches to one or two of the Principal Parts or Characters; this I am apt to believe, because 'tis the most incorrect and indigested piece in all his Works; It seems rather a heap of Rubbish then [*sic*] a Structure.[16]

Yet although many present-day audiences may find the humour of Titus's punning in 3.2 to be profoundly unsettling, especially coming so soon after their first glimpse of a horribly bloodied Lavinia emerging onto the stage with '*her hands cut off and her tongue cut out, and ravished*' (2.4.0.2), certain critics have nevertheless attempted to rehabilitate the play, by demonstrating the importance of its distinctive moments of dark comedy to the execution of its overall dramatic integrity. Indeed, as Curtis Perry has recently observed, although 'It was not all that long ago that *Titus Andronicus* was thought to be […] an "indigested piece" of Shakespearean juvenilia', scholars are now much more likely to find in the tragedy something which he has

[15] Goran Stanivukovic, '*Titus Andronicus*, Elizabethan Classicism and the Styles of New Tragedy', in *Titus Andronicus: The State of Play*, ed. by Farah Karim-Cooper (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2019), pp. 37-53 (p. 37).
[16] Quoted in Barbara A. Murray, *Restoration Shakespeare: Viewing the Voice* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2001), p. 113.

termed a 'postmodern-seeming sophistication'.[17] Regardless of whether or not that is so, however we might choose to assess the play today, the reluctance of historical commentators to accept Shakespearean culpability for the work's many unsettling excesses continues to cast a long shadow over critical analyses.

It is partly for this reason that the issue of the authorship of *Titus Andronicus* has for so long proved to be an area of intense scholarly interest. As Brian Boyd writes, 'For a long time some readers supposed that Shakespeare's hand could not be responsible for all the severed hands and heads' in this play, and this view has been supported by stylistic studies which have 'demonstrate[d] that *Titus* has two very dissimilar strata, one that falls within Shakespearean norms, one that falls far outside them'.[18] As noted at an earlier point in this thesis, most scholars, building upon this realisation, now accept that Peele was responsible for writing at least one of the play's scenes, specifically the long opening scene, which is usually separated by most modern editions into 1.1 and 2.1 following the division which was incorporated into the text prior to its publication in the First Folio; moreover, it has also been considered possible that Peele contributed a further scene, Scene 6 (or 4.1).[19] Yet despite the historical distaste for the play, no serious scholar presently denies that the tragedy is for the most part the work of Shakespeare.

As with so much in the field of stylometric analysis, however, debate continues to surround the exact details of the play's collaborative nature. This includes recent arguments that Shakespeare, rather than Peele, may have been the one responsible for the writing of 4.1,[20]

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[17] Curtis Perry, 'Senecan Belatedness and *Titus Andronicus*', in *Titus Andronicus: The State of Play*, ed. by Farah Karim-Cooper (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2019), pp. 15-35 (p. 16).
[18] Brian Boyd, 'Kind and Unkindness: Aaron in *Titus Andronicus*', in *Words That Count: Essays on Early Modern Authorship in Honor of MacDonald P. Jackson*, ed. by Brian Boyd (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), pp. 51-77 (p. 51).
[19] See Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, pp. 148-243.
[20] William W. Weber, 'Shakespeare After All? The Authorship of *Titus Andronicus* 4.1 Reconsidered', *Shakespeare Survey*, 67 (2014), pp. 69-84; Anna Pruitt, 'Refining the *LION* Collocation Test: A Comparative Study of Authorship Test Results for *Titus Andronicus* Scene 6 (= 4.1)', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 92-106.

and that Shakespeare's involvement in the play may have come about by him completing a tragedy which had been left in an unfinished state by Peele, an idea that may be signalled by the possibility that the Peele-authored opening scene may show some signs of later textual revision.[21] As we have already seen, however, recent scholarship has served to further complicate the question of the play's authorship and textual integrity, with 3.2 having latterly been assigned to neither the hand of Shakespeare nor Peele, but to that of Middleton as the play's adapter. Indeed, Taylor and Duhaime argue that the dramaturgical evidence that they have accumulated points 'overwhelmingly' in this direction.[22]

The textual history of this scene is certainly suggestive of its possibly being a later interpolation. This short addition, consisting of just 84 lines of verse, was included in F1 *Titus Andronicus*, but is conspicuously absent from the three earlier quarto editions of the play which were published in 1594, 1600, and 1611, respectively. In this sense, the play's textual history is certainly reminiscent of that of other adapted play-texts produced during the English Renaissance, such as the text of the post-1602 editions of *The Spanish Tragedy* and the text of the post-1610 editions of *Mucedorus*. Of course, while a few critics have considered 3.2 to be an authentically Shakespearean passage which simply failed, for whatever reason, to find its way into the earlier quarto editions of the play,[23] this is a scene which some have alternatively felt is more likely to be a 'disposable' later textual addition to the play, to utilise the description of 3.2 which has been provided in the work of Alexander Leggatt.[24]

This perception of 3.2 as an easily disposable later addition to the play is especially plausible when *Titus Andronicus* is considered in the context of present-day dramatic revivals

[21] Rory Loughnane, 'Re-Editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader: The Murder of Mutius in *Titus Andronicus*', *Review of English Studies*, 68 (2017), pp. 268-95.
[22] Taylor and Duhaime, p. 91.
[23] See e.g. G. Harold Metz, *Shakespeare's Earliest Tragedy: Studies in Titus Andronicus* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996), pp. 114-15.
[24] Alexander Leggatt, 'Standing Back from Tragedy: Three Detachable Scenes', in *Shakespeare Performed: Essays in Honor of R. A. Foakes*, ed. by Grace Ioppolo (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2000), pp. 108-21 (p. 113).

of the work. As Charlotte Scott writes, 'This extraordinary scene […] poses a significant problem to directors, actors and audiences of the theatre – how do you make a fly audible let alone visible?'[25] Further problems are emphasised in Michael D. Friedman and Alan Dessen's account of *Titus Andronicus* in performance, who note that 'The need for an interval/intermission, along with a potential problem in the transition between 3.2 and 4.1, therefore leads to a series of adjustments' by modern directors in order to minimise difficulties that arise in terms of continuity at this moment.[26] It is fortunate for theatre practitioners, then, that the content of 3.2 can so easily be interpreted as 'disposable' for present-day theatrical circumstances: as Alan Hughes comments in his edition of the play for the New Cambridge Shakespeare series, 'The new scene […] illustrates the madness of Titus without advancing the dramatic action'.[27] Again, this is certainly suggestive of the scene being a later, non-authorial addition. Such additions are, after all, very often characteristically non-essential for the play's overall dramatic integrity, as established by Bourus and Karim-Cooper in their reading of *All's Well that Ends Well* 4.3, which I have discussed at an earlier point in this thesis.

We might thus compare *Titus Andronicus* 3.2 to another highly noteworthy example of additions designed to expand upon a character's madness 'without advancing the dramatic action': the additions to Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, which were possibly written by Shakespeare in late 1599,[28] and first published in Q4 in 1602. For the most part, these additions, consisting of a total of 324 lines, do not have any major effect upon the material originally written by Kyd, but all share an overarching theme. Addition I, inserted between lines 45 and 46 of scene 2.5, comes immediately after the play's hero, Hieronimo, has found the hanging body of his murdered son Horatio, and serves to expand upon his mental distress at what he

[25] Charlotte Scott, 'Still Life? Anthropocentrism and the Fly in *Titus Andronicus* and *Volpone*', *Shakespeare Survey*, 61 (2008), pp. 256-68 (p. 256).
[26] Michael D. Friedman, with Alan Dessen, *Shakespeare in Performance: Titus Andronicus*, 2nd edn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), p. 83.
[27] Alan Hughes (ed.), *Titus Andronicus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 150.
[28] See Taylor and Loughnane, pp. 528-31.

has discovered: in this addition, Isabella even exclaims in response to Hieronimo's speech 'Ay me, he raves!' (2.5.AddI.8),[29] emphasising that this is an addition designed to augment the play's exploration of Hieronimo as a 'mad' character. Addition II then appears in the middle of 3.2.64, replacing Hieronimo's original response to Lorenzo's 'Why so, Hieronimo? Use me' (3.2.64) – 'Oh, no, my lord, I dare not, it must not be. | I humbly thank your lordship' (3.2.65-6) – with 'Who, you, my lord? | I reserve your favour for a greater honour. | This is a very toy, my lord, a toy' (3.2.AddII.1-3), and runs for a total of 11 lines, exploring further Hieronimo's madness, including introducing a disconcertingly flippant dismissal of his son's murder as 'an idle thing' (3.2.AddII.5). Following this, Addition III (after 3.11.1) sees Hieronimo philosophically explore his grief at length in front of two Portuguese travellers who only stopped him to ask the question 'Pray you, which is the next way to my lord the Duke's?' (3.11.4).

More comparable to the insertion of *Titus Andronicus* 3.2 into the text of the First Folio, however, is *The Spanish Tragedy*'s Addition IV, an entirely new scene (3.12A) in which Hieronimo meets Bazardo the Painter and resolves to exact revenge for Horatio's death. As Nance writes of this scene, 'Addition IV to *The Spanish Tragedy* is not comic; like the other Additions in the 1602 text, it amplifies Hieronimo's madness and expands the play's bleak sentimentality.'[30] Nance's argument that this scene 'amplifies Hieronimo's madness' is certainly redolent of Hughes's comment that *Titus Andronicus* 3.2 'illustrates the madness of Titus without advancing the dramatic action'. Indeed, towards the beginning of this addition Pedro informs his audience that 'our master's mind | Is much distraught since his Horatio died' (3.12A.5-6), and over the course of this scene Hieronimo talks at length of his grief, behaves distractedly, and ultimately, following the Painter's agreement to paint a picture inspired by

[29] Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. by Clara Calvo and Jesús Tronch Pérez (London: Arden Early Modern Drama, 2013).
[30] John V. Nance, 'Shakespeare and the Painter's Part', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 261-77 (p. 262).

Horatio's murder, launches what seems like a totally unprovoked attack on Bazardo, beating him (3.12A.165.1), an act in response to which Marguerite Tassi comments that Hieronimo 'literally dramatizes the imagined painted action by treating the Painter as if he were the murderer of his painting'.[31] Finally, the last addition, Addition V, appearing after 4.4.165, primarily serves to offer an exploration of Hieronimo's actions at the play's climax, rationalising the course of action he has taken in the pursuit of his revenge; this addition is positioned immediately before he bites out his tongue following 4.4.187.

As such, all of these additions supplement the action of the play without interfering significantly with Kyd's original text (except for Addition V, which substantially replaces and rearranges material in the original 4.4.165-87), and in particular are focused on emphasising further the madness of its lead protagonist (something which recalls the subtitle found on early editions of this play, *Hieronimo is Mad Again*). As will be seen, the addition of 3.2 to F1 *Titus Andronicus* serves a similar purpose, expanding the madness of its main character, but also providing further rationalisation for his actions, in a similar manner to Addition V in *The Spanish Tragedy*.

The Auspices of the Fly:
Violent Excess and the Dramaturgical Significance of 3.2

Titus Andronicus was an immensely popular play among early modern audiences. As mentioned in Chapter 2, its continued popularity was even being lamented by Jonson as late as 1614, in his comedy *Bartholomew Fair*: 'He that will swear *Jeronimo* [i.e. *The Spanish Tragedy*] or *Andronicus* are the best plays yet, shall pass unexcepted at here as a man whose judgment shews it is constant, and hath stood still these five and twenty or thirty years' (Induction 79-82). Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 1, it is quite clear that Middleton himself had a degree of interest in the tragedy, as indicated by his reference to 'old Titus

[31] Marguerite Tassi, 'The Player's Passions and the Elizabethan Painting Trope: A Study of the Painter Addition to Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*', *Explorations in Renaissance Culture*, 26 (2000), pp. 73-100 (p. 93).

Andronicus' in *Father Hubbard's Tales* (l. 947). In each of the early quarto editions which arose from this apparent popularity, however, the text itself remained mostly consistent, each version containing the same twelve scenes, with only minor textual differences existing between them. As we have already seen, however, F1 *Titus Andronicus* saw the introduction of 3.2, usually referred to as the fly-killing scene, after a pivotal moment contained therein in which Titus's brother Marcus kills the aforementioned insect with his knife. The stylistic and dramaturgical exploration in the New Oxford Shakespeare of where this scene originated from is still very new, and there will hence undoubtedly be much further discussion to be had on the matter. But the results of the tests conducted thus far are localised in the work of Taylor and Duhaime, who helpfully provide a three-point summary of some of their early conclusions:

> 1. The Fly Scene was written and added to *Titus Andronicus* after mid-1608, when the King's Men began performing at Blackfriars;
> 2. But it is not written in Shakespeare's post-1607 style;
> 3. Therefore, it was not written by Shakespeare.[32]

If Taylor and Duhaime are correct in asserting that the 3.2 was most likely written for a Blackfriars version of the play, but that the style in which 3.2 is written does not conform to Shakespeare's post-1607 style, then their conclusion that the scene was most likely not written by Shakespeare seems to me to be perfectly sound. For Taylor and Duhaime, the style of 3.2 does not conform to the style of Shakespeare's writing in each of his surviving 1608-13 plays – *Coriolanus*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, *All Is True*, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* – lacking what they describe as 'the multifaceted metrical fluidity that distinguishes his late verse' as well as 'its complex signature syntax'.[33] Taylor and Duhaime also argue that

[32] Taylor and Duhaime, p. 71.
[33] Ibid. Such a reading of Shakespeare's late style has a long history, and Taylor and Duhaime cite the following studies in particular: Dolores M. Burton, *Shakespeare's Grammatical Style: A Computer-Assisted Analysis of Richard II and Antony and Cleopatra* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973); John Porter Houston, *Shakespearean Sentences: A Study in Style and Syntax* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988); Russ McDonald, *Shakespeare's Late Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

the scene could only have been added after Shakespeare's company began to occupy the Blackfriars Theatre because its inclusion was apparently part of an effort to rework the play's structure to accommodate the imposition of act-divisions onto the text, a convention which, as I have already discussed, has been convincingly demonstrated by Taylor to have only begun to be employed by Shakespeare's company following their acquisition of the Blackfriars in 1608.[34] Of course, if this is correct, this structural revision was not without its problems. To quote Hughes, 'While the action flows smoothly from 3.1 into 4.1, the insertion of 3.2 creates an awkward transition unless the former is followed by an interval'.[35] In terms of early modern theatre practice, I disagree with the relevance of Hughes's assessment here that the inelegance of the transition between these two scenes is one that necessitates adding 'an interval' following 'the former', i.e. 3.1. A single interval in a performance is, after all, a much more modern idea, whereas the Blackfriars, as I discuss above, would instead have made use of four act breaks. Furthermore, I would argue that the movement from 3.1 to 3.2 is in fact doable, and that it is instead between 3.2 and 4.1 that the break would instead be needed – something that makes sense considering that this is the point in a Blackfriars performance where such a break would have been applied, separating the end of Act 3 from the beginning of Act 4. Considering this, Hughes's argument that 'the insertion of 3.2 creates an awkward transition' is surely only applicable to modern performances, as any awkwardness would have been resolved by the inclusion of an act break at this moment anyway.

To illustrate this further, it is worth considering how 3.1 and 4.1 (Scenes 5 and 6 in the original, unadapted text of the play) would have worked together in the play's original performances. At the end of 3.1, the Andronici pledge to exact vengeance upon their enemies, and then depart the stage with Titus's words 'Let's kiss and part, for we have much to do'

[34] Ibid., pp. 69-71.
[35] Hughes, p. 150.

(3.1.286). Lucius then remains behind on the stage and soliloquises for 13 lines (3.1.287-99), before the action transitions into 4.1, which opens with Lucius's son being chased by Lavinia as she attempts to seize his books to help illustrate the truth of what has happened to her; Lucius himself is absent from this scene, thus avoiding the difficulty of his immediate re-entry. When Lucius's soliloquy at the end of 3.1 is instead followed by 3.2, however, this is what causes the 'awkward transition', to use the phrasing of Hughes. Although 3.2 begins with the stage direction '*A banquet. Enter Titus Andronicus, Marcus, Lavinia, and the Boy*' (3.2.0.1), thus again making sure to avoid Lucius's exit and immediate re-entry following his soliloquy at the end of 3.1, the conclusion to 3.2 is more problematic in this regard. Under these circumstances, all four characters '*Exeunt*' (3.2.84.1), but then re-enter straight away at the beginning of 4.1: '*Enter Lucius' son, and Lavinia running after him, and the boy flies from her with the books under his arm. Enter Titus and Marcus*' (4.1.0.1-2). This presents an obvious difficulty in staging. However, this would have been resolved in the Blackfriars, when the conclusion to 3.2 would have been followed by an act break containing the playing of music and the trimming or replacing of the candles that were lighting the space. It is clear, then, that 3.2, speaking from a purely dramaturgical perspective, would have been designed to optimise the play's structure for a revival at the indoor Blackfriars Theatre, following the change in conditions which I have outlined in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

How does this addition function in relation to the overall play, however? It is not worth repeating here too much of what has already been written on *Titus Andronicus* in the context of its original composition, which most scholars date to sometime around 1592, but a few key points are certainly worth reiterating.

As indicated above, it is fair to say that *Titus Andronicus* has rarely been admired by modern critics. Often considered narratively underdeveloped, the story primarily being conveyed through increasingly brutal spectacles of killing and maiming, the play has

traditionally been viewed as something of a lesser entry in the established Shakespeare canon. Although present-day critics might attempt to take a more nuanced approach towards the play's many violent excesses, however, it is important to note that the same cannot be said of the tragedy's earlier spectators. As Wells puts it, 'For centuries *Titus Andronicus* was either rejected from the Shakespeare canon as being unworthy of its author's genius, or vilified as a terrible aberration committed perhaps as a concession to the tastes of barbarous audiences'.[36] One of the most eloquent defences of this aspect of the tragedy's dramaturgy, however, is that which was set forth by Eugene M. Waith in the introduction to his critical edition of the play for the original Oxford Shakespeare series, in which he convincingly argued that, even in this most gruesome of Shakespearean texts,

> Brutal violence, occasionally tinged with tragedy, serves several artistic purposes. It represents the political and moral degeneration of Rome when Saturninus becomes emperor. It also plays a major part in the presentation of the hero's metamorphosis into a cruel revenger. While no artistic device can be called inevitable, one can say with some assurance that Shakespeare's use of violence in *Titus Andronicus* is far from gratuitous. It is an integral part of his dramatic technique.[37]

One reason for the unsettling overemphasis on gore in *Titus Andronicus* has much to do with its generic classification. Indeed, the play is often thought to have been influenced by earlier Elizabethan works such as Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, and, indeed, Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar*, all dramas of the late 1580s and early 1590s which are renowned for their blood-soaked storylines. In these tragedies, tongues are ripped out, flesh is stripped from people's bones, and characters even engage in what are evocatively referred to as 'bloody banquets' (*Alcazar*, 4.Prologue.6). It is in this theatrical context, then, that we can best

[36] Stanley Wells, 'The Integration of Violent Action in *Titus Andronicus*', in *Shakespearean Continuities: Essays in Honour of E. A. J. Honigmann*, ed. by John Batchelor, Tom Cain, and Claire Lamont (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997), pp. 206-20 (p. 206).
[37] Eugene M. Waith (ed.), *Titus Andronicus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 68-9.

understand Titus's extreme plans for cannibalistic vengeance, which he begins to set in motion towards the end of 5.2:

> Hark, villains, I will grind your bones to dust,
> And with your blood and it I'll make a paste,
> And of the paste a coffin I will rear,
> And make two pasties of your shameful heads,
> And bid that strumpet, your unhallowed dam,
> Like to the earth swallow her own increase.
> This is the feast that I have bid her to,
> And this is the banquet she shall surfeit on;
> For worse than Philomel you used my daughter,
> And worse than Progne I will be revenged. (5.2.185-94)

That people would flock to such plays should not surprise us. Indeed, as Duncan Salkeld has recently emphasised, this was a time when people attended real-life executions as though they were a variety of theatrical performance in their own right.[38] This is a suggestion which has also been made in the work of Hannah Crawforth, Sarah Dustagheer, and Jennifer Young, who write that 'The sense of excess, of a proliferation of bloodshed and suffering that Shakespeare would have encountered at Tyburn provides [*Titus Andronicus*'s] keynote.'[39] Furthermore, cannibalism served a strong artistic purpose in such works, either as a means of underscoring the psychological torture of the (witting or unwitting) anthropophagite, as discussed by Taylor in his reading of *The Bloody Banquet*,[40] or as a way of signalling the unwilling participation (and abuse) of the murder victim in the revenge action, as explained in the work of Margaret E. Owens.[41] Considering this, should the original *Titus Andronicus* of the 1590s continue to be viewed merely as an attempt to exploit a popular craze for particularly gruesome depictions of gory horror?

[38] Duncan Salkeld, *Shakespeare and London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 60-2.
[39] Hannah Crawforth, Sarah Dustagheer, and Jennifer Young, *Shakespeare in London* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2014), p. 22.
[40] Taylor, 'Gender, Hunger, Horror', pp. 20-1.
[41] Margaret E. Owens, *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), pp. 102-3.

There is certainly still an argument for this having been the case; yet in considering this possibility we should not ignore the surprisingly learned nature of this play. Indeed, despite earlier critics having expressed the opinion that *Titus Andronicus* represents a 'nascent handling of Senecan material' on the part of Shakespeare, in comparison to his 'more masterful expression in *Richard III*' (to quote from Sharpe's more recent response to such critical viewpoints),[42] it is important to appreciate how overtly the play's authors make clear their indebtedness to the classical tradition in the construction of their violent, cannibalistic plot. Indeed, the Roman poet Ovid is quoted throughout, and a copy of his *Metamorphoses* is even brought directly onstage during 4.1: 'Grandsire, 'tis Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. | My mother gave it me' (4.1.42-3). Crucially, it is via this engagement with Ovid that the play also pointedly alludes to the tale of Philomela, a woman raped and made tongueless by her brother-in-law King Tereus of Thrace, whose sister Procne (Tereus's wife) subsequently took revenge by killing their son Itys and serving him as a meal to Tereus: we can certainly see this in Aaron's line 'His Philomel must lose her tongue today' (2.3.43), and in the many references by Lavinia's relatives to what Titus calls 'the tragic tale of Philomel' (4.1.47; cf. 2.4.38, 4.1.52, 5.2.193). Moreover, the final cannibalistic banquet scene copies much of its action from the conclusion to Seneca's *Thyestes*: as Dunne remarks, 'the Thyestian treatment of Chiron and Demetrius is gruesome in the extreme, but they are themselves guilty of the rape and dismemberment of Lavinia'.[43] In harking back to Seneca, then, Shakespeare and Peele were not simply appealing to the classical tradition as a source for the play's violence; they were evoking a classical model for revenge as a mode of justice.

[42] Will Sharpe, 'Collaboration and Shakespeare's Early Career', in *Early Shakespeare, 1588-1594*, ed. by Rory Loughnane and Andrew J. Power (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp. 54-75 (p. 66). Sharpe is here specifically responding to Marco Mincoff, *Shakespeare: The First Steps* (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1976), pp. 110-37.
[43] Dunne, p. 83.

The excessive violence of *Titus Andronicus* may have led many to view it as too unsophisticated to be considered an 'essential' component of the Shakespeare canon. Few critics are against the view, however entertaining some might find the play in performance, that *Titus* is little more than an over-the-top bloodbath, with very little social or political depth to its story. How, then, can such an assessment be said to change when we reconsider the version of the tragedy which was included in the First Folio in 1623? How can a single scene of just 84 lines be said to repurpose the central cannibalistic themes of such an old tragedy for revival before new audiences during the latter half of the 1610s (or possibly the early 1620s)? This is a question which the remainder of this chapter will seek to answer.

Mirror Scenes:
Banqueting and Language in 3.2

The importance of 3.2 to the play's dramatic action was intriguingly considered by Hereward T. Price as long ago as 1948, in a discussion considering how its place in the play might lead us to the consider it as what he described as a 'mirror-scene'. As Price argued:

> The scene has little or nothing to do with the plot: that is to say, if cut, it will not be missed, nor does it add much to those elements of excitement such as hope, suspense, or anxiety which are stimulated by the plot. On the other hand, it enlarges our knowledge of the problem which is at the core of the work, and in this way *Titus* gains in depth and perspective. It brings everything into focus. The chief issues of *Titus* are there, and it may be said to mirror the play […] Apparently loose detachable scenes, so-called episodes, are frequent in Shakespeare. They vary in function as in technique, but certain features tend to recur. Many of them are, as in *Titus*, mirror-scenes, reflecting in one picture either the main theme or some important aspect of the drama.[44]

Price's commentary on the fly-killing scene is certainly of significant worth, as he evaluates it as being far less 'disposable' than critics such as Leggatt, for example, have. Although written over seventy years ago, long before Middleton's role as an adapter of Shakespearean texts had

[44] Hereward T. Price, 'Mirror-Scenes in Shakespeare', in *Joseph Q. Adams Memorial Studies*, ed. by James. G. McManaway, Giles. E. Dawson, and Edwin. E. Willoughby (Washington: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1948), pp. 101-13 (pp. 102-3).

entered the scholarly mainstream, such an interpretation as Price's might still be considered very illuminating in the recent light of Taylor and Duhaime's revelation that the scene is most likely a later non-authorial addition to the play. Rather than simply being a detachable interpolation slotted into the text of an established work, perhaps 3.2 actually serves as a thematic and structural re-imagining of the original concluding scene. In other words, we can read it, to some extent, as being an adaptation or 'mirror image' of the play's other banqueting sequence, the original, Shakespeare-authored 5.3.

When we approach the fly-killing scene in this light, its function within the wider context of the play can much more easily be related to a recognisable feature of Middleton's dramaturgical style. Middleton was certainly a dramatist with a fondness for the writing of banqueting scenes and depictions of feasting, after all. As Meads puts it, 'Middleton used the banquet scene to telling effect as a device with which to open the action of a play and overcome the problem of introducing a large number of important characters in a short space, without losing the audience's interest or understanding.'[45] In itself, Middleton's penchant for the writing of banqueting scenes might seem relatively unimportant. Such scenes occur frequently in the drama of the period, after all. But the structure of the two banquets in F1 *Titus Andronicus* bears a striking resemblance to the two banqueting scenes in another Shakespeare/Middleton work, *c*.1607's *Timon of Athens*, the second of which (4.1) noticeably reflects and inverts the manner and style of the first (1.2). Interestingly, as Jowett has suggested, it is possible that Middleton may even have reworked Shakespeare's writing of the second banquet scene to better engage with his own representation of Timon's interactions with his many false friends and creditors.[46] Indeed, *Timon* 1.2, attributed entirely to Middleton, is characterised by good cheer, with Timon being more than happy to share his bounty with those he perceives to be his

[45] Meads, p. 140.
[46] See Jowett, 'Pattern of Collaboration', pp. 195-6.

friends. Here, although the audience itself will be perfectly aware of how Timon's wealth and generosity is being misused by those in attendance, Timon himself is entirely unaware of the true motivations of his banquet's attendees, even dismissing Apemantus's warnings in this regard with dismissive comments such as 'Fie, thou'rt a churl. Ye've got a humour there | Does not become a man' (1.2.24-5). 4.1, on the other hand – attributed to Shakespeare, but likely with some reworking made by Middleton – is a much more belligerent affair. Timon has by this point suffered rejection by his friends when he was required to send his steward to visit them to request financial aid for himself, and he illustrates this change in his outlook (from abundant philanthropy to furious misanthropy) by serving them bowls containing only water and stones, dismissing them all as a 'knot of mouth-friends' (4.1.76), and instructing them to 'Live loathed and long, | Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites, | Courteous destroyers, affable wolves, meek bears, | You fools of fortune, trencher-friends, time's flies, | Cap-and-knee slaves, vapours, and minute-jacks!' (4.1.80-4). Middleton's most significant contribution to this scene provides noteworthy commentary on the change Timon's bounty has undergone between this and the earlier banquet scene:

FIRST LORD
How now, my lords?
SECOND LORD
Know you the quality of Lord Timon's fury?
THIRD LORD
Push! Did you see my cap?
FOURTH LORD I have lost my gown.
FIRST LORD
He's but a mad lord, and naught but humours sway him.
He gave me a jewel th'other day, and now he has beat it out of my hat.
Did you see my jewel?
THIRD LORD Did you see my cap?
SECOND LORD Here 'tis.
FOURTH LORD Here lies my gown.
FIRST LORD Let's make no stay.
SECOND LORD Lord Timon's mad.
THIRD LORD I feel't upon my bones.
FOURTH LORD One day he gives us diamonds, the next stones. (4.1.93-101)

It is generally agreed that Shakespeare hired Middleton as his co-author on *Timon of Athens* largely because of the younger dramatist's expertise in the writing of satirical city comedy – thereby working with Middleton 'to benefit from his experience in a particular style of writing', to quote from Kane's reading of the play[47] – and the theme of a lead character suffering immense financial debt certainly recalls a similar plot point concerning the character of Theodorus Witgood in Middleton's *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, a play which had likely been written as recently as 1605. Yet considering how *Timon* makes use of two contrasting banquet scenes, it is possible that this was another aspect of Middleton's style as a dramatist which Shakespeare wanted to bring into this generically hybridised tragedy. As Meads thus writes of the two banquet scenes in *Timon*, 'The two scenes are structurally a pair; the first being a statement of the accepted Athenian hierarchy and the second depicting the breaking down of that order. Without the first banquet scene, the second would lose a good deal of its dramatic impact and relevance, and without the second the first would appear a languid and lengthy self-indulgence.'[48]

Middleton also made use of paired scenes of celebratory occasions elsewhere in his work. In Scene 4 of *No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's* (1611), Weatherwise holds a banquet in honour of Lady Goldenfleece, the widow whom he intends to woo – also inviting other suitors who, in Victoria Yeoman's words, similarly 'covet the widow's wealth'[49] – yet although Weatherwise is confident of success, stating 'My almanac told me true how I should fare' (1.305), it is Mistress Low-Water who, disguised as a man, wins the widow's hand in marriage. This banquet is followed by the wedding masque of Scene 9, which is subverted to become the opportunity for Lady Goldenfleece's suitors to exact their revenge. Likewise, in *Women*

[47] Kane, p. 231.
[48] Meads, p. 147.
[49] Victoria Yeoman, 'Speaking Plates: Text, Performance, and Banqueting Trenchers in Early Modern Europe', *Renaissance Studies*, 31 (2017), pp. 755-79 (p. 772).

Beware Women, the banquet of 3.2, which takes place at the behest of the Duke, marks the culmination of Livia's scheming up to that point in the play. This is then followed by the tragic events of the final masque of the play in 5.1, of which Meads writes that 'it is not straining credibility to suggest that the earlier large-scale ensemble scene, also a lavish display of the court at leisure, would be recalled to the audience's mind […] The banquet scene in Act 3 sets in motion the events leading up to the apocalyptic finale and the punishment of all the miscreants for their lust.'[50] The earlier banquet scene of 3.2 had passed relatively uneventfully, but the masque in 5.1 ends with Bianca drinking poison, 'Tasting […] death in a cup of love' (5.1.262). We can therefore in both of these examples witness Middleton's mastery of using such paired scenes in his own dramas to propel the dramatic action to its ultimate conclusion.

Considering such realisations as these, we might now be encouraged to view the pair of banqueting scenes present in F1 *Titus Andronicus* in a similar light. Rather than simply being a 'disposable' addition to an established text, Middleton may well have been considering how the addition of 3.2 would affect the overall structure of the complete play, with a particular focus on its relation to the already existing Shakespeare-authored banquet of the concluding scene (5.3). Furthermore, that Middleton likely wrote the scene with a view to the wider play might even be signalled by the fact that its central figure of the fly appears to have been adapted from lines spoken by Aaron the Moor in Act 5: 'I have done a thousand dreadful things | As willingly as one would kill a fly' (5.1.141-2).

Considering the idea that this most memorable aspect of the fly-killing scene could have been inspired by material found elsewhere in Shakespeare's original text of the play, we might also now turn our attention to the focus of this scene upon the idea of hands. To quote Albert H. Tricomi, in this play Shakespeare repeatedly makes use of metaphor in order to 'keep the excruciating images of mutilation before our imaginations even when the visual spectacle is no

[50] Meads, p. 154.

longer before us'.[51] This is certainly true of the fly-killing scene. As Karim-Cooper observes of *Titus Andronicus* as a whole, 'the word "hand" occurs with increasing intensity, referred to over 60 times, the most in any Shakespeare play',[52] actually appearing 80 times when we consider the possible puns upon the word, 'handmaid' (1.1.334) and 'handle' (2.1.539; 3.2.29), as well as the word 'handless' (3.1.67), discounting the appearance of the word in stage directions. Interestingly, the word appears 9 times in the added 3.2 alone, more than in any other scene other than 3.1, which contains 27 (perhaps unsurprisingly given that this is the scene in which Titus gives up his own hand and then has it returned to him in mockery). Moreover, 9 uses of 'hand' (including 1 use of 'handle') in just 84 lines equates to approximately 1 appearance per 10 lines, a similar approximate rate to 3.1's 27 uses in 299 lines, or about 1 appearance per 11 lines. It is possible, then, that 3.2's focus on the language of 'hands' was brought about by the adapting dramatist's knowledge of the frequent use of such language throughout Shakespeare's original text, further suggesting that this was a dramatist who was intensely aware of how his addition would fit in with the overall tragedy.

Anthropophagy and 3.2:
Augmenting the Silent Woman

As pointed out by Taylor and Duhaime, 3.2, unlike 5.3, does not actually feature any cannibalism. Nevertheless, it is striking how much the stagecraft of this scene can be said to reflect that of the final bloody feast. In 3.2, Titus, Lavinia, Marcus, and Young Lucius enter the stage to partake in a meal at their home. This, for them, would be a very normal everyday occurrence, but for the first time it has become a scene of horror. That this meal will be noticeably out of the ordinary is acknowledged by Titus in the scene's opening lines:

[51] Albert H. Tricomi, 'The Aesthetics of Mutilation in *Titus Andronicus*', in *Shakespeare and Language*, ed. by Catherine M. S. Alexander (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 226-39 (pp. 226-7).
[52] Karim-Cooper, *The Hand*, p. 222.

So, so, now sit, and look you eat no more
Than will preserve just so much strength in us
As will revenge these bitter woes of ours. (3.2.1-3)

This family meal is not about pleasure or sociability, but purely about sustenance, and as the scene progresses it is clear why. Part-way through this sequence, Marcus lashes out and kills a fly with the flat of his knife. Then, with a cry of 'Out on thee, murderer!' (3.2.54), the usually warlike Titus begins to show the first signs that he is losing his grip on reality, railing against his brother for the abominable act:

How if that fly had a father, brother?
How would he hang his slender gilded wings
And buzz lamenting doings in the air!
Poor harmless fly,
That with his pretty buzzing melody
Came here to make us merry—and thou hast killed him. (3.2.60-5)

Tellingly, this is a significant departure from the cruel and martial character he has been throughout the earlier parts of the play. In the Peele-authored 1.1, after all, Titus had even slain his own son, Mutius, for defying his will regarding a marriage between Lavinia and the Emperor Saturninus:

MUTIUS
Brothers, help to convey her hence away,
And with my sword I'll keep this door safe.
My lord, you pass not here.
TITUS What, villain boy,
Barr'st me my way in Rome?
MUTIUS Help, Lucius, help!
[*Titus kills Mutius*]
[*Enter Lucius*]
LUCIUS [*to Titus*]
My lord, you are unjust, and more than so.
In wrongful quarrel you have slain your son.
TITUS
Nor thou, nor he, are any son of mine.
My sons would never so dishonour me.
Traitor, restore Lavinia to the Emperor. (1.1.290-8)

But Titus's metamorphosis into a nurturing figure, surprisingly concerned about whether 'that fly had a father,' is in keeping with the focus 3.2 places upon his child and grandchild. Here we are forced to keep our eyes upon Lavinia, the mutilated daughter, who cannot even eat and drink without the assistance of her father, and, it seems, is very much unwilling to do so. Furthermore, Young Lucius, the innocent child, is forced to watch this horror show, a family meal which has lost all mirth. It is not even clear whether any food is so much as touched during this banquet scene. There is some suggestion that Titus may attempt to bring some food to his daughter's mouth – 'and, gentle girl, eat this' (3.2.34) – although she seems to reject receiving sustenance in such a way. Here, then, we see a physically and emotionally broken family, who are now unable to engage in two of the most normal social practices: eating and drinking.

We can never know exactly how many audience members, witnessing a revival of *Titus Andronicus* after 1616, would have been intensely familiar with the original pre-1616 version of the play. Jonson's comment, quoted above, does seem to suggest that the play continued to enjoy a not insignificant level of popularity into the 1610s, and the third quarto edition had been published as recently as 1611; but in the absence of documented early responses the play at this time, it is impossible to say for sure how many of their audience members the King's Men could have expected to be familiar with the original version of the play. What is evident, however, is that the author who supplied the fly-killing scene seems to have had a particular knowledge of the overall play. The added scene appears to be a very deliberate inversion of the original, cannibalistic conclusion. The only other banquet scene in the play, after all, plays out very differently. There, two able-bodied characters sit at table. Tamora believes her revenges against Titus have been successful, reducing him to a state of insanity. As far as she is aware, both of her sons are alive and well, and she is thus happy and willing to partake in the meal which has been set before her. It is only after the feast is concluded that Titus gleefully springs

the truth upon her. Announcing the guilt of Chiron and Demetrius to all those who are present, and subsequently killing Lavinia in front of them all with the words 'Die, die, Lavinia, and thy shame with thee, | And with thy shame thy father's sorrow die' (5.3.45-6), Titus theatrically reveals to Tamora the reality both of her sons' deaths and of her unnatural act:

> TAMORA
> Why hast thou slain thine only daughter thus?
> TITUS
> Not I; 'twas Chiron and Demetrius.
> They ravished her and cut away her tongue,
> And they, 'twas they, that did her all this wrong.
> SATURNINUS
> Go, fetch them hither to us presently.
> TITUS
> Why, there they are, both bakèd in this pie,
> Whereof their mother daintily hath fed,
> Eating the flesh that she herself hath bred. (5.3.54-61)

Without 3.2 to precede it, Titus's revenge may appear to be excessive in the extreme, forcing Tamora to ingest human flesh carved from her own offspring as part of the overall escalation of cruelty which has occurred throughout this tragedy's plot. But encountering the fly-killing scene before this gory finale, the inhumanity of Titus's revenge, while certainly still excessive, now has a discernible narrative origin. Titus has already experienced a banquet where the horrors now afflicting the lives of himself and of his family have been brought to the surface. Lavinia, in particular, has found herself unable (and unwilling) to do one of the simplest things in life: eat. Why then should Tamora, whose cruelty has seemingly known no bounds, continue to be permitted to enjoy such functions as these? Eating should be a pleasure, but Titus makes sure that for Tamora it has now become a waking nightmare.

Thus, the scene's author was not simply adding material to assist the company in repurposing the play's structure for a post-1608 Blackfriars context. Rather, he was a writer consciously engaging with the fuller narrative of the dramatic text with which he was working, seeking to insert a scene which would enrich the overall execution of the revenge storyline.

Taylor and Duhaime's stylistic evidence may have proved inconclusive, even if it is interpreted to be suggestive, but it is in such features as the manner of how the added 3.2 functions in relation to the play as a whole, and particularly how it works with 5.3 (from Shakespeare and Peele's original text) to present an inverted version of a second banquet scene, that makes this scene appear most Middletonian in its nature. Whereas *Titus Andronicus* has heretofore often been criticised for its poor integration of its violence into its narrative, the introduction of 3.2 actually serves to provide a more obvious trajectory for the escalation of Titus's cruelty. The cannibalistic nature of Titus's revenge can no longer simply be interpreted as gratuitous violence solely intended to satisfy a bloodlust in its audience, but becomes part of a much more calculated revenge plot. It is an effort to degrade his enemy completely, obliterating her ability to function as a part of normal human society: after all, Lavinia's tormentors had themselves taken great pleasure earlier in the play in mocking how her mutilation sets her apart from other unmutilated Romans, preventing her from preventing her from performing such simple acts as speaking (2.4.1-2), writing (2.4.3-4), and washing (2.4.6-7). The focus of the tragic spectacle is noticeably placed upon the tragic woman, which, especially given Middleton's involvement in *The Bloody Banquet* (as discussed at the beginning of Chapter 1), may serve to align this addition to *Titus Andronicus* with Middleton's own dramaturgical interests. Lavinia can no longer feed, and so, Titus determines, neither will Tamora. Thus, justice, however grotesque we might find it, can be seen to have been delivered.

With the addition of 3.2, the characterisation of Lavinia undergoes a significant metamorphosis. Pascale Aebischer has noted that 'in the theatre, the mutilated rape victim is insistently kept before the audience's eyes for six scenes', and that 'Watching *Titus Andronicus* therefore means watching Lavinia'.[53] Yet Lavinia's presence is only made more significant

[53] Pascale Aebischer, *Shakespeare's Violated Bodies: Stage and Screen Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 26

through the interpolation into the text of 3.2. In the original play, Lavinia, the silent (or, more specifically, silenced) woman is largely used as a plot device. A shocking, bleeding, and agonised spectacle following her rape and mutilation, she principally serves as a visual signifier of the excessive suffering of the Andronici, and of the motivations driving her father's quest for vengeance. As Bethany Packard writes, 'When rape forcibly removes her from the narrative of personal and Roman purity, the play uses her to necessitate recognition of its many other narratives.'[54] Packard's contention is thus that Lavinia in some respect serves as a co-author of this tragedy herself, and the vital nature of her silent presence seems to have been something the play's adapter recognised and readily sought to expand upon. In the adapted text, the author of 3.2 repurposes Lavinia's role in the play in order to emphasise her importance to the narrative as a whole. In 3.2, she refuses all sustenance, herself consumed by woes, and she ultimately becomes the central focus of this single interpolated scene, the author even giving her something of a new voice, as relayed by her father through his interpretation of her outward signs, sounds, and expressions: 'Hark, Marcus, what she says. | I can interpret all her martyred signs. | She says she drinks no other drink but tears, | Brewed with her sorrow, mashed upon her cheeks' (3.2.35-8). The dramatist communicates to us that these are not just Titus's wrongs; his daughter's suffering far outweighs his own. Furthermore, the adapter's focus on the tragic, widowed, and mutilated daughter, once described by Bassianus as 'Gracious Lavinia, Rome's rich ornament' (1.1.55), is certainly reminiscent of Middleton's recognised interest in female characters in general, particularly ones who experience or attempt to subvert the oppressions of the patriarchal order: we might recall works such as A Chaste Maid in Cheapside, described by Kaethler as a play which 'can be said to comment on the absurdity of a marriage market that renders women into commodities whose dowries are valued above their love interests',[55] or

[54] Bethany Packard, 'Lavinia as Coauthor of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 50 (2010), pp. 281-300 (pp. 282-3).
[55] Kaethler, p. 33.

The Changeling, in which Beatrice-Joanna laments that to be a man is 'the soul of freedom', as she should 'not then be forced to marry one | I hate beyond all my depths' (2.2.110-12), or, perhaps most famously, *The Roaring Girl*, whose central character Mary Frith subverts gender norms and challenges men's expectations of womanhood throughout. Indeed, Bourus has praised Middleton's explorations of women characters by stating that 'they live in worlds dominated by men and must find ways to survive', but 'More than any other women characters from early modern drama, they directly and openly compete with men – or force men to compete with them.'[56] It does not seem coincidental, therefore, it is also interesting to note that passages attributed to Middleton in his other adaptations of Shakespeare also often serve to expand and enhance female roles, as seen with Julietta and Mariana in *Measure for Measure* and Helen in *All's Well that Ends Well* (as well as the witches in *Macbeth*, if indeed we interpret them as having been intended to be female).

More research is required, and it remains to be seen whether future investigations into the Folio text of *Titus Andronicus* continue to support and expand upon the possible Middletonian auspices of 3.2. But whether or not we accept the evidence which has been proposed by Taylor and Duhaime in favour of Middleton's authorship of 3.2, the evidence for the scene's status as a later addition to the play nevertheless seems strong. In this scenario, the author was not simply adding new material to *Titus Andronicus* in order to provide a new selling point for a later revival of the work, but also sought to make it easier for the play to be divided into five acts, something only relevant following the acquisition by the playing company of the indoor Blackfriars Theatre in 1608. Equally, however, he was constructing an entirely new but equally important sequence, designed to mirror and complement the already infamous cannibalistic denouement of the original text, and to enhance the female role of

[56] Terri Bourus, '"It's a whole different sex!": Women Performing Middleton on the Modern Stage', in *The Oxford Handbook of Thomas Middleton*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Trish Thomas Henley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 551-70 (p. 552).

Lavinia. Understanding 3.2 as a later addition, we can now better understand how the fly-killing scene is far less ‘disposable’ than previous critics may have realised.

CHAPTER 4

'HEAVEN GRANT US ITS PEACE, BUT NOT THE KING OF HUNGARY'S!': WAR AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE IN *MEASURE FOR MEASURE*

In contrast to the other adapted Shakespearean works which are examined in this thesis, *Measure for Measure* can easily be considered one of the most 'Middletonian' plays in the First Folio, even before accounting for Middleton's identified interpolations in the surviving text. Originally dating from 1603-4, *Measure* is a dark, cynical city comedy set in a morally corrupted Viennese dukedom. The play's plot revolves around themes of sex, vice, and the abuse of authority, themes which are most prominently explored through the character of the hypocritical deputy Angelo, who abhorrently attempts to blackmail the novitiate Isabella into having sex with him in exchange for sparing the life of her condemned brother Claudio. Considering this, Alison Shell has described this play as 'Shakespeare's richest venture into moralistic discourse,'[1] something which is reflected in the Biblical proverb from which the play takes its title: 'For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again' (Matthew 7:2). Indeed, such is the importance of these words that they are even subsequently adapted by Vienna's Duke himself in the play's final scene: 'Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure; | Like doth quit like, and measure still for measure' (5.1.396-7).

Yet it is precisely the moralising didacticism of the play's Biblical titular appropriation that leads Bruster to describe '*Measure for Measure*' as 'Shakespeare's most Middletonian title'.[2] Certainly, the play's dramatis personae, which includes bawds, libertines, and religious hypocrites, would seem equally at home in many of the city comedies that were being produced by Middleton at around the same time that *Measure for Measure* was probably receiving its first performances, such as *Michaelmas Term*, *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, and *A Mad World,*

[1] Alison Shell, *Shakespeare and Religion* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2010), p. 167.
[2] Douglas Bruster, 'Middleton's Imagination', in *The Oxford Handbook of Thomas Middleton*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Trish Thomas Henley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 518-34 (p. 518).

My Masters. Nancy Mohrlock Bunker has even read *Measure for Measure* and *A Mad World, My Masters* in tandem, arguing that 'because these comedies characterize the intersection between society's marital expectations and the unconventional strategies that make particular marriages happen,' they similarly 'interrogate patriarchal control, expose its inadequacy, and demonstrate the negative results of leadership grounded in selfishness.'[3] Yet *Measure for Measure* is also, quite demonstrably, very much unlike other early modern city comedies. As argued in this chapter, this play, in the form in which it survives, is just as concerned with interrogating leadership as it is with representing the lives of its city's inhabitants.

Despite its obvious similarities to the theatrical subgenre with which Middleton earned much of his early success as a dramatist, the concerns of *Measure for Measure* are markedly different from those commonly associated with other city comedies of the early modern era. As Angela Stock observes, 'On the face of it, Shakespeare's Vienna is not much like the London that is represented in Jacobean city comedy. It does not produce or manufacture any goods, it does not invest in trade, [and] there is no sense of an upwardly mobile merchant class.'[4] In this sense, the play is far less of a Shakespearean city comedy than, for example, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, another work which certain critics have connected to this dramatic category.[5] Nevertheless, such genre-defying features have not prevented critics from approaching *Measure for Measure* very much from the perspective of exactly this kind of drama. As Salkeld writes, 'It is somewhat ironic that Shakespeare's most demonstrably "London" play is one ostensibly set in Vienna. The low-life characters [...] are largely Shakespeare's own creation and drawn straight from the taverns and bawdy houses of the

[3] Nancy Mohrlock Bunker, *Marriage and Land Law in Shakespeare and Middleton* (Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2014), pp. 87-8.
[4] Angela Stock, 'Recent Stage, Film and Critical Interpretations', in *Measure for Measure*, ed. by Brian Gibbons, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 69-83 (p. 72).
[5] See Anne Barton, 'Falstaff and the Comic Community', in *Shakespeare's 'Rough Magic': Renaissance Essays in Honor of C. L. Barber*, ed. by Peter Erickson and Coppélia Kahn (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1985), pp. 131-48 (pp. 138-9).

City.'[6] What makes *Measure for Measure* stand out, however, is how it uses the model of city comedy to make far grander, more satirical statements, statements of which its rather unusual setting in Vienna only forms part.

This chapter will argue that the satirical importance of Middleton's adapted *Measure for Measure* does not derive predominantly from its 'urban setting' and the 'characters and incident appropriate to' such a setting, as Brian Gibbons notably defined Renaissance city comedy in his influential study of 1968.[7] Rather, the concerns of *Measure for Measure*, at least in the adapted form of the play produced by Middleton in the early 1620s, are noticeably continental, its satire operating on a far grander, less quotidian scale than other frequently studied examples from this subgenre. It is a far cry from such earlier city comedies as Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (1599), for example, which vocally celebrates throughout the artisans of what its characters refer to as the 'Gentle Craft' of shoemaking (3.24).[8] As Conal Condren puts it, *Measure for Measure* is instead primarily a play 'about the properties of government,' something which is immediately signalled by the Duke's words in the opening scene: 'Of government the properties to unfold | Would seem in me t'affect speech and discourse' (1.1.3-4).[9] Whereas the surviving text of the play continues for the most part to be attributed to the hand of its original author, Middleton's adaptation of Shakespeare's city-comedic drama trains the focus of the play's satiric intentions upon issues surrounding English foreign policy during the latter years of the reign of King James I, something which Middleton can be observed to have achieved through the interpolation into the existing text of only a handful of 'new additions'.

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[6] Salkeld, p. 97.
[7] Brian Gibbons, *Jacobean City Comedy: A Study of Satiric Plays by Jonson, Marston and Middleton* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis Ltd, 1968), p. 24.
[8] Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, ed. by Jonathan Gil Harris (London: New Mermaids, 2008).
[9] Conal Condren, 'Unfolding "the Properties of Government": The Case of *Measure for Measure* and the History of Political Thought', in *Shakespeare and Early Modern Political Thought*, ed. by David Armitage, Conal Condren, and Andrew Fitzmaurice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 157-75 (p. 160).

This chapter seeks to consider *Measure for Measure* in the context of its adaptation around October 1621. By focusing primarily on the additional passage at the beginning of 1.2 (1.2.A1-A67), it will be argued that the play's adaptation has been designed to align the work more with Middleton's dramatic concerns of the early 1620s, alongside those of the theatre company, the King's Men, itself. It will first be shown how this relates the play to the burgeoning culture of printed news in the early 1620s, and how this allowed the play to comment upon the early years of the Thirty Years' War, which had begun in 1618, and which was causing much disquiet among England's populace at the time. The chapter will then seek to expand upon the work already published in this direction, arguing that other references in this additional sequence might relate the play to other concerns reported in the newssheets of this time, particularly economic concerns and the fear of plague in association with war. Finally, the culture of printed news as it was then perceived will be argued to be significant for the revival of this play as a whole, with the play's overall thematic engagement with authority and slander being related back to Middleton's augmentation of the text, in order to argue for the play's suitability for revival under the new conditions of the early 1620s.

1.2.A1-A67: Hungary's 'Peace' and the Coming of War

When Alice Walker, in her article of 1983, described the text of *Measure for Measure* as 'a tissue of confusions and contradictions', she could have had no knowledge of how complex critical interpretations of the play's textual state were destined to become over the following decades.[10] As I have outlined in the Introduction to this thesis, Middleton is now believed to have made several interventions in the text in preparation for a revival in late 1621, almost two decades after the play was first recorded as having been performed at Whitehall on the evening

[10] Walker, p. 18.

of 26 December 1604.[11] The most obvious addition to the text is the insertion of the first stanza of the song beginning 'Take, O take those lips away' at the start of the play's fourth act (4.1.1-6), a song which originated in Fletcher and Massinger's *c*.1617 play *Rollo, Duke of Normandy*. Theoretically, this song could have been transported from *Rollo* to *Measure* at any time between 1617 and 1621, and not necessarily by Middleton – there is nothing to say that plays could only ever go through one process of adaptation in their stage lives, after all – but it also seems likely that it was Middleton who supplied the conversation between the Duke and Mariana which immediately follows it (4.1.7-22), thus providing a smoother transition between the end of the song and the main text of the scene: considering this, the interpolation of the song into 4.1 does seem closely connected to Middleton's other work in adapting this scene. Middleton's presence has also been confidently detected in likely additions to at least five other scenes (1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 4.3, and 5.1), and he may even have relocated the play's action to the Austrian capital of Vienna, in which the surviving Folio version of the play is set, from the postulated Italian dukedom of Shakespeare's original version (perhaps Ferrara, where Middleton had previously set his own disguised ruler play of 1603-4, *The Phoenix*).[12] It is worth re-emphasising that Middleton's identified interventions in the text only constitute roughly five per cent of the text of the play as it has come down to us,[13] and *Measure for Measure* can therefore for the most part still be interpreted as a thoroughly 'Shakespearean' work: as Jowett writes, 'It is important to assert that, as far as is known, Shakespeare wrote the play without collaborating with another dramatist, that the texture of the writing is overwhelmingly Shakespearean, and that Middleton's contribution is confined to specific

[11] For the significance of this first documented performance of the play, see John H. Astington, 'The Globe, the Court and *Measure for Measure*', *Shakespeare Survey*, 52 (1999), pp. 133-42.
[12] See Taylor, 'Mediterranean'.
[13] Taylor and Loughnane, p. 557.

additions and reorganizations'.[14] As Bourus and Taylor have pointed out, however, 'Middleton's proposed additions [...] affect the beginning of eleven of the Folio's 22 speaking roles (50%).'[15] Through an appreciation of the significance of Middleton's textual alterations, therefore, it becomes readily apparent 'how a few textual changes [...] can radically shift an audience's reception of a play', as Trish Thomas Henley remarked in response to Bourus and Taylor's efforts to stage a postulated reconstruction of Shakespeare's original version of the play with Hoosier Bard Productions in Indianapolis in early 2013.[16]

In the previous chapter, it was argued that the adaptation of *Titus Andronicus* was optimised to enable that play to suit the dramaturgical conditions of performance at the indoor Blackfriars Theatre at some point after mid-1616. As Jowett points out, however, it is clear that Middleton's identifiable amendments to *Measure for Measure* were not solely designed 'to make the play's structure, style, and fascinations match the dramaturgy of an indoor hall theatre [Blackfriars] in the early 1620s', but also served 'to make the play topical' for the socio-political conditions relevant to the time of its revival.[17] Certainly, by approaching the surviving version of *Measure for Measure* from a more specifically Middletonian perspective, we can readily discern how the play accords with the major concerns inherent in much of Middleton's dramatic output during a particular period of Jacobean history.

Specifically, such an approach as this reveals the play's relation to the contemporaneous European skirmishes of religious dominance which have come to be collectively known in present-day discourse as the Thirty Years' War, which raged from 1618 until 1648, and resulted in approximately eight million deaths.[18] Middleton's process of theatrical adaptation can hence

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[14] John Jowett, 'Addressing Adaptation: *Measure for Measure* and *Sir Thomas More*', in *Textual Performances: The Modern Reproduction of Shakespeare's Drama*, ed. by Lukas Erne and Margaret Jane Kidnie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 63-76 (p. 68).
[15] Bourus and Taylor, p. 374.
[16] Trish Thomas Henley, '*Measure for Measure, Ferrara* and *Measure for Measure, Vienna*', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 31 (2013), pp. 499-505 (p. 505).
[17] Jowett, *Text*, p. 44.
[18] This figure is taken from Peter H. Wilson, *Europe's Tragedy: A History of the Thirty Years War* (London: Allen Lane, 2009), p. 4.

be connected not only to evolving political perspectives in England, but also in this case to the strongly Protestant, probably Calvinist viewpoints which critics have often ascribed to the revising author in recent decades. To utilise the phrasing of Paul Yachnin, it is thus that we can read the extant Middletonian *Measure for Measure* as very much a part of an authorial canon which conspicuously has 'a strain of zealous, English Protestantism running right through it, from a juvenile composition like *Wisdom of Solomon* to his late satire, *A Game at Chess*.'[19] For a dramatist like Middleton, who could often be accused of pursuing an anti-Catholic agenda in inflammatory plays like *A Game at Chess*, *Measure for Measure* might seem a strange play to have attracted his interest as an adapter. As Gillian Woods writes, '*Measure for Measure*, the only text in the Shakespeare canon with a biblical title, is also the play in which Catholicism is most visible and significant to the plot itself.'[20] In this ostensive comedy, much of the drama centres on Isabella, a young woman who wishes to become a nun, and the Duke, a ruler who early in the play admits that 'I love the people, | But do not like to stage me to their eyes' (1.1.68-9), and so instead leaves his dukedom under the command of his deputy Angelo – a man described by the Duke in the Folio text using the curious word 'prenzie' (TLN 1309, 1312), a word often amended to 'precise' in modern editions (see e.g. 1.3.50 in the New Oxford Shakespeare), which would suggest that he may be taken to be a Puritan – while he moves among the people of his city disguised as a Catholic friar named Lodowick. While the potential for anti-Catholicism in the text of this play may not be as readily apparent as in such a work as *A Game at Chess*, however, *Measure for Measure* has more frequently been interpreted as a commentary on kingship itself.[21] This would likely have been quite apparent to spectators

[19] Paul Yachnin, 'Reversal of Fortune: Shakespeare, Middleton, and the Puritans', *English Literary History*, 70 (2003), pp. 757-86 (p. 771).
[20] Gillian Woods, *Shakespeare's Unreformed Fictions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 98.
[21] See e.g. Thomas Healey, 'Selves, States, and Sectarianism in Early Modern England', *English*, 44 (1995), pp. 193-213; Debora K. Shuger, *Political Theologies in Shakespeare's England: The Sacred and the State in Measure for Measure* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001); Stacey Magedanz, 'Public Justice and Private Mercy in *Measure for Measure*', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 44 (2004), pp. 317-32; Sarah Beckwith,

viewing the original play in 1603-4, especially given that *Measure for Measure*, written so soon after the first accession of a new monarch in England since 1558, was apparently also being written at the same time as several other similar 'disguised duke plays', including Middleton's *The Phoenix*, as noted above, as well as Marston's *The Malcontent* in 1603 and *Parasitaster; or, The Fawn* in 1605. Kevin A. Quarmby urges caution against assuming that all of these plays emerged at around the same time 'as active responses to the particular "occasion" of King James's accession,'[22] but it is certainly interesting that it was a play written shortly after this hopeful accession that the King's Men sought to revive and adapt almost two decades later, after the King's popularity, as Bourus and Taylor have noted, had significantly declined.[23]

If Middleton can be said to have reshaped *Measure for Measure* in 1621 in order for it to more strongly reflect upon the issues surrounding the European wars, we can hence contextualise the author's process of adaptation within a period of Middleton's career during which he is known to have repeatedly alluded to these continental happenings in his writings. In 1618, Middleton had served as the ghost-writer of a pamphlet entitled *The Peacemaker; or, Great Britain's Blessing*. This pamphlet was published anonymously, but is evidently supposed to be the work of King James himself, even beginning with an epistle addressed '*To all Our true-loving and peace-embracing subjects*' (l. 11). Furthermore, as Mark Kaethler observes, *The Peacemaker* 'overtly draws inspiration from James's motto "*Beati pacifici*" or blessed are the peacemakers […] as it quotes this phrase several times at the outset (64, 70, 85, 104, 118).'[24] However, as the text's Oxford Middleton editor Paul Mulholland notes, 'The licence granted

'Medieval Penance, Reformation Repentance and *Measure for Measure*', in *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, ed. by Gordon McMullan and David Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 193-204; and Beatrice Groves, *Texts and Traditions: Religion in Shakespeare, 1592-1604* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), pp. 154-83.

[22] Kevin A. Quarmby, *The Disguised Ruler in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012), p. 3.

[23] Bourus and Taylor, pp. 387-91.

[24] Mark Kaethler, *Thomas Middleton and the Plural Politics of Jacobean Drama* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), p. 123.

by James I to William Alley "at y^{e} nomination of Thom^{a}s Midleton [*sic*]" for "y^{e} sole printing, and selling of a small booke, lately made by the said Midleton [*sic*], called the *Peace maker* or *Great Brittains blessing*", first noticed by A. H. Bullen, establishes the pamphlet's authorship with some certainty.'[25] For Rickard, Middleton's work on this pamphlet reveals him to have been 'an able and flexible mimic'.[26] In this pamphlet, Middleton (on behalf of the King) powerfully exhorts to his reading public the many blessed qualities that can be attributed to peace, writing that 'the perfection of all things [is] peace and union. It is the riches of our beings, the reward of our sufferings, the music on our deathbeds […] The God of Peace sent it, the Lamb of Peace bought it, the Spirit of Peace confirmed it, and We still seek to preserve it' (ll. 12-18). The political aim of *The Peacemaker* is easy to understand: James was not eager to join the European conflict, and as James Doelman explains 'Especially in the later years of his reign, the phrase "Beati Pacifici", blessed are the peacemakers, from the Sermon on the Mount [Matthew 5:9] came to be frequently applied to James, and readily accepted by him as a personal motto.'[27] Just two years later, however, in early 1620, Middleton was to turn his pen towards the creation of far more provocative lines:

SOLDIER
The world's in a good hand now, if it hold, brother.
SCHOLAR
I hope for many ages.
SOLDIER Fair thee well then.
I'll over yonder to the most glorious wars
That e'er famed Christian kingdom.
SCHOLAR And I'll settle
Here, in a land of a most glorious peace
That ever made joy fruitful, where the head
Of him that rules, to learning's fair renown,
Is doubly decked, with laurel and a crown,
And both most worthily. (ll. 876-84)

[25] Taylor et al., 'Works Included', p. 402.
[26] Jane Rickard, *Writing the Monarch in Jacobean England: Jonson, Donne, Shakespeare and the Works of King James* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 244.
[27] James Doelman, *King James I and the Religious Culture of England* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2000), p. 85.

This dialogue between a Soldier and a Scholar appears towards the end of Middleton and Rowley's courtly masque *The World Tossed at Tennis*, which was identified by F. G. Fleay in 1891 as having most likely been intended for performance on 4 March 1620 as part of the entertainment provided by Prince Charles for his father at the late Queen Anne's official London residence on the Strand.[28] More specifically, Martin Butler reads the masque as a key component of the celebrations 'to mark the occasion when Charles came into possession of his late mother's property.'[29] What is most interesting for the purposes of this discussion, however, is the clear juxtaposition that existed between the royalist, pacific Middleton who authored *The Peacemaker* on behalf of England's King in 1618, and the militant, Protestant proponent of armed conflict who forcefully expounded upon the opposing viewpoint in many of his theatrical offerings from this same period. Certainly, in a similar vein to *The World Tossed at Tennis*, Middleton wrote or co-wrote several plays during the early 1620s which to varying degrees sought to pass comment upon the events that were occurring at that time in Europe.

One excellent example of this is *The Changeling* (1622, with Rowley), a Spanish-set tragedy which has most notably been read by A. A. Bromham and Zara Bruzzi as a political response to what they term 'the years of crisis' of the early 1620s.[30] Furthermore, *Anything for a Quiet Life* (*c.*1622, with Webster) contains a striking reference to 'An obstinate fellow' who purchased 'fourscore pair of provant breeches o'th' new fashion' to 'Supply a captain, sir, a friend of his went over to the Palatinate' (5.1.104-12). In more subtle vein (at least for a present-day readership), Taylor has illustrated how the Passionate Lord in *The Nice Valour; or, The Passionate Madman* (*c.*1622, either co-authored with or later adapted by Fletcher) can be interpreted as a satire upon John Villiers, the mentally unstable older brother of the Duke of

[28] Frederick Gard Fleay, *A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama, 1559-1642*, vol. 2 (London: Reeves and Turner, 1891), p. 100.
[29] Martin Butler, *The Stuart Court Masque and Political Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 251.
[30] A. A. Bromham and Zara Bruzzi, *The Changeling and the Years of Crisis, 1619-1624: A Hieroglyph of Britain* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990).

Buckingham, and further argues that the play's apparent ambivalence regarding the issue of violence would also have been especially topical during the early 1620s.[31] It is also worth noting that Bromham has connected the recurrent allusions to 'peace' in *Women Beware Women* (*c*.1621) to contemporary anxieties relating to James's pacific foreign policy, which were very common at this point in his English reign.[32]

Concerning this last point in particular, it is also of considerable interest that Middleton's addition to *Measure for Measure* 1.2, itself contributed in the same year as *Women Beware Women* was most likely written (or thereabouts), is also concerned with the issue of 'peace' (1.2.A3) in relation to 'war' (1.2.A66). In fact, the only instances in the entirety of the play where these words are specifically used to refer to martial matters occur in this added Middletonian passage.

The first addition readers and spectators encounter in the text is particularly illustrative of the political purposes which likely motivated the play's adaptation. In the dialogue between Lucio and '*two other Gentlemen*' (1.2.0.1) which occurs at the very beginning of 1.2, we are immediately presented with the following exchange regarding the pursuit of a prospective treaty of peace in Europe:

> LUCIO
> If the Duke with the other dukes come not to composition with the King of Hungary, why then, all the dukes fall upon the King.
> FIRST GENTLEMAN
> Heaven grant us its peace, but not the King of Hungary's! (1.2.A1-A4)

As discussed above, Shakespeare almost certainly wrote the original *Measure for Measure* in 1603 or 1604. Reading the lines in this context, many explanations have previously been offered for their meaning. N. W. Bawcutt, in his Oxford edition, simply stated that the reference

[31] Gary Taylor, 'Thomas Middleton, *The Nice Valour*, and the Court of James I', *The Court Historian*, 6 (2001), pp. 1-27.
[32] A. A. Bromham, 'The Tragedy of Peace: Political Meaning in *Women Beware Women*', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 26 (1986), pp. 309-29.

was taken from a similar reference to a King of Hungary in Shakespeare's source for the play, George Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra* (1578).[33] Gibbons, in his New Cambridge edition, relates the lines to Queen Anne's brother, Ulrich of Holstein, who was in late 1604 levying men to fight in Hungary.[34] J. W. Lever, in his edition for the second series of the Arden Shakespeare, suggested that this is a pun on 'hungry', noting that if peace were to be achieved, the soldiers would be out of work and thus liable to starve; Lever also notes that 'Down-at-heels ex-soldiers were sometimes nicknamed "Hungarians".'[35] Jowett, however, has argued that this conversation – part of a substantial new addition to the play which was apparently intended to replace the Shakespeare-authored dialogue between Mistress Overdone and Pompey which immediately follows it in the surviving Folio text (see 1.2.D1-D7) – is heavily indebted to a newssheet which was first published in England on 6 October 1621.[36] The phenomenon of these printed newssheets, commonly termed corantos, was a very new innovation in October 1621, having only arisen at the start of the 1620s. Satisfying an appetite for information of continental events following the eruption of the conflict in the Palatinate, these publications quickly became very popular, something which England's ruler found particularly troublesome. As Andrew Pettegree explains,

> It is […] no surprise that the first serial news publication in English was published not in London but in Amsterdam. In December 1620 the enterprising Pieter van den Keere published the *Courant out of Italy, Germany etc*. This was a straightforward translation of the Dutch edition, published in the same single-sheet format. It was sufficiently successful for van den Keere to maintain publication for the best part of a year. Success brought imitation: by 1621 several of these single-sheet 'corantos' were in circulation. The most successful, though prudently attributed to the Amsterdam firm of Broer Jansz, may actually have been printed in London, and from September 1621 the London publisher Nathaniel Butter was openly advertising his responsibility for what was in effect

[33] Bawcutt, *Measure*, p. 91.
[34] Gibbons, *Measure*, p. 21.
[35] J. W. Lever (ed.), *Measure for Measure* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 1965), p. 9.
[36] Jowett, 'Audacity', p. 233.

> a continuation of van den Keere's series. Several other London printers also re-entered the market with unnumbered pamphlet news-books.[37]

The newssheet to which Middleton probably attended when adapting *Measure for Measure* was part of the periodical news publication *Corante*, printed for 'N. B.', almost certainly Butter.[38] In particular, this newssheet contains a striking passage detailing a number of European dukes meeting with the King of Hungary – at the time Bethlen Gábor, elected by the Hungarian estates on 25 August 1620[39] – as part of negotiations for a treaty of peace between the warring states of Hungary and Austria. As the newssheet informs its readers in a section detailing news 'From Vienna the 15. of September 1621':

> there is a treaty of peace in Hand-holden, at Rauensburge, in the Marckt[,] and Committies, to that end on both sides come thether. The English Ambassador hath his dispatch of the Emperour, and hath had a great reward, but is referred to be at the Electorall meeting. The Duke of Saxen in the Emperours name is to be president for him at that meeting;, [*sic*] and the Arch Duke Charles rides thether: the Arch Duke Leopoldus is dayly expected here.[40]

Reading *Measure for Measure* solely as a text written by Shakespeare shortly after the accession of King James in 1603, Lucio's comment regarding coming 'to composition with the King of Hungary' might appear to be a disconcertingly irrelevant comment about an unrelated enterprise in European diplomacy. The King of Hungary is never again mentioned throughout the entirety of *Measure for Measure*, and Hungary bears no immediately obvious importance to the play's plot. But the stylistic evidence in favour of Middleton as adapter of this play, combined with the fact that this is the only instance in the entirety of the work where we find

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[37] Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know About Itself* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), p. 195.
[38] See S. A. Baron, 'Butter, Nathaniel (*bap*. 1583, *d*. 1664), Bookseller', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (January 2003) <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-4224> [accessed 2 September 2020].
[39] See Géza Pálffy, 'Crisis in the Habsburg Monarchy and Hungary, 1619-1622: The Hungarian Estates and Gábor Bethlen', *Hungarian Historical Review*, 2 (2013), pp. 733-60 (pp. 734-5).
[40] *Corante, or weekely newes from Italy, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Bohemia, France and the Low Countreys* (STC 18507.32).

a suggestion that Lucio is supposed to be a soldier, lends credence to the idea that this passage is a later addition to *Measure for Measure*, added separately from the writing of the rest of the play; and if this is the case, it is certainly plausible that this reference to Hungary relates to later events, rather than being an addition where the adapter retroactively alludes to contemporaneous matters from the 1603-4 period. By placing this allusion to the content of this particular newssheet at such an early point in the adapted text, Middleton draws his audience's attention at the very beginning of 1.2 towards popular concerns regarding the worrying events which were at the time taking place on the European continent. As Bourus writes, 'From the perspective of many English Protestants in 1621, a peace treaty between the House of Austria and the King of Hungary would, indeed, have been seen as shameful, whether anticipated in autumn 1621, or when it actually came to pass in early 1622.'[41] Middleton can thus be seen to be tapping into the intense popularity surrounding these printed newssheets; apparently, he must have been confident that his audience would have been familiar with what had been reported in such a recently published coranto. Middleton would thus have enabled the political undercurrents of this new version of *Measure for Measure* to gain traction immediately following the conclusion of the more expository 1.1; moreover, the possibility of a revived *Measure for Measure* being used as a vehicle for commentary upon current affairs would surely have been a very attractive, even tantalisingly subversive lure for audiences, something upon which the King's Men were seemingly very eager to capitalise at this point in time.[42]

[41] Terri Bourus, 'Counterfeiting Faith: Middleton's Theatrical Reformation of *Measure for Measure*', in *Stages of Engagement: Drama and Religion in Post-Reformation England*, ed. by James D. Mardock and Kathryn R. McPherson (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2014), pp. 195-216 (pp. 207-8).

[42] Considering the fleeting nature of the adapted play's topicality with regards to the King of Hungary, it might seem strange that it was this adapted version that was included in the First Folio two years later, in 1623. The answer may simply be that despite the volume's promise to publish the play's according to the 'true, original copies', usually the most recent version of the play-texts was the one included (e.g., the *c*.1610 revised text of *King Lear*).

Middleton had made use of the printed report of current affairs as sources for his works before. Aside from the early plague pamphlets he co-authored with Dekker, which strikingly chronicled the effects of the 1603-4 outbreak upon London life, Middleton had also sensationally dramatized the Calverley murders of 1605 in *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, which he had based upon a particularly lurid contemporaneous account of the crime which had been published by Butter shortly after the crime had been discovered, which had been evocatively titled *Two Most Vnnaturall and Bloodie Murthers*. Such engagement with the burgeoning culture of printed news during the early 1620s, however, goes far beyond issues of topicality and sensationalism. Rather, the advent of popular printed newssheets such as *Corante* formed part of an information revolution which, to quote from the work conducted in this direction by Stephen Wittek, can even be perceived as having 'contributed to the reinvention of truth.'[43]

Determining the exact extent of the readership of the corantos is difficult, nor do the surviving dramatic responses to their contents (such as Jonson's *News from the New World*, discussed below) prove that all spectators could have been expected to have read them (and in an age of high illiteracy rates, such a presumption would be groundless). What is clear, however, is that printers clearly saw the publication of these newssheets as an economically profitable venture, and the market for such news was evidently driven by a widespread interest in the events occurring in the Palatinate. As Kirsty Rolfe points out, 'The existence of news texts about the Palatinate does not incontrovertibly prove the evidence of interest in such news, merely that stationers believed such commodities to be saleable', but 'the fact that "newes from the Palatinate" featured prominently on title pages throughout its defence suggests that texts advertising it sold well – that readers wanted to know what happened next.'[44] Moreover, Catherine Rockwood, in her reading of Jonson's *The Staple of News* (1626), which satirises the

[43] Stephen Wittek, *The Media Players: Shakespeare, Middleton, Jonson, and the Idea of News* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015), p. 25.
[44] Kirsty Rolfe, 'Probable Pasts and Possible Futures: Contemporaneity and the Consumption of News in the 1620s', *Media History*, 23 (2017), pp. 159-76 (p. 164).

printed news trade, boldly states how 'Publications like Butter's *corantos*, which were often translated from Dutch Protestant sources, provided the English public with provocative accounts of Spanish and Austrian machinations against not only the Elector's Continental defenders and allies but also the existence of Protestant countries generally', concluding that 'Their contributions to popular opinion helped fan the winds of war.'[45] It is also important to recognise that one of the biggest threats this innovation in printed news posed for England's government was the ease and speed with which such information could spread. While the corantos themselves were a commodity which was very popular among the literate, their contents would also have informed discussion, and thus been disseminated further through oral transmission: Richard Cust notes that 'the commonest method of passing on news remained word of mouth. This was in keeping with the habits of a society which was still only partially literate and in which the opportunities for oral exchange were growing with the development of internal trade and increasing resort to London.'[46] Cust cites several examples of how the evidence for such oral news exchange has been preserved in contemporaneous records: Joseph Mead 'recorded conversations which he had had with travellers passing through Cambridge'; John Pory 'referred to gossip and hearsay as the basis for his reports'; and John Rous, 'a Suffolk clergyman who spent most of his life in his immediate locality', kept a 'news diary' citing local talk and gossip as the main source for much of his knowledge of the news that the corantos were allowing to be spread throughout England.[47] Even in an age of widespread illiteracy, the easily digestible nature of these popular newssheets evidently allowed political knowledge to spread far and wide.

[45] Catherine Rockwood, '"Know thy side": Propaganda and Parody in Jonson's *Staple of News*', *English Literary History*, 75 (2008), pp. 135-49 (pp. 138-9).
[46] Richard Cust, 'News and Politics in Early Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present*, 112 (1986), pp. 60-90 (p. 65).
[47] Ibid., pp. 65-6.

Middleton certainly engaged in a sustained interaction with current affairs which stretched along much of the earliest years of the European conflict. On 6 January 1620, around two months prior to the planned staging of Middleton and Rowley's *The World Tossed at Tennis*, King James witnessed the presentation at court of a new masque by Jonson: *News from the New World Discovered in the Moon*. This work is particularly notable for the satirical commentary it offers on the burgeoning business of printed news. Indeed, speaking towards the beginning of the masque, one character is especially memorable for the observations he makes in this regard:

> Indeed, I am all for sale, gentlemen, you say true. I am a printer, and a printer of news, and I do hearken after 'em, wherever they be at any rates. I'll give anything for a good copy now, be't true or false, so't be news. (ll. 17-19)

From a very early moment in this entertainment, Jonson pours characteristic scorn upon England's developing industry in the dissemination of news, comically expressing significant doubts about the value of truth to the commercial purveyors of such information, especially in comparison to other salient considerations, such as sensationalism and entertainment value. As James Knowles remarks, in *News from the New World* Jonson's newsmongers predominantly trade 'in gossip or the recycled legends […] as part of the double-edged joke that these men who are consecrated to "news" novelty are largely plagiarists.'[48] But this Jonsonian caricature of 'a printer of news' readily admits how little he cares about whether the information he distributes is truly 'new', or even whether it is 'true or false,' so long as he is able to successfully promote its sale to his readers under the vaguely-defined guise of 'news.' Approaching *News from the New World* from the perspective of the early twenty-first century, the concerns raised by Jonson may appear to be enduringly relevant considerations, particularly

[48] James Knowles, *Politics and Political Culture in the Court Masque* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 98.

in relation to present-day anxieties which have arisen in recent years regarding the ease with which false or otherwise deliberately misleading topical information – so-called 'fake news' – can be spread, largely via easily accessible internet platforms such as social media sites, as a means of influencing widespread popular opinion for the perceived benefit of the propagators.[49] In 1620, the criticism expounded by writers such as Jonson of these apparently unscrupulous purveyors of 'news', 'be't true or false,' was equally pertinent and understandable.

This new innovation in the dissemination of topical information would thus have enabled dramatic texts to better contribute to what we might today describe as the 'public sphere', defined by the philosopher Jürgen Habermas as 'a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed' (although I use Habermas's terminology highly conscious of the fact that its application to the early seventeenth century pushes my usage to an earlier time than Habermas himself would have recognised).[50] Indeed, as Lena Steveker observes, 'Information about English involvement in international affairs was […] no longer restricted to a small political elite, but became accessible to a growing number of readers across different social strata', therefore for the first time 'making political knowledge available to a wider reading public.'[51] Yet such democratisation of news was something which was vehemently opposed by King James, who on 24 December 1620 issued 'A Proclamation against excesse of Lavish and Licentious Speech of matters of State', instructing his 'loving Subjects […] from the highest to the lowest' to 'containe themselves within that modest and

[49] Recent informative studies on the growing concerns regarding the dissemination of 'fake news', particularly in relation to social media and contemporary politics, include: Hunt Allcott and Matthew Gentzkow, 'Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election', *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31 (2017), pp. 211-36; John Brummette, Marcia Distaso, Michail Vafeiadis, and Marcus Messner, 'Read All About It: The Politicization of "Fake News" on Twitter', *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 95 (2018), pp. 497-517; and Jacob L. Nelson and Harsh Taneja, 'The Small, Disloyal Fake News Audience: The Role of Audience Availability in Fake News Consumption', *New Media and Society*, 20 (2018), pp. 3720-37.
[50] Jürgen Habermas, 'The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article', in *Critical Theory and Society: A Reader*, ed. by Stephen Eric Bronner and Douglas MacKay Kellner (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 136-42 (p. 136).
[51] Lena Steveker, 'English News Plays of the Early 1620s: Thomas Middleton's *A Game at Chess* and Ben Jonson's *The Staple of News*', in *News in Early Modern Europe: Currents and Connections*, ed. by Simon F. Davies and Puck Fletcher (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 215-29 (pp. 216-17).

reverent regard, of matters, above their reach and calling, that to good and dutifull Subjects appertaineth'.[52] Despite this proclamation, foreign news continued to be imported into England, and so by the end of 1621 James had altered his approach, instead seeking to control the news through the issuing of royal patents.[53] Specifically, such a patent was granted to Butter and his apprentice Nicholas Bourne.[54] Yet by the time *Measure for Measure* came to be adapted in October 1621, the characterisation of news as a subversive and controversial medium had clearly already been established. Certainly, as Paul Salzman informs us, 'As early as January 1621' James had 'requested the States General of The Netherlands to ban the export of corantos to England,' and had even 'promptly imprisoned' Thomas Archer, the producer of the first English coranto, as recently as that August.[55]

As Jowett makes clear, therefore, the distaste expressed by Lucio and the gentlemen regarding the idea of 'peace' with the King of Hungary makes greatest sense in the context of the 1621 news regarding Bethlen's desired alliance with the European Protestant states. Specifically, Bethlen's efforts, begun in 1620, formed part of a wider campaign for Hungarian independence from the Catholic Habsburgs, the dynastic rulers of the Holy Roman Empire, the *de facto* capital of which was at the time Vienna.[56] It is thus that Middleton most obviously strove to reshape Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* as one of numerous plays of the period which are at least tangentially concerned with issues associated with the Thirty Years' War.

For Middleton, whose Protestant bias has by now been well established in modern criticism, the events reported by the 6 October issue of *Corante* would surely have been of considerable interest. Regarding the religious positions to which Middleton subscribed, Margot

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[52] James F. Larkin and Paul L. Hughes, *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), pp. 495-6.
[53] See Fritz Levy, 'Staging the News', in *Print, Manuscript, Performance: The Changing Relations of the Media in Early Modern England*, ed. by Arthur F. Marotti and Michael D. Bristol (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2000), pp. 252-78 (p. 266).
[54] Pettegree, p. 195.
[55] Paul Salzman, *Literary Culture in Jacobean England: Reading 1621* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 141.
[56] Jowett, 'Audacity', p. 231.

Heinemann's contentious characterisation of Middleton as a key producer of oppositional drama under James via an active association with a 'Parliamentary Puritan opposition'[57] has not been received favourably by subsequent critics,[58] but it is nevertheless logical to conclude that Middleton was a writer who often seems to have been relatively unafraid of courting controversy, daringly reflecting upon current events in many of his writings. A good example of this can be found through examination of the surviving scribal manuscript of *The Lady's Tragedy*, for example, which features several passages which have been excised (presumably by the censor Sir George Buc, the Master of the Revels) apparently due to their dangerous anti-court sentiments, but which also features six new additions, probably contributed by Middleton himself, which seem to provocatively relate the play's action to the contemporaneous imprisonment of Arbella Stuart amid the controversy of her marriage to William Seymour.[59] Likewise, Lancashire has shown that the trouble encountered by *The Witch* in 1616 was likely generated by its perceived association with the details of the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury in 1613.[60] It is also important to note that it was less than three years after his highly political adaptation of *Measure for Measure* that Middleton produced the most famed theatrical controversy in Jacobean England, namely *A Game at Chess* in August 1624, which Janet Clare has cited as 'the best documented account of early modern theatrical censorship'.[61] Read within this context, Middleton's engagement with similar issues in his adaptation of *Measure for Measure* is characteristic of his wider concerns as an active participant in London's theatre industry during this period of time.

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[57] Margot Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre: Thomas Middleton and Opposition Drama Under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 2.
[58] See e.g. N. W. Bawcutt, 'Was Thomas Middleton a Puritan Dramatist?', *Modern Language Review*, 94 (1999), pp. 925-39.
[59] See Purkis, pp. 101-30.
[60] Anne Lancashire, '*The Witch*: Stage Flop or Political Mistake?', in *'Accompaninge the players': Essays Celebrating Thomas Middleton, 1580-1980*, ed. by Kenneth Friedenreich (New York: AMS Press, 1983), pp. 161-81.
[61] Janet Clare, 'The Theatre and Political Control', in *Thomas Middleton in Context*, ed. by Suzanne Gossett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 176-83 (p. 180).

It is therefore likely that Middleton, when he came to adapt *Measure for Measure* in late 1621, would have had a particular interest in improving the play's topicality for audiences of the 1620s through reference to the most important ongoing political event of the time. As Jowett points out, whereas the original *Measure for Measure* has often been closely connected to anxieties associated with the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603 and her subsequent replacement by 'the unknown King of Scotland', James, immediately thereafter, 'A play from this cultural and historical environment must have begun to appear jaded in this respect long before 1621. Whatever its other strengths, its original topicality would have turned to disadvantage.'[62] Thus, for audiences of October 1621, the commentary by Lucio and his compatriots upon the events relayed in Butter's latest coranto would surely have served to draw attention away from the play's very obvious associations with the succession crisis of over eighteen years prior, and towards more immediately pressing popular concerns, specifically regarding the concerning religious upheaval which was occurring on the continent at that very point in time.

'Grace is grace despite of all controversy': *Measure for Measure* and the Palatine Crisis

In their recent edition of the play for the third series of the Arden Shakespeare, A. R. Braunmuller and Robert N. Watson argue that the adapted text of *Measure for Measure* can essentially be read as the work of 'a strongly Protestant Thomas Middleton' reworking a play-text originally written 'by a Shakespeare more sympathetic to Catholicism'.[63] Readers would of course be justified in responding to this statement by pointing out that our present-day understanding of the confessional opinions to which Shakespeare may have subscribed is nowhere near as straightforward as this interpretation may appear to imply. As Arthur F.

[62] Jowett, 'Audacity', p. 230.
[63] A. R. Braunmuller and Robert N. Watson (eds), *Measure for Measure* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2020), p. 36.

Marotti puts it, 'Shakespeare's temperament was skeptical and intellectually exploratory – with regard to religion as well as to other subjects – so that his texts are more "open" than those of, say, Ben Jonson or John Webster, [and] more receptive to spectators' wishful projections'.[64] Nevertheless, it is certainly worthy of note that the surviving version of *Measure for Measure* appears strikingly non-committal in terms of its ideological considerations. As Brian Walsh observes of 'the play's possible religious commitments and controversies', for example, 'Whether it is radically pluralistic in its vision of salvation, whether its Catholic setting in Vienna should push us to take it as delivering a pro- or anti-Catholic message, or whether it aligns Catholicism and Puritanism as equally extreme errors that can only be balanced out by an English Church-style *via media* is not made clear.'[65] Perhaps most puzzlingly of all, Lucio, the man who in 1.2 so jocularly engages in critical discussion of Vienna's Protestant enemy the King of Hungary, is also the character who later in the same addition makes the surprisingly diplomatic assertion that 'Grace is grace despite of all controversy' (1.2.A20), a line which Thomas Fulton has notably interpreted in terms of its function as a response to a remark uttered by the First Gentleman at 1.2.A19: 'Reaching beyond context and character, Lucio's comment voices the ecumenical contention [...] that grace might be found in "any Religion."'[66] We could of course seek to attribute the play's ideological ambiguity to the impact of a London-born Calvinist playwright attempting to reshape an old play which had originally been written by a provincial dramatist who may at the very least have been 'sympathetic to Catholicism' (to use Braunmuller and Watson's phrasing), even if he cannot definitely be said to have been a Catholic himself; but equally, when Middleton came to adapt *Measure for*

[64] Arthur F. Marotti, 'Shakespeare and Catholicism', in *Theatre and Religion: Lancastrian Shakespeare*, ed. by Richard Dutton, Alison Findlay, and Richard Wilson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 218-41 (p. 219).
[65] Brian Walsh, *Unsettled Toleration: Religious Difference on the Shakespearean Stage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 113-14.
[66] Thomas Fulton, 'Shakespeare's *Everyman*: *Measure for Measure* and English Fundamentalism', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 40 (2010), pp. 119-47 (p. 132).

Measure in 1621, shortly after reading the 6 October issue of *Corante*, it seems reasonable to suggest that his personal Protestant outlook would likely have motivated many of his textual changes in the play. This would have effectively shifted *Measure for Measure*'s topical focus away from the succession crisis of 1603 and aligned it more with the artistic concerns associated with Middleton's other surviving works of the early 1620s.

In Middleton's addition to 1.2, Lucio in particular is evidently very eager to partake in the present martial conflict – 'There's not a soldier of us all that in the thanksgiving before meat do relish the petition well that prays for peace' (1.2.A12-A13) – and his sentiments would have reflected the prevalent attitudes towards war and peace that were held by many English audience members during this period. By the time of *Measure for Measure*'s adaptation in late 1621, events which had begun in 1618 – specifically starting that May with the Bohemian Revolt, an uprising which quickly spread through Bohemia, Silesia, Moravia, and Upper and Lower Lusatia – had placed considerable strain upon the longstanding pacific diplomatic positions of King James, the self-styled *rex pacificus*, whose 'honourable and long-standing desire to act as a bridge-builder between catholics and protestants in Europe', as Pauline Croft puts it, has been very well documented.[67] But as W. B. Patterson informatively summarises the matter, 'The Bohemian revolt, which erupted in the spring of 1618 over the religious and political policies of the pre-elected king of Bohemia, Ferdinand of Styria, was a problem which James soon recognized as a major threat to the peace of Europe.'[68] Since Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II had been pressured to grant the so-called 'Letter of Majesty' in 1609, Bohemian Protestants had enjoyed relatively widespread religious freedom, but this document had left certain interpretations ambiguous. As Robert Bireley explains, 'One issue on which interpretations collided was whether Protestants could construct churches on ecclesiastical

[67] Pauline Croft, *King James* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 105.
[68] W. B. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 297.

lands. These lands were, Protestants argued, ultimately royal lands and thus accessible to the construction of Protestant churches. But the government responded vigorously to attempts to build churches there, imprisoning citizens of Braunau and razing a structure constructed in Klostergrab.'[69] It was largely in response to these events that the Bohemian Revolt erupted.

An excellent and succinct resource for understanding the significance of this occurrence is provided in the work of Myron P. Gutmann: with Protestant worship thus restricted in two Bohemian towns, 'The Protestant-dominated estates met to protest these actions, only to be ordered twice to be dissolved. To vent their anger at the regents, on May 23 they entered the palace [Prague Castle in Hradčany] and threw two catholic regents [Jaroslav Bořita of Martinice and Vilém Slavata of Chlum] and their secretary [Filip Fabricius] out of the window', an event which has come to be known as the Second Defenestration of Prague; this violent insult thus set the Catholic Habsburgs and the Protestant Estates on the path to war, and in August 1619 the estates offered the Bohemian crown to the Protestant Elector Palatine, Frederick V – James's son-in-law by marriage to his daughter Elizabeth Stuart – in return for assistance from the Protestant Union, the coalition of German states founded in 1608 by Frederick's predecessor as Elector, Frederick IV.[70]

The relevance of these events to the dynamics of Central Europe should not be understated. As Thomas Cogswell explains: 'If the Bohemian estates succeeded in replacing their Catholic monarch, Ferdinand II, with a Protestant, Frederick V of the Palatinate, a majority of the Imperial Electors would for once be Protestant', and thus 'Some contemporaries in their excitement heralded the accession of Frederick to the Bohemian throne as the dawn of a new age, in which the Habsburgs would at last be humbled'.[71] Unfortunately for Frederick,

[69] Robert Bireley, *The Jesuits and the Thirty Years War: Kings, Courts, and Confessors* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 1-2.
[70] Myron P. Gutmann, 'The Origins of the Thirty Years' War', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 18 (1988), pp. 749-70 (p. 763).
[71] Thomas Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution: English Politics and the Coming of War, 1621-1624* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 16.

although he was crowned in November 1619, Habsburg forces drove him from Bohemia less than a year later, following the catastrophic defeat of his forces at the Battle of White Mountain outside Prague on 8 November 1620.[72]

With these events firmly at the forefront of our considerations, the strong Protestant militarism which can be detected in Middleton's addition to 1.2 may seem less surprising. As Norman Jones summarises: 'when [Frederick's] forces were crushed at the battle of White Mountain, it appeared that the Protestant cause was in extreme danger. James was anxious to help his son-in-law, but equally anxious not to break the peace he had striven so hard to maintain.'[73] The return of the Palatinate to the exiled Frederick and Elizabeth consequently became an overbearing point of controversy in English politics.

This crisis in Central Europe, which would not fully abate until the signing of the three treaties negotiated at Münster and Osnabrück which made up the Peace of Westphalia in 1648,[74] provides us with an important historical context into which we can place Middleton's posthumous adaptation of *Measure for Measure*. Ever since Jowett and Taylor's highly influential analysis of the surviving text was published in 1993, it has often been argued that Middleton deliberately reworked the play in order for it to better reflect upon this contemporaneous conflict: as they observe, around 1621 'topical allusions supporting the war would not only be popular; they also ran little risk of censorship.'[75] Whereas certain critics of more recent decades have praised James for his persistence in his attempts to maintain his

[72] Ronald G. Asch, 'Elizabeth, Princess [Elizabeth Stuart] (1596-1662), Queen of Bohemia and Electress Palatine, Consort of Frederick V', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (May 2016) <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-8638> [accessed 23 December 2020].
[73] Norman Jones, 'The Politics of Renaissance England', in *A New Companion to Renaissance Drama*, ed. by Arthur F. Kinney and Thomas Warren Hopper (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), pp. 11-20 (p. 19).
[74] See Joachim Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 619-31.
[75] Jowett and Taylor, p. 184.

peaceful diplomatic positions,[76] the same cannot be said for many of his English subjects at that time. To quote from the work of Salzman, 'a considerable number' of English Protestants desired 'some engagement, not to mention less rapprochement with Catholic powers, and [...] were even more suspicious of a concomitant increasing tolerance at home.'[77] These concerns were amplified in particular by James's continued pursuit of a controversial 'Spanish Match' between his son and heir, Prince Charles, and the Spanish Infanta, María Ana, the negotiations for which would ultimately culminate in a disastrous mission to Madrid undertaken by Charles and Buckingham in early 1623; as Glyn Redworth puts it, the diplomatic conflict between these two issues (the crisis in the Palatinate on the one hand, the efforts for the Spanish Match on the other) effectively 'caught [James] in an undignified pincer movement'.[78] Read in this context, it is easy to imagine a 1621 audience feeling raucously inspired by Lucio's call for 'all the dukes [to] fall upon [i.e. attack] the King', should Vienna and its allies fail to 'come [...] to composition with' Hungary.

We should not of course assume that Middleton would have expected all of the theatregoers for whom he was writing in late 1621 to have homogeneously subscribed to such belligerent attitudes. Even eighty years after the Dissolution of the Monasteries took place in 1536-41, a Jacobean theatre audience could still be expected to have been something of a multivalent congregation. As Wittek argues, in the Renaissance theatres 'Anyone who could afford the admission price of one penny could feel welcome to participate on an equal basis with strangers in a space where religious and political differences did not preclude the possibility of meaningful shared experience.'[79] In any case, it would be highly reductive to

[76] See e.g. R. Malcolm Smuts, 'The Making of *Rex Pacificus*: James VI and I and the Problem of Peace in an Age of Religious War', in *Royal Subjects: Essays on the Writings of James VI and I*, ed. by Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), pp. 290-322.
[77] Paul Salzman, *Literature and Politics in the 1620s: 'Whisper'd Counsells'* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 12.
[78] Glyn Redworth, *The Prince and the Infanta: The Cultural Politics of the Spanish Match* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 21.
[79] Stephen Wittek, 'Middleton's *A Game at Chess* and the Making of a Theatrical Public', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 55 (2015), pp. 423-46 (pp. 425-6).

assert that being a Catholic would also necessarily have made a playgoer pro-Habsburg and thus in favour of armed warfare against the Protestant Union. As Peter H. Wilson informs us, historical evidence indicates that the conflict was in fact rarely characterised as 'two confessional parties locked in combat across the continent', something that is also 'true for correspondence between rulers and their commanders, for personal diaries, and for local chronicles.'[80] Wilson also points to specific examples which go against the idea of a strict confessional divide existing between the warring sides, such as the case of Sir James Hepburn, a Scottish Catholic who 'commanded a brigade under Gustavus Adolphus', the Lutheran King of Sweden,[81] as well as the events of 1635, when 'Catholic France intervened on the side of Protestant Sweden against the Catholic Habsburg emperor and his Lutheran Saxon allies.'[82]

Yet it is difficult to argue against the perception that during the 1620s in particular Middleton was apparently writing much of his drama with a Protestant, pro-war clientele in his mind. Middleton most obviously achieved this in 1624, through his infamous *succès de scandale*, *A Game at Chess*, an immensely popular satire which – although Wittek has recently set forth a more nuanced argument that its 'Hispanophobic, anti-Catholic, or nationalistic elements' might also 'meaningfully coexist with elements such as suspicion of the English Court and fascination with Spain'[83] – has commonly been perceived as a product of jingoistic public fervour, as has been illustrated, for example, by Cogswell, who comments that 'the play's vehement hispanophobia stirred up popular support for the war coalition's goal of an Anglo-Spanish conflict', and who also reminds us of how the Spanish Ambassador himself, Don Carlos II Coloma y de Saa, 'interpreted the play to mean that "nothing else but war is to

[80] Peter H. Wilson, 'Dynasty, Constitution, and Confession: The Role of Religion in the Thirty Years War', *International History Review*, 30 (2008), pp. 473-514 (p. 489).
[81] Ibid., p. 491.
[82] Ibid., p. 475.
[83] Wittek, 'Theatrical Public', p. 424.

be expected from these people"'.[84] Middleton's adapted *Measure for Measure* cannot be described as being as aggressively satirical or seditious as *A Game at Chess*, of course; but by aligning this play so closely with the ongoing events in Europe, *Measure for Measure* takes on a far more critical position regarding the rule of King James I than it apparently did in its original 1603-4 version. *Measure for Measure* can thus be read as a representation of popular disquiet regarding James's foreign policy, a disquiet which Middleton would go on to explore with increasing directness as his work progressed over the course of the early 1620s, culminating in *A Game at Chess* only three years later.

'I am custom-shrunk':
Plague Anxieties and the News in 1621

It is clear, then, that Middleton was a playwright who was heavily attuned to the social and political upheavals occurring during the early 1620s, as an ever-increasing number of European states prepared for war (while England's King remained controversially reluctant regarding his country's involvement), and strove to reflect his largely partisan attitudes through his dramatic output, 'abandon[ing] a playwright's customary caution about even mentioning contemporary politics', to quote from Cogswell's analysis.[85] As Adrian Streete puts it, reflecting upon *Women Beware Women*'s connection to contemporary political controversies, such occurrences as the 'humiliation of James' son-in-law Frederick [...] the vexed question of a possible Catholic marriage for Charles [...] the ever present difficulty of Anglo-Catholic relations [...] as well as growing religious factionalism within the Church of England all contributed towards a culturally febrile atmosphere, one to which [...] Middleton was well placed to respond.'[86] We might even imagine that the multitudinous concerns that must have been preying upon

[84] Thomas Cogswell, 'Thomas Middleton and the Court, 1624: *A Game at Chess* in Context', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 47 (1984), pp. 273-88 (p. 281).
[85] Thomas Cogswell, 'States and Their Pawns: English Political Tensions from the Armada to the Thirty Years War', in *Thomas Middleton in Context*, ed. by Suzanne Gossett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 126-34 (p. 126).
[86] Adrian Streete, '"An old quarrel between us that will never be at an end": Middleton's *Women Beware Women* and Late Jacobean Religious Politics', *Review of English Studies*, 60 (2008), pp. 230-54 (p. 231).

Middleton's Calvinist mind at this point in his career could be reflected in the varied list of woes with which he provided Mistress Overdone in his first addition to *Measure for Measure*: 'what with the war, what with the sweat, what with the gallows, and what with poverty, I am custom-shrunk' (1.2.A66-A67).

The section of 1.2 in which this statement occurs has been inadequately adapted. In lines A48-A65, news of Claudio's arrest on charges of fornication is brought by Mistress Overdone, yet just a few lines later (D1-D7 in the New Oxford text) Overdone herself is informed of these events by the clown Pompey:

> CLOWN
> Yonder man is carried to prison.
> BAWD
> Well, what has he done?
> CLOWN
> A woman.
> BAWD
> But what's his offence?
> CLOWN
> Groping for trouts in a peculiar river.
> BAWD
> What? Is there a maid with child by him?
> CLOWN
> No, but there's a woman with maid by him. (1.2.D1-D7)

It seems most plausible that these lines were intended to be deleted following the insertion of the added lines A1-A67 above, but were mistakenly kept in the printed text. The resulting confusing dialogue therefore provides further reason to believe that this scene has undergone substantial changes. But if Middleton altered the scene to make Overdone the bearer of the news about Claudio, he gave her character a much greater presence in the scene, and expanded her worries beyond purely those which personally affect her business. Like Overdone, Middleton was at this time obviously concerned 'with the war,' but it is possible that he may also have been preoccupied 'with poverty': England's economic woes had previously influenced Middleton and Shakespeare in their writing of *Timon of Athens*, a play which has

been read as a comment upon James's problematic profligacy early in his reign, something which became apparent shortly after his accession and reached its apex during the period 1605-8, during which time *Timon* was most likely written.[87] This early context might explain *Measure*'s city comedy-esque language of commerce and exchange – as David Landreth writes, this is a play which 'uses money to define the enclosure of contingency within the legitimating means of sovereignty', as when the Duke 'mints' Angelo 'to become the instrument of [his] secondhand governance' in the opening scene[88] – but the nation's finances were no less precarious in 1621, with the value of coin fluctuating dangerously.[89] It is interesting, then, that throughout his addition to 1.2 Middleton can be observed to pun upon the transaction of money when describing the many citizens of Vienna, their 'bones […] hollow' (1.2.A45), who have received 'many [sexual] diseases' from the prostitutes 'under [Mistress Overdone's] roof' (1.2.A36), with jokes regarding the homophonous connection between dollars and 'dolours' (1.2.A39), meaning particularly painful diseases (*OED n.*, 1), as well as a reference to a 'French crown' (1.2.A41), or baldness caused by syphilis, a.k.a. the 'French pox',[90] underlying the commentary upon England's economic hardships.[91] As Newman thus argues of 1.2.A1-A67: 'if we recognise it as a Middletonian interpolation, the language of disease, contamination and foreign coinage functions differently. Middleton may have been responding to heightened anxieties about coinage in the late Jacobean period, when the diseased English economy had been brought to its knees by foreign wars and the

[87] See David Bevington and David L. Smith, 'James I and *Timon of Athens*', *Comparative Drama*, 33 (1999), pp. 56-87.
[88] David Landreth, *The Face of Mammon: The Matter of Money in English Renaissance Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 103.
[89] See Bradley D. Ryner, 'Anxieties of Currency Exchange in Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling*', in *Money, Morality, and Culture in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Juliann Vitullo and Diane Wolfthal (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 109–25 (pp. 110-12).
[90] See Louis F. Qualtiere and William W. E. Slights, 'Contagion and Blame in Early Modern England: The Case of the French Pox', *Literature and Medicine*, 22 (2003), pp. 1-24.
[91] See Stephen Deng, *Coinage and State Formation in Early Modern English Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 161-2.

international market economy.'[92] All of this converges to emphasise further the topical relevance of this Middletonian addition to the concerns and anxieties of spectators in late 1621.

But Middleton's addition to 1.2 is not just a nationalistic call to arms. Although Jowett's reading of the play in relation to the 6 October *Corante* focuses primarily upon the news of the King of Hungary as an influence upon 1.2.A1-A67, Middleton's wider reading of this issue may also have encouraged him to draw attention to a threat which could have been even more immediately fearsome for many members of his audience than the erupting European war itself. Indeed, Overdone also claims to be troubled by 'the sweat'. Ostensibly, this is just another reference to venereal diseases. As Sujata Iyengar glosses this word, associating Overdone's line with the prediction at the end of *2 Henry IV* (*c*.1597) that 'Falstaff shall die of a sweat' (Epilogue 23), 'Some editors take both references to evoke the tub-fast or the sweating-cure for syphilis', rather than, for example, the 'sweating sickness', a mysterious disease which ravaged England in several outbreaks between 1485 and 1578.[93] Indeed, although the *OED* offers the sweating sickness as an interpretation of 'the sweat' (*n*. 3.b.), that the term refers to the 'sweating tub' cure for syphilis is the primary reading set forth in major editions by N. W. Bawcutt (Oxford), Brian Gibbons (New Cambridge), and Braunmuller and Watson (Arden3).[94] It is important to note, however, as A. A. Mendilow pointed out in 1958, that although 'the sweat' and the plague were not medically speaking the same thing, 'In common usage and even in many of the medical manuals the terms were used interchangeably.'[95] Mendilow cites several early modern treatises in support of this claim, including Thomas Moulton's *Myrrour or Glasse of Helth* (*c*.1540), Andrew Boorde's *Compendyous Regimente or Dyetary of Health* (1562), John Jones's *A Dial for all Agues* (1566), and Thomas Brasbridge's *The Poore Mans*

[92] Newman, pp. 113-14.
[93] Sujata Iyengar, *Shakespeare's Medical Language: A Dictionary* (London: Continuum, 2011), p. 328.
[94] N. W. Bawcutt (ed.), *Measure for Measure* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 95; Brian Gibbons (ed.), *Measure for Measure*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 96; Braunmuller and Watson, p. 168.
[95] A. A. Mendilow, 'Falstaff's Death of a Sweat', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 9 (1958), pp. 479-83 (p. 479).

Jewell (1592). With the recurrent threat of plague in mind, therefore, Overdone's reference to 'the sweat' should give us pause. That Overdone would here once again be referring to sexually transmitted infections is fully in keeping with her concerns as a bawd, and taken in this sense it would appear that such diseases have significantly reduced either her pool of available clients or the number of prostitutes at her disposal (or possibly both), thus contributing towards her present feeling of being 'custom-shrunk.' Yet if we consider the possibility of a connection between her reference to 'the sweat' and the ever-present menace of plague in early modern society, Middleton's adaptation of *Measure for Measure* can once again be brought back to the news of the Thirty Years' War which had recently begun circulating among the English populace.

Although England had been free from a significant epidemic of plague since the last great outbreak of 1603-4, and would not experience its next severe bout until 1625, fear of the reappearance of the disease never fully abated. To quote from the valuable work undertaken in this regard by Ian Munro,

> In the early seventeenth century London's plague was not a calamitous singularity but a continuous presence, ebbing and flowing throughout the years but never disappearing. Even after 1612, when plague deaths in London dropped to a handful a year, the psychic presence of plague did not leave the city, as reports of plague elsewhere in the country and in Europe repeatedly presaged its imminent return.[96]

The 6 October issue of *Corante* would surely have contributed to this continued 'psychic presence of plague', relaying as it did news dated 'the 13. of September' from 'Constantinople [...] that there is both a great plague and dearth in that City'. For a Viennese citizen such as Mistress Overdone, news of 'a great plague and dearth' in Constantinople could have had an immediate resonance: since 1453, Constantinople had served as the capital of the Ottoman

[96] Ian Munro, 'The City and Its Double: Plague Time in Early Modern London', *English Literary Renaissance*, 30 (2008), pp. 241-61 (pp. 241-2).

Empire, a state which had been engaged in a protracted conflict with the Habsburg Monarchy since the Battle of Mohács in 1526.[97] Moreover, the Siege of Vienna, led by the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in 1529,[98] was an event which came to be directly referenced in several plays of the period, as in *2 Tamburlaine* (1587), where Marlowe gives Orcanes the line 'forgett'st thou I am he | That with the cannon shook Vienna walls,' to which Sigismund replies 'Vienna was besieged, and I was there' (1.2.9-26),[99] and the revised 1616 Folio version of Jonson's *Every Man In His Humour* (1598), where Brainworm, adopting the disguise of a wounded veteran, informs Edward and Stephen of an absurdly elongated catalogue of war service, including the story that he 'was twice shot at the taking of Aleppo, once at the relief of Vienna' (2.4.53-4). It therefore stands to reason that the Ottoman capital would thus have been associated by many knowledgeable spectators with the traditional enemy of Habsburg Austria.

Yet the news from Constantinople could also have had an important significance for spectators attending a revival of *Measure for Measure* in late 1621. Audiences that October would surely have been aware of the threat of a plague preparing to sweep its way across Europe, especially given the matter of the ongoing conflict in the Palatinate. As Rolfe reminds us of the perceived 'connections between plague and war' which were often identified in the early modern imagination, 'Both brought the risk – and often the realisation – of death and of destruction, of personal loss and national catastrophe.'[100] Thus, in the specific context of the Thirty Years' War,

> While the war was geographically distant, neither confessional fellow-feeling, dynastic loyalty, nor self-preservation allowed English Protestants to consider

[97] James D. Tracy, 'The Habsburg Monarchy in Conflict with the Ottoman Empire, 1527-1593: A Clash of Civilizations', *Austrian History Yearbook*, 46 (2015), pp. 1-26 (p. 5).
[98] Ibid., p. 12.
[99] Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine: Parts One and Two*, ed. by Anthony B. Dawson, 2nd edn (London: New Mermaids, 1997).
[100] Kirsty Rolfe, 'Fatal and Memorable: Plague, Providence and War in English Texts, 1625-6', *The Seventeenth Century*, 35 (2020), pp. 293-314 (p. 294).

> it remote from their own concerns. Perceived failures in the response to the Palatine crisis – both on the part of subject and of state – were seen by some to put the English nation at risk both of direct Habsburg aggression and of divine punishment. In this context, the plague can stand in for the horrors of war: as a comparable punishment for sin, and/or as a warning that the conflict will eventually reach the shores of an unrepentant England.[101]

Rolfe's analysis is grounded in publications that materialised in 1625-6, by which point England, following the death of King James on 27 March 1625, and the subsequent accession of Prince Charles to the English throne as King Charles I immediately thereafter, had finally become involved in the European wars, after many years of vacillation: as Cogswell summarises, in 1624 Parliament had 'voted a generous extraordinary supply of almost £300,000, which allowed England to move onto a war footing, repairing coastal and Irish defenses, refitting the fleet and sending 6,000 troops to the hard-pressed Dutch Republic.'[102] Yet Rolfe's argument strongly demonstrates how intrinsically the threat of plague could be associated with the waging of war, something we can readily apply to the news that reached England in October 1621.

It is also interesting to note that another work written some months prior to Middleton's adaptation of *Measure for Measure*, the 1621 play *The Witch of Edmonton*, has similarly been connected to contemporary plague fears. As Bronwyn Johnston has explored in great detail, *The Witch of Edmonton* is a play which 'exhibits a complex model of contagion in which pollution and disease are linked inextricably with moral corruption, with the devil serving as the pathogenic transmitter of both.'[103] Indeed, as Johnston points out, throughout the play both Dog (in actuality a devil or malevolent spirit) and the titular witch, Mother Sawyer, are repeatedly connected to ideas of contagion, and even tellingly use the word 'touch', identified

[101] Ibid.
[102] Cogswell, 'States and Their Pawns', p. 133.
[103] Bronwyn Johnston, '"Go touch his life": Contagious Malice and the Power of Touch in *The Witch of Edmonton*', in *Contagion and the Shakespearean Stage*, ed. by Darryl Chalk and Mary Floyd-Wilson (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), pp. 63-81 (p. 64).

by Donald Beecher as the etymological origin of the word 'contagion' (via the Latin 'tangere'),[104] as an instruction to 'kill' (e.g. 'Go, touch his life', spoken by Sawyer to Dog at 2.1.171).[105] Curiously, *The Witch of Edmonton* is attributed on the title page of the 1658 quarto edition to Dekker, Ford, Rowley, '&c'. It has often been suggested that it is Middleton whose co-authorship may be encompassed by that ambiguous '&c'.[106] This quartet of dramatists certainly wrote together on another project written around this same point in time, being the four recognised authors of *The Spanish Gypsy* (1623), and the argument that Middleton might also have contributed to *The Witch of Edmonton* with Dekker, Ford, and Rowley is, at the very least, plausible.[107] If that is the case, then it is certainly interesting to consider the possibility that Middleton, potentially involved in the writing of a drama early in 1621 which so ominously plays with the issue of popular plague anxieties (as highlighted by Johnston), just months after the first news of the continental wars had begun to circulate in England, also sought to connect ideas of 'the war' and 'the sweat' in his first addition to *Measure for Measure* later that same year. The last great plague of 1603-4, in the midst of which Shakespeare had likely been working on his original version of *Measure for Measure*, had resulted in the deaths of over thirty thousand people, more than an eighth of London's population,[108] and the fears of plague which might have been exacerbated by such reports of the coming of war could plausibly have inspired Middleton's reflections upon his reading of newssheets like Butter's *Corante* when he came to rewrite Shakespeare's early Jacobean city comedy in the context of this new European conflict.

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[104] Donald Beecher, 'Windows on Contagion', in *Imagining Contagion in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Claire L. Carlin (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 32-46 (p. 32).
[105] Thomas Dekker, John Ford, and William Rowley, *The Witch of Edmonton*, ed. by Lucy Munro (London: Arden Early Modern Drama, 2016); Johnston, p. 69.
[106] For a recent identification of Middleton as a likely co-author of this play, see Brian Vickers (ed.), *The Collected Works of John Ford*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 135-67, where Vickers finds Middleton as having partaken in the writing of 3.4 with Dekker and Rowley.
[107] See Jackson and Taylor, 'Works Excluded', p. 446.
[108] Neil Cummins, Morgan Kelly, and Cormac Ó Gráda, 'Living Standards and Plague in London, 1560-1665', *Economic History Review*, 69 (2016), pp. 3-34.

'Slandering a prince deserves it':
News, Slander, and Lucio as Rumourmonger

In their discussion of their performance-testing of *Measure for Measure* as a Middleton adaptation, Bourus and Taylor observe that Middleton's additions to the play encompass the beginning of half of the play's speaking roles. Indeed, eleven such characters are introduced in the existing version of the play in lines which have latterly been assigned to the hand of Middleton. Yet it is also important to note that these speaking roles were not all affected to an equal extent. Much scholarship, in fact, has already focused on how Shakespeare's characterisation of the Duke in particular would have been affected by Middleton's identified alterations to the text, with Bourus and Taylor contrasting his manipulative scheming in the existing Middletonian version of the play with his 'benevolent plotting' in their postulated Shakespearean original.[109]

Yet it is also worth noting in particular Jowett and Taylor's suggestion that Middleton, in the act of adapting *Measure for Measure*, also very deliberately chose to elaborate in particular upon the character of Lucio, the exasperated unemployed soldier (at least in Middleton's reworking of the role) who initiates the on-stage political discussion of the King of Hungary at the beginning of 1.2. For the most part, this apparently did not involve a significant amount of new writing being added to Lucio's role. Nonetheless, it is interesting to consider Middleton's expansion of Lucio's part in the light of the adapted play-text's relevance to England's burgeoning culture of printed news and the development of an early form of the public sphere in 1621.

Of all the characters to whom the Duke's identity is revealed following the removal of his ecclesiastical disguise in the play's long final scene, it is arguably Lucio who is subjected to the most unrelenting portion of the Duke's wrath. Even the hypocritical, corrupt deputy Angelo, following the pleadings of Isabella and Mariana, is granted 'an apt remission' (5.1.486)

[109] Bourus and Taylor, p. 366.

from the Duke's original sentence of being 'condemn[ed] […] to the very block | Where Claudio stooped to death' (5.1.400-1), as is (even more surprisingly) Barnardine, the convicted murderer awaiting execution: 'for those earthly faults, I quit them all, | And pray thee take this mercy to provide | For better times to come' (5.1.471-3). As Andrew Majeske puts it, 'The Duke's apparently inexplicable act of mercy in Barnardine's case precisely balances and counteracts Angelo's confoundingly strict application of the law in Claudio's case. The pardon produces a necessary "shock," a seemingly "unaccountable disruption," one that […] compels the people to forget and forgive not only Angelo's severity and misdeeds, but also the Duke's laxity in enforcing the laws that caused Vienna's problems in the first place.'[110] For Lucio, conversely, a total tempering of the Duke's ire is not quite as easily achievable:

> DUKE
> And yet here's one I cannot pardon.
> You, sirrah, that knew me for a fool, a coward,
> One all of luxury, an ass, a madman,
> Wherein have I so deserved of you
> That you extol me thus?
> LUCIO
> Faith, my lord, I spoke it but according to the trick. If you will hang me for it, you may; but I had rather it would please you I might be whipped.
> DUKE
> Whipped first, sir, and hanged after.–
> Proclaim it, Provost, round about the city,
> If any woman wronged by this lewd fellow,
> As I have heard him swear himself there's one
> Whom he begot with child, let her appear,
> And he shall marry her. The nuptial finished,
> Let him be whipped and hanged. (5.1.487-501)

Although Lucio might protest most vehemently, even following the Duke's decision to 'Remit thy other forfeits' (5.1.507) so long as he marries the prostitute Kate Keepdown, that 'Marrying a punk, my lord, is pressing to death, whipping, and hanging' (5.1.509-10), the Duke remains

[110] Andrew Majeske, 'Equity's Absence: The Extremity of Claudio's Prosecution and Barnardine's Pardon in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*', *Law and Literature*, 21 (2009), pp. 169-84 (p. 178).

steadfast in his decision to make an example of him: as he says to justify his condemnation of Lucio, 'Slandering a prince deserves it' (5.1.511).

Ostensibly, the treatment of Lucio in this concluding scene should bear scant relation to Middleton's additions elsewhere in the text. After all, while Middleton is thought to have made some contribution to 5.1, these seem to have been relatively minor textual interpolations. Taylor and Loughnane assign to his authorship the addition of the silent figure of Julietta at 5.1.465.1; the bawdy dialogue regarding prostitution which appears in the middle of the Duke's interrogation of Mariana –

> DUKE
> […] neither maid, widow, nor wife!
> LUCIO
> My lord, she may be a punk, for many of them are neither maid, widow, nor wife.
> DUKE
> Silence that fellow. I would he had some cause to prattle for himself.
> LUCIO
> Well, my lord. (5.1.176-81)

– and one further interjection involving Lucio which occurs a few lines later:

> LUCIO
> He was drunk then, my lord, it can be no better.
> DUKE
> For the benefit of silence, would thou wert so too.
> LUCIO
> Well, my lord. (5.1.186-8)[111]

The two additions at 5.1.176-81 and 186-8 both serve to expand Lucio's presence in this scene, but it is important to note that in a scene of 526 lines such interpolations as those outlined above only constitute eight full lines of dialogue (or 1.52% of the scene's text), plus two half-lines

[111] In a separate study, Bourus and Taylor have also suggested that the Duke's half-line 'But fitter time for that' at 5.1.481, which underscores the delayed nature of Isabella's response to his marriage proposal, may potentially be another Middletonian addition; see Bourus and Taylor, p. 370. The New Oxford text identifies the half-line as 'Middletonian' in a performance note, but does not identify it as by Middleton.

and one extra character (Julietta) added to a stage direction. Lucio's role in this scene, then, seems largely to remain as Shakespeare intended it in his original version of the play. Nevertheless, in a similar vein to how 3.2 was later integrated into the text of *Titus Andronicus* (as I have discussed in Chapter 3 of this thesis), *Measure for Measure* 5.1 does contain certain information which may have informed Middleton's expansion of Lucio's role throughout the text, particularly in terms of his importance to the addition 1.2.A1-A67 analysed above.

Interestingly, the concept of slander, that so damaging form of communication which the Duke feels 'deserves' severe penalties, is a noticeable theme which runs throughout the action of the play. The words 'slander', 'slanderers', and 'slandering' appear five times in 5.1 alone. The first two of these instances are spoken in relation to the accusations which have been levelled against Angelo – 'stir not you till you have well determined | Upon these slanderers' (254-5); 'did you set these women on to slander | Lord Angelo?' (277-8) – and his efforts to dismiss Isabella's complaints as slanders is a logical follow-on from his earlier warning to her about any attempts to tell others of the abhorrent sexual proposition he has made towards her: 'Who will believe thee, Isabel?' (2.4.154). However, the third occurrence in 5.1 instead sees such terminology directed at the disguised Duke, whose criticism of Vienna's supposedly absent ruler is decried by Escalus as 'Slander to th' state!' (311), while the latter two occurrences – 'Thy slanders I forgive' (506); 'Slandering a prince deserves it' (511) – refer to Lucio's earlier spreading of disinformation regarding the Duke's moral character, which he unwittingly spoke to the Duke himself upon encountering him in the guise of 'Friar Lodowick' in 3.1:

> Ere [the Duke] would have hanged a man for the getting a hundred bastards, he would have paid for the nursing a thousand. He had some feeling of the sport, he knew the service, and that instructed him to mercy […] 'Sblood! your beggar of fifty – and his use was to put a ducat in her clack-dish. The duke had crochets in him. He would be drunk too, that let me inform you […] A very superficial, ignorant, unweighing fellow. (3.1.340-59)

Lucio's overview of the Duke's reported vices may be grounded somewhat in reality. The Duke is certainly not an entirely wise and virtuous ruler, although he clearly wishes himself to be perceived as such, and earlier critics did often interpret him in a similar manner.[112] As Braunmuller and Watson write, 'He brags about not needing public adulation, but he abandons his city partly to avoid public criticism, and when that criticism comes anyway through Lucio, he complains about it, plans to punish it severely, tries with embarrassing grandiosity to refute it […] and begs others to contradict it.'[113] However, the chatter which Lucio spreads around Vienna concerning the Duke's moral conduct is evocative of something which King James himself saw as a considerable threat to the government of England: rumour. As David Coast observes, 'rumour was a mode of political discourse that even the poorest members of society could freely engage in […] According to the official rhetoric, ordinary people were emotional and gullible, they lacked judgment and were always eager for change and novelty, and so were particularly likely to credit slanders and seditious rumours that might undermine popular obedience to authority.'[114] We might here recall Shakespeare's description of rumour in *2 Henry IV*, in which he calls it

> a pipe
> Blown by surmises, Jealousy's conjectures,
> And of so easy and so plain a stop

[112] See e.g. Josephine Waters Bennett, *Measure for Measure as Royal Entertainment* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), pp. 83-104 and David Stevenson, *The Achievement of Shakespeare's Measure for Measure* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 134-64.
[113] Braunmuller and Watson, pp. 59-60.
[114] David Coast, *News and Rumour in Jacobean England: Information, Court Politics and Diplomacy, 1618-25* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), p. 83.

That the blunt monster with uncounted heads,
The still-discordant wav'ring multitude,
Can play upon it. (Induction 15-20)

Yet if Lucio was always intended by Shakespeare as a largely unfettered rumourmonger, whose seditious murmurings ostensibly pose a very real threat to public opinion of Vienna's government, then it is nevertheless notable that Middleton appears to have taken this aspect of his character and noticeably expanded it, making him into the troublesome disseminator of topical news we are confronted with in 1.2.

The severity of the Duke's response to Lucio's exercise in 'Slandering a prince', whether contextualised in 1603-4 or in late 1621, bears some relation to the political issue of slander as it was understood in early modern England. As M. Lindsay Kaplan explains, 'During the reign of Edward I, provision was made in 1275 to punish rumors defaming the reputation of a state official in the statute of *scandalum magnatum* – slander of a magnate.'[115] Furthermore, James (as King of Scotland) had himself affirmed his support for the laws against slander in 1584, in his poetic treatise *Ane Schort Treatise conteining some Reulis and Cantelis to be obseruit and eschewit in Scottis Poesie*.[116] Yet Lucio's role as a rumourmonger also appears to be resonant of the royal concern regarding the popularity of printed news during the early 1620s. Lucio is not necessarily making his slanders up on the fly; it seems likely that he is repeating what he has heard from other sources, and passing such information on to the ears of other subjects. In this sense, Lucio might well recall the people of late Jacobean England, who had so recently been granted a regular source of news in the form of the printed corantos which had so recently and so rapidly become so popular. Indeed, considering this, Jowett has even pondered whether Lucio and his friends, when they enter onto the stage in Middleton's

[115] M. Lindsay Kaplan, *The Culture of Slander in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 21.
[116] See Jane Rickard, *Authorship and Authority: The Writings of James VI and I* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), p. 37.

addition at the beginning of 1.2, might have been brandishing their own copies of such newssheets, the audience thus visually witnessing the source of their topic of discussion.[117] This, unfortunately, can never be proven, but one thing does seem clear: by the start of the 1620s, a popular news culture had arisen that had caused much disquiet for England's government, and the threat posed by the new ease with which news and rumour could be disseminated would have led to the emergence of many Lucio-figures, now equipped with the information to discuss topical affairs freely, unfettered, and, in royal eyes, quite subversively.

This chapter has demonstrated how intricately Middleton's engagement with the issue of printed news in 1621 is reflected in the adapted text he produced of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* during this year. As war continued to erupt throughout Europe, and as England's King James remained very reticent regarding his participation in such a conflict, Middleton, whose own works betray him to have been a strong advocate for military intervention on the continent, crafted a new version of *Measure for Measure* which refocuses the plays engagements with religion, kingship, and slander as a commentary upon the rising popularity of the printed newssheet in the early 1620s. While past critics might have viewed Shakespeare's play as a positive portrayal of rulership in the wake of the accession of King James I in 1603, Middleton's adapted version of this play is far more obviously critical of the diplomatic positions undertaken by this King in 1621. Middleton's criticism of the monarch in this regard is well documented, and would famously culminate in his satire *A Game at Chess* in 1624, with which Middleton seems to have ended his career. Yet as this thesis will proceed to demonstrate, *Measure for Measure* was only the first of two Shakespeare plays which he reshaped in such a satirical way. This is something which will be argued further in the next and final chapter of this thesis, which will examine Middleton's adaptation of *All's Well that Ends Well*, which he

[117] Jowett, 'Audacity', p. 236.

likely undertook to work on just a matter of months after finishing adapting *Measure for Measure* in or shortly after the October of 1621.

CHAPTER 5

KINGSHIP, FAVOURITISM, AND COURT SCANDAL: SATIRISING THE 1620s IN *ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL*

When Bertram and Lafeu first appear onstage with Helen and the Countess of Roussillon in the opening scene of *All's Well that Ends Well*, their conversation swiftly turns to the subject of the mysterious illness which is presently afflicting the King of France. Informing the audience that 'He hath abandoned his physicians [...] under whose practices he hath persecuted time with hope, and finds no other advantage in the process but only the losing of hope by time' (1.1.10-12), Lafeu wastes little of his own time before elaborating further upon the nature of the King's debilitating ailment:

> BERTRAM
> What is it, my good lord, the King languishes of?
> LAFEU
> A fistula, my lord.
> BERTRAM
> I heard not of it before.
> LAFEU
> I would it were not notorious. (1.1.24-7)

Lafeu is conspicuously unspecific regarding the nature of the French King's 'fistula,' and a wider reading of the rest of the play provides us with no more explicit details either. It is important to note, however, that the French King's fistula is not solely an invention of the dramatist, but is in fact mentioned in one of Shakespeare's known sources for the play, the thirty-eighth tale in Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*, which had been translated into English by William Painter in the first volume of his *Palace of Pleasure* in 1566. In this version of the story, the cause of the King's illness is unequivocally stated to be located near his heart: 'She heard by reporte, that the Frenche Kyng, had a swellyng vpon his breast, whiche by reason of ill cure, was growen to a Fistula, and did putte him to meruellous paine and grief'.[1] Yet the

[1] William Painter, *The palace of pleasure beautified, adorned and well furnished, with pleasaunt histories and excellent nouelles, selected out of diuers good and commendable authors* (London: 1566), fol. 95^{v}.

word ‘fistula’ – simply defined by Iyengar as ‘a long, hollow, ulcerated passageway,’[2] and described more fully in the *OED* as ‘any abnormal tube-like passage between the skin and an organ or cavity within the body, typically exuding pus or other matter’ (*n*. 3.a.)[3] – is in fact a very broad medical term, describing a condition which can occur in sundry parts of the human body. Indeed, there is good reason to believe that the meaning of the word as it appears in *All’s Well that Ends Well* may have been intended to signify something very different from the term as it is used in both Boccaccio and Painter.

Bard C. Cosman states that to many early modern spectators the use of the unqualified term ‘fistula’ would likely have implied that the King’s complaint was situated anally. As Cosman points out in his analysis of Lafeu’s use of the word, ‘Scatological humor was standard in contemporary comedy […] and fistula was part of its vocabulary.’[4] Unfortunately, corpus linguistics evidence from the period does not support this assertion. In fact, a search of *Early Print Lab* only turns up fourteen examples of explicitly anal fistulae being referred to in print in the years before the outbreak of the English Civil War in 1642, only two of which occur in works of comedy by Shakespeare’s contemporary dramatists: in Marston’s *Parasitaster* (1605, at 1.2.194) and Jonson’s *The Staple of News* (1626, at 2.4.96-7). But Cosman bolsters his argument in favour of an anal reading of the French King’s fistula by pointing to the play’s many emphases upon and allusions to the concept of ‘ends’ – a detail which has been recognised in earlier works of criticism[5] – which could be interpreted as a form of

[2] Iyengar, p. 137.
[3] Modern editors of the play have also tended to gloss this with the more general, not specifically anal, interpretation of the word, including Susan Snyder, who defines the King’s fistula using the more general definition of a ‘burrowing abcess’ (Susan Snyder (ed.), *All’s Well That Ends Well* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 80), and Russell Fraser, who simply calls it ‘a long, flute-shaped abcess’ (Russell Fraser (ed.), *All’s Well That Ends Well*, 2nd edn, rev. by Alexander Leggatt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 48). Conversely, Gossett and Wilcox, in their Arden3 edition, do argue that the phrase would most commonly have been associated with anal disorders: see Gossett and Wilcox, p. 128.
[4] Bard C. Cosman, ‘*All’s Well That Ends Well*: Shakespeare’s Treatment of Anal Fistula’, *Upstart Crow*, 19 (1999), pp. 78-97 (p. 85).
[5] See e.g. Ian Donaldson, ‘*All’s Well That Ends Well*: Shakespeare’s Play of Endings’, *Essays in Criticism*, 27 (1977), pp. 34-55.

Shakespearean punning upon the human backside. In light of Cosman's thought-provoking elucidations, then, it may well be of note that after his physicians, '*Embowelled* of their doctrine, have left off | The danger to itself' (1.3.213-14; emphasis mine), the King praises Helen for her miraculous curing of his affliction with what might be considered to be equally suggestive language: 'From *lowest place* when virtuous things proceed, | The place is dignified by th' doer's deed' (2.3.117-18; emphasis mine).[6]

How many other works of early modern drama are known for featuring characters who are troubled by explicitly anal fistulae? Just one other noteworthy example immediately comes to mind: *A Game at Chess*, wherein humour about such a fistula is a cornerstone of the play's characterisation of the Black Knight, Middleton's satirical caricature of former Spanish Ambassador Gondomar, who infamously suffered from exactly this kind of ailment. In light of this connection, Lafeu's reference to the French King's fistula was one aspect of the text of *All's Well that Ends Well* which first encouraged Maguire and Smith to suggest that this play might originally have been written as a direct collaboration between Shakespeare and Middleton. As Maguire and Smith pointed out (in a similar vein to Cosman's reading), 'Fistulas may occur in sundry parts of the body but are usually anal', and thus in this interpretation 'anal fistula connects *All's Well* with two Middleton plays'.[7] Indeed, the word 'fistula' occurs nowhere else in Shakespeare's surviving canon of works, but Maguire and Smith observed Middleton deploying it in two of his comedies, not only in *A Game at Chess* (the far more notorious example), but also in *The Widow*, in Ansaldo's reading of the pseudo-medical ditty 'Palsy, gout, hydropic humour, | Breath that stinks beyond perfumer, | Fistula *in ano*, ulcer, mègrum, | Or what disease soe'er beleag'r 'em' (4.2.91-4). Yet although Maguire and Smith do not mention it in their analysis, Middleton also makes use of the term in a third work, *The*

[6] Cosman, p. 82.
[7] Maguire and Smith, 'Many Hands', p. 14.

Owl's Almanac (1618), in the section warning of '*General diseases to reign in this year*' (l. 1362). Here, however, the condition is unambiguously identified as being of a markedly different form: 'All the fiddlers that play upon wind instruments shall in cold, nipping mornings have fistulas in their fingers' (l. 1370-2). That this third reference to a fistula is self-evidently not referring to the anal kind, then, significantly undercuts Maguire and Smith's claims about Middleton's obsession with anal fistulas.

The problem with drawing upon such an association between Lafeu's reference to a fistula and the references to fistulae in other works by Middleton, in fact, is that such a connection functions exclusively in the context of a perceived link between the French King's fistula and the anal disorder from which Gondomar is known to have suffered, as infamously ridiculed by Middleton in *A Game at Chess*. As Suzanne Gossett and Helen Wilcox remark in their recent Arden edition of *All's Well that Ends Well*, 'Lafeu calls the King's ailment "notorious" […] as a fistula of this kind certainly became when the Spanish Ambassador Gondomar's sufferings were satirized on stage'.[8] *A Game at Chess*'s savage lampooning of Gondomar and his fistula was so memorable, in fact, that as Musa Gurnis observes 'Nearly every contemporary commentator identifies Gondomar, the Black Knight, as the central role, several referring to the piece simply by his name.'[9] Middleton's final satire, then, can easily be said to contain the most famous depiction of fistula *in ano* in the entire extant corpus of early modern drama.

Yet it is equally important to note that the fame of Gondomar's fistula also transcended the boundaries of the popular theatre. As Streete writes, 'Gondomar's problems with his anal fistula were well known in visual and verbal polemics.'[10] Indeed, Taylor reminds us that it was

[8] Suzanne Gossett and Helen Wilcox (eds), *All's Well That Ends Well* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2019), p. 54.
[9] Musa Gurnis, *Mixed Faith and Shared Feeling: Theater in Post-Reformation London* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), p. 95.
[10] Adrian Streete, 'Polemical Laughter in Thomas Middleton's *A Game at Chess* (1624)', *English Literary Renaissance*, 50 (2020), pp. 296-333 (p. 329).

a well-known detail in England, and would have been especially topical following Thomas Scott's prominent satirical portrayal of Gondomar in his 1620 pamphlet *Vox Populi; or, News from Spain*.[11] Furthermore, although published the year after the First Folio, in 1624 the engraving for the title page of Scott's *The Second Part of Vox Populi* featured an unflinching depiction of Gondomar's 'chair of ease' (*Chess*, 4.2.3), suggesting that the image alone was successfully able by then to serve as a wordless mockery of his famous condition.[12] Crucially, both of Middleton's references to explicitly anal fistulae were written within the context of Gondomar's ambassadorship to England, *The Widow* in 1615, *A Game at Chess* in 1624; but while Gondomar became Spanish Ambassador for the first time in 1613, even those critics who believe that *All's Well* may post-date 1605 – the date most recently suggested in Wiggins and Richardson's *Catalogue*, and subsequently agreed upon by Taylor and Loughnane[13] – have not tended to argue for a date any later than 1607.[14] In fact, some critics have even suggested that the play may have been written earlier, possibly around 1603-4, although such an argument has not been widely accepted.[15] Thus, despite the tantalising suggestiveness of the French King's fistula, it is important to heed Taylor's warning that there is 'no evidence that would place the original composition of *All's Well* later than 1607',[16] some six years before Gondomar achieved notable prominence in England's cultural and political landscape.

We might hence be tempted to agree with certain of the views set forth by Vickers and Dahl in their forceful riposte to Maguire and Smith's research into the play's authorship, in which – notably failing to take account of Cosman's valuable and intriguing work on the subject – they persist in describing the King's ailment as an 'abscess on the chest,' and state

[11] Taylor, '*All's Well*', p. 346.
[12] See Christina Marie Carlson, 'The Rhetoric of Providence: Thomas Middleton's *A Game at Chess* (1624) and Seventeenth-Century Political Engraving', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 67 (2014), pp. 1224-64 (p. 1241).
[13] Martin Wiggins, in association with Catherine Richardson, *British Drama, 1533-1642: A Catalogue*, vol. 5 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 194-5; Taylor and Loughnane, pp. 557-9.
[14] This was a date most notably argued for in Jackson, 'Spurio', and subsequently rebuffed in Skinner, 'Spurious'.
[15] See e.g. Douglas Bruster and Geneviève Smith, 'A New Chronology for Shakespeare's Plays', *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, 31 (2016), pp. 301-20.
[16] Taylor, '*All's Well*', p. 340.

that 'Maguire and Smith transform this to a fistula *in ano* on no good grounds, apart from Middleton's use of this term.'[17] However, when we consider the likelihood that Middleton's plausible presence in the text is a result not of traditional processes of collaborative co-authorship, but rather derives from Middleton having posthumously adapted Shakespeare's original work (in much the same manner as he has long been observed to have adapted both *Macbeth* around 1616 and *Measure for Measure* in 1621), the textual and linguistic curiosities of the play which Maguire and Smith initially sought to investigate take on a far greater critical significance than they, or indeed Vickers and Dahl, could ever have anticipated back in 2012.

As in the previous chapter on Middleton's adaptation of *Measure for Measure*, this final chapter will consider what effect the far more recent attribution to the hand of Middleton of several passages in *All's Well that Ends Well* might be thought to have upon present-day critical interpretations of this drama. As with *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Titus Andronicus*, Middleton's likely contributions to *All's Well that Ends Well* appear to have been relatively minor, at least when viewed in a purely quantitative manner. As Taylor and Loughnane remind us, 'the hypothesis of adaptation suggests that Middleton is responsible for much less of the play than the hypothesis of collaboration would entail.'[18] Maguire and Smith identified noticeable concentrations of Middletonian stylistic features in seven scenes – 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 4.1, 4.3, and 5.3 – something which Loughnane calls 'a wide dispersal of Middletonian forms with no discernible pattern.'[19] Yet regarding several of these scenes, it would now appear that Maguire and Smith's critical instincts were in fact correct – or, as Maguire and Smith themselves put it, their analysis turned out 'to be wrongly right in almost everything we said'.[20] Not every scene in the play has yet been thoroughly investigated, but of the seven implicated in Maguire and Smith's study, three have since been confidently identified as partially

[17] Vickers and Dahl, p. 14.
[18] Taylor and Loughnane, p. 558.
[19] Loughnane, 'Part One', p. 279.
[20] Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith, 'On Editing', *Shakespeare*, 15 (2019), pp. 293-309 (p. 301).

Middletonian. Loughnane and Taylor both find Middleton in the virginity dialogue spoken between Helen and Paroles at 1.1.98-139.[21] Nance likewise assigns to Middleton the King's speech at 2.3.109-36.[22] Finally, in keeping with Middleton's penchant for the addition of comical material and the expansion of comic roles in his adaptations of Shakespeare, Loughnane argues that Middleton significantly revised the comedic gulling of Paroles in 4.3, with additions likely occurring at lines 90-9, 140-93, 203-38, and 260-4.[23] As this chapter will argue, such revelations in authorship attribution imbue *All's Well that Ends Well* with a kind of temporal duality very similar to that explored in the previous chapter on *Measure for Measure*. It was by expanding upon themes which were initially most relevant when the play was first performed around 1605 that Middleton drastically increased the topicality of this work in preparation for its revival before new audiences at a much later point in time.

This final chapter reads *All's Well that Ends Well* as a Middleton adaptation of the early 1620s, probably produced shortly after Middleton completed work on adapting the text of *Measure for Measure*. The first section of this chapter will be dedicated to assessing the evidence for the date of Middleton's adaptation of the play. Responding to work recently conducted by Taylor, and supplemented by older criticism on the text of *All's Well*, I will argue that this adaptation was likely a product of the early 1620s, and perhaps even of the early months of 1622. The chapter will then build upon the analyses of the text presented in the New Oxford Shakespeare, considering how the adaptation may have operated as a critique of Anglo-Spanish relations during the early 1620s, both in terms of King James's reluctance to engage in a war in Europe, and in relation to popular concern regarding the King's pursuit of the Spanish Match at around this time. Finally, it will be suggested that Middleton's likely augmentation of the King's speech in 2.3 may have been designed to relate the play to common

[21] Loughnane, 'Virginity Dialogue'; Taylor, '*All's Well*', pp. 346-64.
[22] Nance, 'King's Speech'.
[23] Loughnane, 'Part One'; Loughnane, 'Part Two'.

concerns regarding royal favouritism during the early 1620s, in particular reading the speech in relation to contemporary associations between King James and his favourites and an earlier monarch who faced similar criticism, King Edward II, to whom James had recently been compared in parliament.

All's Well that Ends Well has long been recognised as a play that exists in a text filled with unusual features. To quote Maguire and Smith, 'All previous attempts to explain the textual anomalies invoked duality of some kind (Shakespeare was interrupted; he later revised the play; it was later adapted; it was marked up for revival).'[24] Of course, Middleton's identification as the adapter of the play should not be assumed to be the definitive solution to the question of how the extant text came to exhibit so many irregularities and abnormalities. As Loughnane correctly states, after all, 'The discovery that Thomas Middleton added material to Shakespeare's play after its original composition does not necessarily offer a corrective to all these issues.'[25] But as Loughnane continues to observe, such a discovery 'does enable and encourage a new understanding of the layers of composition, authorial and temporal, which produced this complex, divisive comedy.'[26] This is something which I seek to explore further in this final chapter.

'Virginity like an old courtier wears her cap out of fashion': Dating Middleton's Additions to *All's Well that Ends Well*

The present chapter on the surviving version of *All's Well that Ends Well* is necessarily informed by very recent research. Although Maguire and Smith's reading of the play's authorship first appeared in print in April 2012, it was not until October 2016 that the *Modern Critical Edition* of the New Oxford Shakespeare was published, this being the first edition of Shakespeare's works to identify *All's Well* as surviving in a text likely adapted by Middleton.

[24] Maguire and Smith, 'On Editing', p. 300.
[25] Loughnane, 'Part Two', p. 320.
[26] Ibid.

Furthermore, other than Loughnane's 2016 essay discussing 1.1's virginity dialogue, the majority of the stylistic and dramaturgical studies in this direction which were performed for the New Oxford Shakespeare were not published until February 2017, as part of the New Oxford Shakespeare's associated *Authorship Companion*. This doctoral thesis was then researched and written between September 2017 and January 2021. During this time, no additional analyses have been published which expand upon the research undertaken for the New Oxford Shakespeare, or which seek to establish the importance of the Middleton attribution for critical interpretation of the play as a whole. Yet as Taylor remarks in his 2017 discussion of the play's authorship,

> The chapters [on *All's Well that Ends Well* in the New Oxford Shakespeare's *Authorship Companion*] have established, beyond a reasonable doubt, that Middleton added material to 1.1, 2.3, and 4.3 of Shakespeare's original play. But most of the play has not yet been thoroughly investigated. Although Shakespeare undoubtedly wrote the overwhelming bulk of the text, and is undoubtedly present in every scene, Middleton may have contributed more passages than have yet been identified. And even in the three scenes we have investigated, where the authorship is mixed, it will remain impossible to establish who wrote every sentence, let alone every word. Even at the level of attribution, much remains to be done. At the level of criticism and interpretation, we have hardly begun.[27]

Hence, of the seven scenes in which Maguire and Smith detected noteworthy signifiers of Middletonian writing, the New Oxford edition only identifies three 'beyond a reasonable doubt' as having been adapted by Middleton. It remains plausible (some might even say highly likely) that Middleton made other interpolations elsewhere in the text – to reiterate Taylor's observation in the above quotation, 'Middleton may have contributed more passages than have yet been identified' – but additional sustained stylistic analyses undertaken in this direction by specialists in authorship attribution have yet to make an appearance in the peer-reviewed scholarly press. Nevertheless, the possibility that Middleton may be responsible for some other

[27] Taylor, '*All's Well*', p. 365.

portions of the extant text must remain an ever-present consideration for future critical interpretations of this work. As Gossett and Wilcox observe in their summary of the authorship debate, 'The last word has, no doubt, not been said about the authorship of *All's Well*.'[28]

Despite only constituting 175 lines of the play's text, the three passages which have been identified as likely Middletonian additions do have a significant effect upon critical interpretation of the play. Even if Middleton was responsible for some other small-scale interpolations in the text, these 175 lines, in a play of 2,572 lines (in the New Oxford edition), amount to 6.8% of the existing text, a figure which noticeably accords with the approximated extent of Middleton's additions to both *Macbeth* (7.2%) and *Measure for Measure* (5.3%).

Just as important for critical interpretation as determining the exact delineation of authorial shares in the play, however, is persuasively establishing the date of the work's adaptation. As I have explained above, certain textual features of *All's Well that Ends Well* have long intrigued literary critics, and have led some to conclude that the extant version must derive from a text marked-up for a revival sometime after the King's Men's original performances took place around 1605. Most notable from a dramaturgical perspective is David Lindley's recognition that the audial cue '*Flourish cornets*', which opens 1.2 and 2.1, strongly suggests annotation of the playscript for performance at the indoor Blackfriars Theatre which, as I have discussed in Chapter 2, the King's Men did not acquire until August 1608.[29] The division of the play into five acts may also be related to this observation; indeed, this textual feature has been cited throughout this thesis as a probable indicator of the theatrical renovation of older plays for revival in the indoor conditions at the Blackfriars.

Yet the appearance in the extant text of the play of two players who are designated only by initials, E. and G., has also been considered suggestive of later revision of the playbook.

[28] Gossett and Wilcox, p. 368.
[29] David Lindley, 'Music and Shakespearean Revision', *Archiv*, 249 (2012), pp. 50-64 (p. 53).

The most satisfactory explanation for the appearance of these initials is that they denote the names of the actors who occupied these roles. Two players with these initials whose tenures with the King's Men suitably overlap (after 1611) are William Ecclestone and Robert Gough.[30] Indeed, these are the actors Chambers identified with these roles in his study of 1930.[31] However, it is important to note that Samuel Gilbourne, who can be associated with the company between 1605 and 1623, could also be a possible performer of G.'s part.[32]

We are on firmer ground for dating *All's Well*'s adaptation when examining Ecclestone: although certainly a member of the King's Men from 1609, Ecclestone is known to have been performing as part of Lady Elizabeth's Men between 1611 and 1613, before subsequently re-joining Shakespeare's company sometime prior to appearing with them in Fletcher's *Bonduca* (*c*.1614),[33] a fact which might narrow the period of adaptation even further. Thus, the presence in the text of calls for '*cornets*' and of the initials E. and G. is suggestive of the alterations having taken place sometime after 1609, and very likely even after 1613, the year in which Shakespeare is traditionally believed to have retired from working within the theatres.

The question critics must ask is whether the period of adaptation can be narrowed even further. Unlike *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure*, there are no songs transplanted into *All's Well that Ends Well* from other works which might be used as a guide to dating, nor does the play seem to respond to a particular dated coranto in the same way that *Measure for Measure* does; but Middleton's adaptation of *All's Well that Ends Well* can nonetheless be convincingly dated to sometime between 1620 and 1622, and perhaps even more specifically between April and September 1622.

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[30] Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company, 1594-1642* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 226-8.
[31] E. K. Chambers, *Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p. 450.
[32] Gurr, *Shakespeare Company*, p. 228.
[33] Eva Griffith, 'Ecclestone, William (*d. c*.1624), Actor', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-8441> [accessed 6 November 2020].

Taylor believes that a curious observation made by Paroles in 1.1's virginity dialogue (a dialogue latterly attributed to Middleton, as indicated above) is particularly important in this regard. Here, Paroles argues that 'Virginity like an old courtier wears her cap out of fashion, richly suited but unsuitable, just like the brooch and the tooth-pick, which wear not now' (1.1.132-4). Taylor suggests that any discussion of fashions having become outdated would make these lines relevant only after a specific point in time. For example:

> Fashions, notoriously, change quickly. But Shakespeare himself tells us that brooches remained in fashion from 1597, when he wrote *2 Henry IV* ('brooches, pearls', [2.4.42]), to 1609–10, when he wrote *The Winter's Tale*, where Autolycus the pedlar told audiences that he had sold every 'ribbon, glass, pomander, brooch, table-book, ballad, knife, tape, glove, shoe-tie, bracelet, horn-ring' to his customers, 'as if my trinkets had been hallowed and brought a benediction to the buyer' (4.4.575–9). Somewhere between those two dates, anywhere from 1599 to 1604 (depending on the scholar), Laertes describes Lamord as 'the brooch indeed | And gem of all the nation' (*Hamlet* [4.4.89–90]) and Cleopatra swears that 'th'imperious show | Of the full-fortuned Caesar' shall never 'Be brooched' (that is, adorned) with her captive presence (*Antony and Cleopatra* [4.16.24–6]).[34]

Taylor offers these examples as evidence that Shakespeare did not consider brooches to be unfashionable even as late as 1609-10, many years after the writing of *All's Well that Ends Well* would have been completed; Taylor also notes that 'Jonson refers to them positively in 1614',[35] an unspecified reference to *Bartholomew Fair*, when Coke mentions 'delicate brooches for the bridemen' (3.1.127-8). Yet as G. K. Hunter pointed out in his 1959 Arden edition of *All's Well that Ends Well*, by the time of Jonson's *Christmas His Masque* (1616-17), in which 'old Christmas' (l. 5) wears one on his '*high-crowned hat*' (l. 2), the brooch 'belong[ed] clearly to the dress of the past'.[36] From these examples, we can supposedly deduce that the brooch must have gone out of fashion at some point between 1614 and late 1616. This

[34] Taylor, '*All's Well*', pp. 343-4.
[35] Ibid., p. 344.
[36] G. K. Hunter (ed.), *All's Well That Ends Well* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 1959), p. 12.

seems to be supported by a search of *Early Print Lab* for references to brooches between 1614 and 1616, which turns up references in the work of only two writers: William Browne, in his *The shepheards pipe* (1614), and George Hakewill, in his *An ansvvere to a treatise vvritten by Dr. Carier* (1616).

Taylor provides similar reasoning for the significance of Paroles's dismissive reference to toothpicks. Toothpicks were, like the brooch, associated with fashionableness for much of the English Renaissance. In Sarah Warneke's study of early modern 'educational travellers', she explains that toothpicks were a fashionable accessory often associated with foppish young men, and notes that 'In 1572 George Gascoigne cautioned his friend not to arrive home with a "piketoothe" hanging from his lip, and by the end of the century many characterisations of travellers, like Ben Jonson's deformed traveller Amorphus [in *Cynthia's Revels*], commonly walked with toothpicks in their mouths.'[37] Taylor similarly notes that toothpicks were often considered highly fashionable in many early modern dramatic works, despite Paroles's comment to the contrary:

> Toothpicks, too, are described positively in *King John* (1596) and Henry Chettle's *Tragedy of Hoffman* (1603); James Shirley mentions them in three plays (*The Ball* [1632], *The Witty Fair One* [1628], and *The Grateful Servant* [1629]). But between 1603 and the 1630s [presumably excluding *The Witty Fair One* and *The Grateful Servant*], I have found in *Literature Online* (*LION*) only one play that refers to them: Middleton's *More Dissemblers Besides Women*, where a comic servant describes a page as 'good for nothing but to carry toothpicks' [3.1.78-9] […] This does not suggest any great appreciation of the toothpick in the later years of James I's reign. Thus, this reference to the unfashionable brooch and toothpick suggests that the dialogue on virginity in 1.1 was written no earlier than 1615, after Shakespeare's retirement from the theatre.[38]

[37] Sarah Warneke, *Images of the Educational Traveller in Early Modern England* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 259-60.
[38] Taylor, '*All's Well*', p. 344.

While the date of *More Dissemblers Besides Women* is difficult to ascertain, with various critics placing it anywhere between 1614 and 1619, and Wiggins and Richardson reasoning for even later, in 1621-2,[39] the fact that Taylor can find no other references to toothpicks between those in *Hoffman* and *More Dissemblers* certainly seems suggestive of their waning popularity.

However, Taylor is not entirely accurate in making such an assertion. Unfortunately, it is no longer possible to exactly replicate Taylor's experiment, because *LION*'s search mechanism has changed since 2016. For my own search of *LION*, then, I undertook to search for references to toothpicks (or picktooths) between 1603 (the date of *Hoffman*) and 1680 (thus ensuring to encompass the publication dates for Renaissance works written much earlier than they were printed, including *More Dissemblers*, which was not published until 1657). Between *Hoffman* and *The Grateful Servant*, my search turned up an additional play with a reference to toothpicks, other than *More Dissemblers Besides Women* and *The Witty Fair One*: William Davenant's *Albovine, King of the Lombards* (probably written in 1626, but with a possible date range of 1626-9): 'Ile bribe your Lordship with a Ginny Tooth-pick!' ($C4^{v}$). Furthermore, during this period we can find many examples of toothpicks being repeatedly mentioned in one alternative authorial canon (though these plays did not show up in the course of my *LION* search). Certainly, Jonson makes numerous references to toothpicks during this period: in *Volpone; or, The Fox* (1606), when Peregrine proudly relates how he has 'bought two toothpicks' (4.1.139); in *The Entertainment at Britain's Burse* (1609), which depicts a 'Shop Boy' selling 'toothpicks' to his clientele (l. 58); in *Epicene; or, The Silent Woman* (*c*.1610), when John Daw swears 'By this pick-tooth' (2.1.112); and in *The Devil is an Ass* (1616), wherein the gentleman usher Ambler describes the 'fine new device I had to carry | My pen and ink, my civet, and my toothpicks' (5.1.40-1).

[39] Martin Wiggins, in association with Catherine Richardson, *British Drama, 1533-1649: A Catalogue*, vol. 7 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 361.

Furthermore, a search of *Early Print Lab* turns up eight additional uses of the word 'toothpick' and five of the word 'picktooth' in the years between *Hoffman* and the publication of *Albovine*, in Cyril Tourneur's *Laugh and lie dovvne* (1605), Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Woman Hater* (1607), Thomas Tomkis's *lingua* (1607), Sir Thomas Overbury's *A wife novv the widdow of Sir Thomas Overburye* (1614) and *Sir Thomas Ouerburie his wife* (1616), Charles Estienne's *Maison rustique* (1616), Gervase Markham's *Herod and Antipater* (1622), Mateo Alemán's *The Rogue* (1623), Samuel Purchas's *Purchas his pilgrimes* (1625), Philip Nichols's *Sir Francis Drake* (1626), William Hawkins's *Apollo Shroving* (1627), John Earle's *Micro-cosmographie* (1628), and Sir Francis Drake's *The vvorld encompassed* (1628). The evidence for toothpicks having become an unfashionable item does not seem nearly as strong as Taylor believes it to be.

Thematically, however, Taylor argues that *All's Well that Ends Well* would have been far more resonant for audiences if revived later in this timeframe, particularly after 1620. This is, after all, a play greatly concerned with military matters: Bertram, commanded by the King to marry Helen following her miraculous curing of his fistula, resolves to flee 'to the Tuscan wars and never bed her' (2.3.248). This is not to suggest that the theme of war would only have been relevant to audiences during the 1620s, in the proximity of the Thirty Years' War – if this were the case, then many of Shakespeare's history plays could be considered to be of questionable authorship – and besides, memories of war can endure in the popular imagination; bur rather, Taylor uses this argument to connect this posited revival of the play with a period during which such concerns were highly prevalent on the Jacobean stage, both in terms of the wider King's Men's repertory, and in the later dramas on which Middleton is known to have worked. In this sense, the play may have resonated considerably with popular concerns after the crisis in the Palatinate erupted in 1620, concerns which at this time also inspired Middleton's references to the European wars in works such as *Anything for a Quiet Life*, *The*

Changeling, *The Nice Valour*, and his adaptation of *Measure for Measure*. Indeed, as Salzman writes, these events, and in particular the associated outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, constituted 'The big political issue that haunted the decade'.[40]

Yet what is even more notable is that in *All's Well that Ends Well* the French King seems to share certain of his attitudes to the ongoing wars with England's own King James I: 'Yet for our gentlemen that mean to see | The Tuscan service, freely have they leave | To stand on either part' (1.2.13-15). It is as yet undetermined whether these lines were added into the play by Middleton, or if they were part of Shakespeare's original *c*.1605 text – Maguire and Smith did detect some signs of Middleton's style in 1.2, but it has also been separately argued by critics such as Wilcox that the French King's words may have alluded to James's attempts to '"preserve and maintaine an indifferent Form of Neutrallity" in the months leading up the Somerset House conference in August 1604,' at which time he allowed English soldiers a similar liberty[41] – but even if these lines were in the original play, the sentiment expressed here may indicate a further reason why this play could have been selected by the King's Men for revival during the early 1620s. As Taylor points out, 'In May 1620 King James allowed Count Dohna to levy English volunteers to travel abroad to defend the Protestant cause and the Palatinate', their status as volunteers being crucial to the King's otherwise pacific stance 'because James did not want to be drawn into a war with the House of Austria'; Taylor further notes that the words of the French King in *All's Well that Ends Well* may have been considered to be evoking this policy, when he says 'we here receive it | A certainty vouched from our cousin Austria, | With caution that the Florentine will move us | For speedy aid' (1.2.4-7).[42] As I observed in my discussion of Middleton's adaptation of *Measure for Measure* in Chapter 4, it seems likely that the plays chosen to undergo such processes of adaptation were sometimes

[40] Salzman, *Literature and Politics*, p. 9.
[41] Helen Wilcox, 'Drums and Roses? The Tragicomedy of War in *All's Well That Ends Well*', in *Shakespeare and War*, ed. by Ros King and Paul J. C. M. Franssen (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 84-95 (p. 86).
[42] Taylor, '*All's Well*', p. 344.

selected based on the appropriateness of certain aspects of their subject matter to the moment of their revival. The applicableness of such comments as the French King's quoted above to May 1620 and after, then, would certainly have made *All's Well* an attractive possibility for such revival and reshaping.

Even more important might be the events of April 1622, however, when as Cogswell informs us King James 'allowed two Catholic peers, Lord Vaux and the Earl of Argyll, to raise regiments for the army of Flanders, which had invaded the Palatinate two years earlier.'[43] To quote from the work of Taylor, 'James was therefore allowing English volunteers to fight on either side, as does the French King in *All's Well*'; indeed, it is worth reiterating the French King's exact words in this regard, that those who wish to fight in the Tuscan wars have leave 'To stand on either part.'[44] Interestingly, Hinman demonstrated that it must have been in 1622 that *All's Well that Ends Well* was typeset for inclusion in the First Folio; while this process was begun 'probably not *earlier* than the second quarter of that year', Hinman demonstrated that it was finished 'not *later* than about November'.[45] Taylor therefore notes that 'This means that Jaggard's compositors must have had a manuscript of *All's Well* in hand by April 1622 at the earliest, and theoretically as late as September.'[46] There would, then, have been ample time for Middleton to supply additional material for this play following the events of April 1622, referenced above; after all, when adapting *Measure for Measure* Middleton must have completed his work on the play in a relatively short space of time, in order to maintain its topicality in light of the events recounted in the 6 October 1621 issue of Butter's *Corante*.

It therefore seems most likely that Middleton adapted *All's Well that Ends Well* sometime after 1620, probably during the early months of 1622 (but certainly not long thereafter). *All's Well*, unlike *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure*, may not contain any songs

[43] Cogswell, *Blessed Revolution*, p. 20.
[44] Taylor, '*All's Well*', p. 345.
[45] Hinman, *Printing and Proof-Reading*, vol. 2, p. 461.
[46] Taylor, '*All's Well*', p. 342.

transposed from other works which we may use as a guide to dating the play's adaptation, nor are any of the identified additions demonstrably inspired by a specific, dated news publication, also unlike *Measure for Measure*; but the references in the identified Middletonian passages to items such as brooches and toothpicks having gone out of fashion, combined with textual annotations calling for '*cornets*' and the inclusion of actors with the initials E. and G., converge to situate Middleton's work on the play during the early 1620s, a time when, as discussed in Chapter 4, Middleton was very much concerned with political intrigue and military action in Europe (as well as with royal inaction at home). Furthermore, the wider play's thematic engagement with military matters, alongside the text's inclusion of lines which would have been topical both *c*.1605 and *c*.1622, would surely have made this a work that would have resonated with English audiences if it were indeed revived at this moment in time.

Middleton's adaptation of *All's Well that Ends Well* can therefore be plausibly situated during a period in which Middleton was demonstrably deeply engaged in crafting dramatic responses to the febrile European situation of the 1620s. Indeed, some indication of this has been given in Chapter 4: Middleton's apparent desire for an English show of strength as part of the European wars informed much of his writing, with noteworthy references in this direction being detectable in several plays in which he had a hand during these years. By dating his adaptation of *All's Well that Ends Well* to early in 1622, however, the proximity of this work to the performances of Middleton's *A Game at Chess* in 1624 also helps us to observe that the attention paid by Maguire and Smith to the oddly specific description of the French King's ailment as a 'fistula', as discussed in the introduction to this chapter, may well have been highly justified and informative. In the later play, the Black Knight's (Gondomar's) anal affliction is directly referenced when the Fat Bishop of Spalato says 'Yonder's Black Knight, the fistula of Europe' (2.1.41), but Gondomar's sufferings are also alluded to repeatedly in the play's suggestive language, such as when the Black Knight says 'Reach me my chair of ease,

my chair of coz'nage' (4.2.3) and states that 'There's a foul flaw i'th' bottom of my drum' (4.2.7); when he is accused of having 'a leaking bottom' (2.1.175); and when the Fat Bishop exclaims 'Foh! the politician is not sound i'th' vent' (5.3.210). Likewise, *All's Well that Ends Well* only contains one direct reference to a fistula (that which occurs at 1.1.25, as cited above), but the suggestiveness of its language, such as describing physicians as being 'Embowelled of their doctrine' (1.3.213) and of the 'lowest place' somehow being 'dignified' (2.3.217), could have compounded an audience's interpretation of the French King's sufferings as being related to his anus. It is also suggestive that Lavatch, in the scene immediately following Helen's promise to the King to cure his ailment, soon begins to speak to the Countess of 'a barber's chair that fits all buttocks: the pin-buttock, the quatch-buttock, the brawn-buttock, or any buttock' (2.2.13-14). The association of the barber (which may implicitly be read as barber surgeon) with the focus on various kinds of 'buttocks' draws significant attention to the likelihood that the French King's fistula, despite the description given of the King's illness in Boccaccio and Painter, may well be of the anal kind. Again, it is not yet certain whether the reference to a fistula was added into the text of *All's Well that Ends Well* by Middleton, but the humour and innuendo surrounding the French King's sufferings certainly would have made the play highly resonant if revived during the early 1620s, and could thus be taken to be an early instance of Middletonian mockery of the unpopular Spanish Ambassador, just a few years before he launched his more famous attacks upon him in *A Game at Chess*.

If we situate Middleton's contributions to the extant version of this play in early 1622, then, the question that arises is how spectators would have responded to this work when experiencing it within such a historical context. This chapter will now proceed to supplement the work in this direction presented in the New Oxford Shakespeare by offering some additional suggestions in this regard, by first considering how the play's setting in the French province of Roussillon may have been perceived as a very provocative locale at the time of the

play's adaptation, and then by interrogating how certain of Middleton's additions to the text would have compounded the play's political subversiveness at the time of its postulated revival.

'The Florentine and Senois are by th'ears': War and the Geographical Significance of Shakespeare's Roussillon

By adapting *All's Well that Ends Well* for revival in early 1622, Middleton would thus have been provided with the opportunity to provide an additional work to the King's Men's active repertory at this time which reflected upon this period of particularly troublesome political unrest in England and in Europe. As discussed in Chapter 4, by adapting *Measure for Measure* shortly after the publication of the 6 October issue of *Corante* Middleton enabled an old play of 1603-4 to better allude to the news of contemporary events which was then circulating among English theatregoers, not only through reference to the King of Hungary, but also through playing upon contemporary plague anxieties, reflecting upon England's economic woes, and by referring more generally to England's burgeoning industry in the mass dissemination of printed news. Little had changed by the early months of 1622. Indeed, spectators may well have found their common anxieties reflected in the words of the French King at the opening of 1.2, words which could easily have acquired a special resonance during an early-1620s revival of the play: 'The Florentine and Senois are by th'ears, | Have fought with equal fortune, and continue | A braving war' (1.2.1-3).

Such a 'braving war' serves as a prominent backdrop to the main narrative of *All's Well that Ends Well*, but the details of the depicted conflict are always kept quite ambiguous. For R. B. Parker, in fact, in this play 'The war […] is merely a convenience, a backdrop without clear purpose, circumstances, or outcome'.[47] Shakespeare had used the theme of war in a similar manner before. Indeed, in the opening scene of *Much Ado About Nothing* (*c*.1598) we see Don Pedro, Benedick, and Claudio returning from an unspecified battle, the purpose of which seems

[47] R. B. Parker, 'War and Sex in *All's Well That Ends Well*', *Shakespeare Survey*, 34 (1984), pp. 99-113 (p. 103).

primarily to provide a contrast to the 'merry war' which Benedick engages in with Beatrice at home in Messina (1.1.45-6). Willem Schrickx, however, has shown that the wars of *All's Well that Ends Well*, even if left ambiguous, were probably inspired by the conflict in the Low Countries during the first years of James I's English reign, which culminated in the signing of the Treaty of London at the Somerset House Conference in August 1604.[48] The Anglo-Spanish War had by this point been raging for nineteen years, and had also encompassed the Dutch Revolt, when the Dutch Republic, or United Provinces of the Netherlands, was established after several Dutch provinces seceded from the Spanish Netherlands in revolt against Habsburg rule. England's stance with regard to the United Provinces was in many ways contradictory. As Alexandra Gajda notes, while 'Elizabeth rejected the formal sovereignty of the Netherlands [...] By signing the Treaty of Nonsuch in 1585, Elizabeth treated the United Provinces as a sovereign power, implicitly recognizing their abjuration of Philip II's authority as legitimate, and acknowledging the de facto transformation of the polity, from a monarchical state to a republic of federated provinces'.[49] Trudi L. Darby further notes how by the end of Elizabeth's reign England and Spain 'had become bogged down in conflicts by proxy, as England supported rebels against Spain in the Netherlands and Spain supported rebels against England in Ireland.'[50] For James, the motion towards peace was both desirable and necessary.

Despite continuing widespread anti-Spanish feeling in England, upon his accession James, who as Croft points out 'had never been at war with Spain, with whom he had no particular quarrel,'[51] was determined to pursue a treaty of peace. Indeed, although a

[48] Willem Schrickx, '*All's Well That Ends Well* in Its Historical Context', *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, 131 (1995), pp. 106-15.
[49] Alexandra Gajda, 'Debating War and Peace in Late Elizabethan England', *Historical Journal*, 52 (2009), pp. 851-78 (pp. 853-4).
[50] Trudi L. Darby, 'The Obsession with Spain', in *Thomas Middleton in Context*, ed. by Suzanne Gossett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 144-50 (p. 144).
[51] Pauline Croft, '*Rex Pacificus*, Robert Cecil, and the 1604 Peace with Spain', in *The Accession of James I: Historical and Cultural Consequences*, ed. by Glenn Burgess, Rowland Wymer, and Jason Lawrence (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 140-54 (p. 140).

controversial position, peace effectively became what Wiggins calls 'the keynote' of 1604,[52] and was memorably praised in Jonson's contribution to *The Magnificent Entertainment*, with which James was welcomed into London on 15 March that year: 'This hath brought | Sweet Peace to sit in that bright state she ought, | Unbloody and untroubled' (ll. 2461-3). Yet James's diplomatic desires did not pass without criticism. To quote from the work of Sophie Shorland, James was perceived by many to be 'betraying [Elizabeth's] legacy through a peace with Spain', and although the Treaty of London was 'largely brokered under her rule [...] many of James' subjects saw it as a sad footnote to the glory days of the Armada.'[53] Indeed, for such a strongly Protestant writer as Middleton the peace with Spain may have seemed very questionable indeed. After all, this is a writer who repeatedly refers back to the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 in much of his extant writing: in *The Phoenix*, in Tangle's comments 'I stood not o' th' pillory for nothing in eighty-eight' (4.82-3) and 'I myself was overthrown in eighty-eight by a tailor' (9.275-6); in *Plato's Cap, Cast at this Year 1604, Being Leap Year*, in the reference to 'the great Spanish Armado in eighty-eight.' (ll. 167-8); in *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, when Dampit remarks 'When did I say my prayers? In anno '88, when the great armada was coming' (3.4.1-2); in *The Peacemaker*, where we find the observation 'Spain, that great and long-lasting opposite, betwixt whom and England the ocean ran with blood not many years before' (ll. 86-8); in *The Nice Valour*, when a gentleman says 'He was past a Spaniard | In eighty-eight' (4.1.220-1); and twice in *A Game at Chess*, in the Black Knight's 'As the fired ships put in severed the fleet | In '88.' (3.1.188-9) and in the White Knight's 'all the gins, traps, and alluring snares | The devil has been at work since '88 on' (4.4.5-6). When we consider Middleton's apparent obsession with 'the glory days of the Armada', then, it may seem logical that one of the plays he would proceed to adapt around 1622, at a time when Spain and war

[52] Martin Wiggins, *Drama and the Transfer of Power in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 82.
[53] Sophie Shorland, '"Womanhood and weakness": Elizabeth I, James I, and Propaganda Strategy', *Renaissance Studies*, 34 (2019), pp. 260-77 (p. 272).

were once again becoming a pressing issue in England, would have been a work which seemingly alluded to the efforts for peace that characterised the beginning of King James's English reign.

In *All's Well that Ends Well*, this uneasy peace between two long-warring enemies may well be reflected in the words of the French King, who early in the play describes 'our cousin Austria' as 'our dearest friend' (1.2.5-7), despite Austria's status as 'France's traditional adversary', to use Patterson's description.[54] As explained above, however, the King's position concerning the ongoing war between the 'Florentine and Senois' in this play recalls positions that were held by England's King James at two different points in time:

> KING we here receive it
> A certainty vouched from our cousin Austria,
> With caution that the Florentine will move us
> For speedy aid—wherein our dearest friend
> Prejudicates the business, and would seem
> To have us make denial.
> LORD G. His love and wisdom,
> Approved so to your majesty, may plead
> For amplest credence.
> KING He hath armed our answer,
> And Florence is denied before he comes.
> Yet for our gentlemen that mean to see
> The Tuscan service, freely have they leave
> To stand on either part. (1.2.4-15)

It has already been discussed how these lines could have seemed particularly provocative for spectators in 1622, when James attempted to maintain his neutrality in relation to the Palatine crisis and the Thirty Years' War. But eight years before *All's Well that Ends Well* was first promoted in the New Oxford Shakespeare as a play adapted by Middleton, Wilcox highlighted how these lines would have been very relevant for audiences at the start of the Jacobean era:

[54] Patterson, p. 304.

> In letters from 1603 and early 1604, Sir Ralph Winwood, the English envoy in The Hague, wrote that soldiers from England and Scotland were being advised by King James to decide for themselves whether to fight with the United Provinces, or the forces representing the king of Spain. According to Winwood, the king hoped to 'preserve and maintaine an indifferent Form of Neutrallity' in the months leading up the Somerset House conference in August 1604, and he allowed the fighters on both sides 'the same Liberty'.[55]

As discussed above, the lines promising 'gentlemen that mean to see | The Tuscan service' freedom 'To stand on either part' could equally be a Middletonian addition to 1.2 or a part of the original play as Shakespeare had written it around 1605. Both possibilities speak to the play's potential topicality as a work ripe for revival and adaptation around early 1622. As a reference to a specific conflict, the King's mention of the Tuscan wars, in which the Florentine is engaged in battle against the Senois (that is, the Sienese), may have been intended to evoke the wars in Italy which had been fought during the middle ages, during which the Guelphs, those supporting the supremacy of the Pope, and the Ghibellines, those who supported the Holy Roman Empire, had regularly clashed.[56] Specifically, this conflict included battles between the pro-Papal (Guelph) Republic of Florence and the pro-Imperial (Ghibelline) Republic of Siena. Although these skirmishes can be traced back to the Investiture Controversy, which began in 1076 as a power struggle between Pope Gregory VII and the future (after 1084) Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV, as recently as 1555 Siena had surrendered to Spain during the course of the 1551-9 Italian War, an event which was followed by King Philip II of Spain ceding Siena to Florence, whose absorption of it was ratified by the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559, thus leading to the formation of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany thereafter. This does not speak against Parker's estimation that the wars mentioned in *All's Well that Ends Well* serve primarily as 'a backdrop without clear purpose,' but the King's mention of the 'Florentine and Senois' fighting a 'braving war' remains useful for critics seeking to contextualise the play's military

[55] Wilcox, p. 86.
[56] Gossett and Wilcox, p. 146.

narrative. Whether historicised in the context of *c.*1605 or *c.*1622, the relevance of a military context to the concerns of contemporary audiences remains a pertinent consideration.

In this reading, then, the play's specific reference to Florentine and Sienese soldiers being 'by th'ears' establishes a specific military backdrop to the play's plot, but it may also have been a conflict historical enough to enable spectators to apply the play's exploration of war to contemporary conflicts, whether that be the end of the Anglo-Spanish war in 1604 or the beginning of the Thirty Years' War in the late 1610s and early 1620s. But if this is the case, the adaptation of *All's Well that Ends Well* would therefore reveal the King's Men's selecting a play for revival based on the enduring significance of its plot, rather than be an example of Middleton adding new material to a play in order to imbue it with new contemporary relevance. Unlike *Measure for Measure*, the military themes of *All's Well that Ends Well* are not primarily confined to Middleton's additions, instead being an integral dimension of the plot. In *Measure for Measure*, Lucio's occupation as a soldier is only communicated to audiences through Middleton's addition at 1.2.A1-A67. In *All's Well that Ends Well*, on the other hand, Bertram's military status is a key component of his character throughout the drama, as he flees to the wars to escape his betrothal to Helen. As he says to Paroles in lines almost certainly part of Shakespeare's original version of the play: 'Although before the solemn priest I have sworn […] I'll to the Tuscan wars and never bed her' (2.3.244-8). So substantial is Bertram's engagement with the Tuscan wars that this element of the text cannot possibly have been added in during the course of the play's adaptation. Thus, creating an association between *All's Well* and the contemporary European wars would likely have been a relatively straightforward enterprise for a playwright tasked with adapting Shakespeare's text.

The play's connection to contemporary concerns, however, might have been made even stronger by the French King's affable comments regarding 'our cousin Austria'. Indeed, the significance of Austria to works designed to pass comment upon the Thirty Years' War has

already been considered with regards to *Measure for Measure*. This is one of only four plays by Shakespeare to make mention of Austria, and two of those do not even use the country's name: *Measure for Measure* is set simply in 'Vienna', Austria itself never being mentioned; *Hamlet* likewise only refers to Vienna, in the description of Hamlet's play, *The Mousetrap*, which he says is 'the image of a murder done in Vienna' (3.2.213-14). In *King John*, Austria plays a much more overt role in the plot: the Duke of Austria, Viscount of Limoges, is a prominent enemy of John's, allied with the French, and his death at the hands of the bastard Philip Falconbridge is prominently featured at the beginning of 3.2, when Philip enters '*with the Duke of Austria's head*' (3.2.0.1). In *All's Well that Ends Well*, the presence of Austria is simultaneously given more direct attention than in *Hamlet* and *Measure for Measure*, and yet is also far less significant than in *King John*, only occurring in the King's comment regarding 'our cousin Austria'. As explained above, the King's reference to Austria as 'our dearest friend' may appear strange, especially considering France's historical animosity towards Austria. Yet as a feature of the text which would have been particularly relevant to a performance of the play in the 1620s, it is possible to relate the King's reference to Austria back to Middleton's adaptation of *Measure for Measure*, which he had likely completed just a few months before beginning work on adapting *All's Well that Ends Well*, and to the overall geopolitical significance of the setting of *All's Well that Ends Well* as a whole.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, one of the striking curiosities of the surviving text of *Measure for Measure* is the problem of the play's geographical setting. It is often argued, following a line of reasoning most notably promoted by Taylor, that the original version of *Measure for Measure* was in fact set in Italy, and that it was Middleton who relocated the action to the Viennese dukedom in which the existing version of the play takes place.[57] Such an argument does in fact make a good degree of sense: Shakespeare is famous for setting several

[57] Taylor, 'Mediterranean'.

of his plays in Italy (whether wholly or in part), as were many other dramatists who were active in the early modern theatre industry, but Vienna may have been a much more politically relevant setting for audiences attending plays in the shadow of the Thirty Years' War during the early 1620s. As discussed in Chapter 4, Vienna then served as the *de facto* capital of the Holy Roman Empire, and was thus the seat of Catholic Habsburg rule. It is also curious that a play set in Vienna, today the capital city of the predominantly German-speaking Republic of Austria, features so many characters with distinctly Italianate names: the corrupt Puritan hypocrite Angelo; Isabella the novice; the nun Francisca; Lucio the 'fantastic'. Even the otherwise unnamed Duke is referred to as 'Vincentio' in his appearance at the head of the Folio text's list of roles. The juxtaposition between the play's ostensibly Italian dramatis personae and its disconcertingly Germanic setting may therefore have been a very jarring detail for spectators of 1603-4 to confront.

In his intriguing analysis of this problem, Taylor suggests that there are moments in the existing text where Middleton could easily have expunged Vincentio's name from the dialogue when undertaking the process of adapting Shakespeare's original work. The most conspicuous instance of such possible textual lacuna can be observed at the very beginning of the opening scene. Here, the Duke enters greeting his aide Escalus, who in his turn replies with the deferential line 'My lord' (1.1.2); but could he not originally have responded with the longer line 'My lord Vincentio'? Taylor certainly believes this to have been the case. He compares this to the Duke of Milan being referred to as 'my lord Antonio' by Sebastian in *The Tempest* at 5.1.263, and points out that 'Shakespeare often followed "my lord" with a proper name.'[58]

This play's overt situation in Vienna may therefore cause more than a modicum of intrigue among audiences. Almost as if to drive the point home, the city's name is explicitly mentioned nine times throughout the play, and all but two of these instances (5.1.262 and 305)

[58] Ibid., p. 256.

occur within the first five scenes (1.1.23 and 45; 1.2.4; 1.3.13; 2.1.163, 193, and 204). The problem this creates is further compounded by the fact that the first mention of 'Vienna', spoken by Escalus in the opening scene, draws additional attention towards the apparent juxtaposition between the name of the city and the names of its inhabitants. As Escalus comments upon learning of the Duke's desire to appoint Angelo as Vienna's ruler in his absence:

> If any in *Vienna* be of worth
> To undergo such ample grace and honour,
> It is Lord *Angelo*. (1.1.23-5, my emphasis)

In these lines, the name 'Angelo', itself an Italian word meaning 'angel', occurs just two lines after Escalus's explicit statement that the events of this play are supposedly taking place in Germanic Vienna. The curiosity of this passage has been considered at length in the work of Leah S. Marcus, who observes of Escalus's speech that

> the first mention of Vienna does not come until Escalus's response to the duke's long expository speech at the beginning of the play […] For contemporary London audiences, that sudden naming of the city may have caused a jolt – all of the duke's previous disquisition on government [...] could easily have been imagined as referring to London, or at least to a less alien theatrical locale than Vienna. In the folio text, for readers of 1623 and after, the name *Vienna* is also withheld before Escalus's seemingly offhanded reference […] In *Measure for Measure* the withholding of place creates an aura of familiarity 'within the wall,' which is suddenly shattered when it turns out that 'here' is 'Vienna.'[59]

Marcus thus interrogates the major problems critics and editors of *Measure* have traditionally faced when confronting this issue of the play's ostensibly Austrian setting. It is therefore apparent why present-day criticism might hypothesise that there is something markedly 'un-Shakespearean' about this play's apparently rather unusual choice of setting.

[59] Leah S. Marcus, *Puzzling Shakespeare: Local Reading and Its Discontents* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. 186.

In response to these problems of place, Taylor analyses in great detail the implications of an explicitly Viennese *Measure for Measure*, ultimately determining, in response to his own question 'what did the word "Vienna" mean to London audiences in 1603 or 1604, when the play was first performed?', that 'It meant almost nothing. *Measure* is the only play written in England before 1660 to be set in Vienna or to feature Viennese characters. Actually, it is the only play of the period set anywhere in Austria.'[60] In making such a statement, Taylor is certainly not wrong: by examining the entry for Vienna in Edward H. Sugden's invaluable *Topographical Dictionary to the Works of Shakespeare and His Fellow Dramatists* (1925), we can observe that *Measure* does indeed stand alone as a surviving play of the period which adopts Vienna as its primary setting.[61] But Taylor uses this line of reasoning to make a much grander claim about Middleton's processes of adaptation: namely, that the Viennese setting could only have originated with Middleton's adaptation of the text after October 1621. As Taylor writes:

> *Measure* does not even associate Vienna with 'Austria,' a word that never appears in the play […] Although Shakespeare's contemporaries located Vienna in a vaguely defined region called 'Austria,' Austria itself was merely a province of Germany. Vienna was just one city among several in what was then called 'Upper Germany.' But 'Germany' does not appear in *Measure*, either; nor does any reference to the Danube.[62]

Taking account of such details, Taylor posits that Shakespeare's original version of the play had probably been set in Ferrara, the Italian former duchy in which Middleton himself had previously situated *The Phoenix*, his own comedy of a disguised ruler which he had produced for the Children of Paul's at around the same time as Shakespeare's 1603-4 version of *Measure for Measure*.

[60] Taylor, 'Mediterranean', p. 244.
[61] Edward H. Sugden, *A Topographical Dictionary to the Works of Shakespeare and His Fellow Dramatists* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1925), p. 547.
[62] Taylor, 'Mediterranean', p. 244.

Taylor's argument that *Measure for Measure*'s 'Vienna' was originally intended to be a representation of Ferrara is attractive. The most obvious benefit of such a solution to the drama's problematic geography is the fact that 'Ferrara' so easily scans, the trisyllabic 'Vienna' being a place name which Middleton could have substituted fairly straightforwardly for 'Ferrara' in the verse segments of the play's text. Ferrara also makes good dramaturgical sense when we consider Shakespeare's composition of *Measure for Measure* within the wider dramatic context of *c*.1603. I have already mentioned *Measure*'s similarity to another disguised duke play of the period, *The Phoenix*, which establishes Ferrara as its setting in the play's opening stage direction: '*Enter the old Duke of Ferrara*' (1.0.1). The similarities between these two plays, along with Marston's 1603 play of the disguised Duke of Genoa, *The Malcontent*, are such that Thomas A. Pendleton (who believes that *The Phoenix* pre-dates Shakespeare's play) has argued that 'The indebtedness is salient enough and wide enough [...] to speak of these contemporary plays as "sources" of *Measure for Measure*.'[63] But there is a third play of the period which bears a greater similarity to both *Measure for Measure* and *The Phoenix* than *The Malcontent* does: Marston's 1605 play *The Fawn*, which opens with a speech spoken by the character Hercules to his brother Renaldo concerning the dukedom which the former has now resolved to temporarily leave behind:

> See, yonder's Urbin; those far-appearing spires rise from the city—you shall conduct me no further. Return to Ferrara: my Dukedom, by your care in my absence, shall rest constantly united and most religiously loyal. (1.1.1-4)[64]

We can thus observe that of these four disguised duke plays of 1603-5, the existing version of *Measure for Measure* certainly seems to be the odd one out. With both *The Phoenix* and *The*

[63] Thomas A. Pendleton, 'Shakespeare's Disguised Duke Play: Middleton, Marston, and the Sources of *Measure for Measure*', in *'Fanned and Winnowed Opinions': Shakespearean Essays Presented to Harold Jenkins*, ed. by John W. Mahon and Thomas A. Pendleton (London: Methuen, 1987), pp. 79-98 (p. 81).
[64] John Marston, *Parasitaster; or, The Fawn*, ed. by David A. Blostein (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978).

Fawn being set in Ferrara, *The Malcontent* in Genoa, and *Measure for Measure* in Vienna, only the latter does not take as its lead character the ruler of an Italian dukedom. Michael J. Redmond has rather grandly suggested that Shakespeare was attempting to outdo Marston in crafting a drama which uses an 'anomalous setting […] to highlight the distance separating the providential vision of the ransom story from the standard representations of Italian crisis',[65] but it remains the case that *Measure*'s 'anomalous setting' continues to cause more than a modicum of intrigue among critics and audiences.

While the Italian inflexions of the play's dramatis personae would have continued to emphasise the ostensive Catholicism of its characters and plot, Austria was more closely associated with the key players in the Thirty Years' War, specifically the Holy Roman Emperor, Ferdinand II of the House of Habsburg (who was also Archduke of Austria until 1637). As François Laroque writes, 'To a Calvinist like Middleton, Vienna indeed represented a religious and political threat because of the devious despotism associated with Habsburg rule.'[66] We can hence see why a change of setting for *Measure for Measure*, from Italy to the Austrian city of Vienna, would have been particularly beneficial for a revival of the play at this specific point in time. As many spectators in England lamented their monarch's reluctance to assist the European Protestant states against the Catholic Habsburgs, a setting in Vienna would have had particular connotations which could have given stronger meaning to the play's other references to war and specific topical events; at the time, lest we forget, Vienna was the effective capital of the Holy Roman Empire.

This argument thus provides some indication of how the plot of *Measure for Measure* may have found its way into a Viennese setting. If *Measure for Measure* had originally been set in Italy, the transportation by Middleton of the play's story to Vienna would arguably have

[65] Michael J. Redmond, *Shakespeare, Politics, and Italy: Intertextuality on the Jacobean Stage* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), p. 145.
[66] François Laroque, 'Shakespeare's Imaginary Geography', in *Shakespeare and Renaissance Europe*, ed. by Andrew Hadfield and Paul Hammond (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2004), pp. 193-219 (p. 214).

enabled the play to reflect to a greater extent upon the skirmishes occurring in Europe between Protestant and Catholic powers without being as direct in its commentary as other Middletonian works of the period, such as *A Game at Chess*. But no scholar has argued that the Roussillon of *All's Well that Ends Well* was a geographical relocation in the same way that *Measure for Measure*'s situation in Vienna may have been. However, consideration of *Measure for Measure* does demonstrate that the geography of a play's setting could have had a particular importance for contemporary understanding of that play's political relevance. Specifically with regards to *All's Well that Ends Well*, it is interesting to note that the historical relevance of Roussillon may likewise have had some bearing upon the play's topical suitability for a revival in the context of the early 1620s.

The work of Deanne Williams on the geography of the play is particularly informative in this regard: as Williams writes, 'Shakespeare's "Rossillion" [the original spelling of the setting as it appears in the First Folio] is presented as a long-standing and untroubled province of France. Nowhere in the play is it mentioned that for much of its history, Roussillon was Rosselló: part of Catalonia, not France.'[67] Williams's work was published four years before Maguire and Smith even began constructing the argument that Middleton could have had a hand in *All's Well that Ends Well*, but it is interesting to consider what knowledge of Roussillon's Spanish links might have meant for an audience's understanding of the play's setting, whether when attending the play at the time of King James's initial attempts to make peace with Spain following his accession in 1603, or when attending an adapted revival of the work in the early 1620s.

We have already considered Taylor's thought-provoking argument that the play's military concerns would have been a feature of this drama which would have made it a

[67] Deanne Williams, 'Roussillon and Retrospection in *All's Well That Ends Well*', in *Representing France and the French in Early Modern English Drama*, ed. by Jean-Christophe Mayer (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), pp. 161-77 (p. 164).

particularly appropriate work to be adapted and revived in the context of the early 1620s, when England's military role in relation to other European states was the cause of much contention and debate. Although the play does not allude directly to actual ongoing events, unlike *Measure for Measure* through its mention of the King of Hungary and its possible allusion to the plague in Constantinople, it seems likely that its references to Austria and to a vaguely defined ongoing war would have enabled the play to remain topical at this much later point in time. However, if this is the case, then it is also true that other elements of the original play's plot might have been particularly provocative in the context of Jacobean England's unpopular foreign policies during the 1620s, something which may also be related to the Spanish identity of the play's Roussillon. Certainly, *All's Well*'s focus on a belligerent count, Bertram, who flees to engage in a war to escape a marriage he is being pushed into by his King could easily have gone hand in hand with the play's Catalonian setting to ensure the play's topicality at the time of its revival. Indeed, it now seems likely that this play was being adapted by Middleton during the time in which James's efforts for the Spanish Match between Charles and the Spanish Infanta were moving forward apace, efforts which would culminate in Charles's journey to Madrid in this regard in 1623, accompanied by the Duke of Buckingham. As Barbara Fuchs writes, 'The failure of the match and Charles's safe return from his escapade to Madrid were widely celebrated in England, in an outpouring of anti-Spanish sentiment.'[68] Yet in 1622, Middleton could have had no knowledge of how the Spanish Match controversy would conclude. In this sense, for an audience of the early 1620s a play depicting the efforts of a soldier-prince (or count, in Bertram's case) to avoid marriage to a woman from Spanish Roussillon into which he is being forced by a King who clearly wishes to avoid engagement in a contemporary war may well have seemed particularly provocative. The potential allegorical connections are not

[68] Barbara Fuchs, 'Middleton and Spain', in *The Oxford Handbook of Thomas Middleton*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Trish Thomas Henley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 404-17 (p. 405). See also Alexander Samson, '1623 and the Politics of Translation', in *The Spanish Match: Prince Charles's Journey to Madrid, 1623*, ed. by Alexander Samson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 91-106.

so direct as those we find in a play like *A Game at Chess*, of course, but scholarship has suggested that popular concerns around Charles's potential for marriage may have inspired several other plays of the period, including Massinger's *The Renegado* (1624) and *The Unnatural Combat* (*c*.1626)[69] and Fletcher's *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* (1624).[70] It is possible, therefore, that a revival of *All's Well that Ends Well* during this period would easily have been related by spectators to this ongoing controversy.

It is possible, of course, that Shakespeare (or even Middleton) was unaware of Roussillon's Spanish, rather than French, connections. Geographically, Roussillon is situated in the south of France, just north of Catalonia and the Pyrenees, although its exact location (as with so much of the geography of Shakespeare's plays) does seem confused. As Gossett and Wilcox point out, for example, following Helen's letter announcing her intention to embark upon a journey to 'Saint Jacques' (3.4.4), 'Her pathway to the shrine of Saint Jacques, or Santiago de Compostela, which lies on the Spanish Atlantic coast almost due west of Roussillon, seems conveniently to lead her far to the east, through southern France and much of Italy, to Florence, where Bertram is.'[71] Interestingly, Diana and the Widow do not seem surprised by Helen's route to Saint Jacques. Indeed, they inform her that 'Of enjoined penitents | There's four or five to great Saint Jacques bound | Already at my house' (3.5.87-9). If Helen's route to Santiago de Compostela is geographically nonsensical – taking her to the east when she should be travelling to the west – then it is strange that so many other unseen pilgrims seem to be taking exactly the same route.[72] Nevertheless, there are indications in the text that

[69] Claire Jowitt, 'Massinger's *The Renegado* (1624) and the Spanish Marriage', *Cahiers Élisabéthains*, 65 (2004), pp. 45-54; Claire Jowitt, '"I am another woman": The Spanish and French Matches in Massinger's *The Renegado* (1624) and *The Unnatural Combat* (1624-5)', in *The Spanish Match: Prince Charles's Journey to Madrid, 1623*, ed. by Alexander Samson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 151-71.
[70] Barbara Fuchs, 'Beyond the Missing *Cardenio*: Anglo-Spanish Relations in Early Modern Drama', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 39 (2009), pp. 143-59.
[71] Gossett and Wilcox, p. 45.
[72] Ibid.

Roussillon's geopolitical relation to Spain is understood by certain of its characters. To again quote Williams:

> Shakespeare starts off making 'Rossillion' French in *All's Well That Ends Well*, however, he ultimately conveys the idea of a resistance to French incorporation. We first detect a note of this when Parolles describes Helena's virginity as 'like one of our French withered pears: it looks ill, it eats drily' (1.1.136-37). Here, Parolles implies that France is something past tense: to be sloughed off, like a dead skin. Parolles says '*our* French withered pears,' suggesting that he identifies with Frenchness even as he makes this far from flattering comparison. The comment appears in a scene that is all about dead or dying father figures (punningly, French withered *pères* [fathers]), and concerns in particular how the health of the King of France is compromised by a fistula. Parolles's image of a French withered pear suggests that France, and, more generally, the idea of a French Roussillon, will vanish: that it is as short-lived as Helena's virginity.[73]

We can thus detect a curious dissonance between the characters who seem completely deluded as to Roussillon's position with regard to other European locales, and Paroles, who seems here to hint at knowing more about Roussillon's geopolitical ties, its situation as being both 'in' and somehow 'not in' France, than the play's audiences are told about elsewhere in the text.

Williams's reading of the play's setting, then, is certainly interesting, but her analysis continues by considering how the overall suppression of Roussillon's partly Spanish identity may have been significant for early spectators in attendance at the play:

> Why does Shakespeare suppress the dominant Catalan strain of Roussillon's medieval and early modern history? […] By the time of Philip II, Catalonia and Aragon existed within the embrace of Castilian Spain. They formed part of another imperial dominion, one that despite the defeat of the Spanish Armada, remained a daunting and wide-reaching world power to which England aspired (as opposed to the divided France). However, a Catalonian history that goes unmentioned may be even more notable in its absence: especially when the brittle world of 'French' Roussillon […] is punctured by the words and deeds of Parolles and Helena.[74]

[73] Williams, p. 169.
[74] Ibid., p. 174.

Williams's assessment of the geography of *All's Well that Ends Well* is certainly thought-provoking, but what is even more intriguing from the perspective of more recent scholarship is the fact that Paroles's comparison of Helen's virginity to 'our French withered pears' appears to be part of a dialogue added to the play by Middleton in the early 1620s. In this reading, it is possible that Middleton wished to make a wry comment upon Roussillon's Spanish connections which was only implicit in Shakespeare's original depiction of Roussillon as a province of France. If this is the case, then this provides further reason to consider that Middleton's adaptation of *All's Well that Ends Well* was likely occasioned by increasing concerns regarding England's relations with Spain at this point in time, something which might bolster the argument that the play may have been revived and adapted to comment not only on the ongoing wars which England's King was continually refusing to enter, but also to reflect contemporary anxieties concerning the developments with regard to the Spanish Match.

''Tis only title thou disdain'st in her':
The King's Speech and the Problem of Royal Favouritism

The play's setting in Roussillon, combined with its frequent references to an unspecified Tuscan conflict, could therefore have served as a powerful impetus behind the King's Men choosing to revive and adapt *All's Well that Ends Well* around early 1622. However, another passage which has recently been identified as a Middletonian addition strongly suggest that the political resonance of the adapted play-text may have been designed to reflect certain more domestic concerns as well, in addition to the European interests Middleton and his audiences clearly held at this point in time.

The most obvious suspect passage to analyse in this regard is the King's speech at 2.3.109-36, identified as a likely Middletonian interpolation by Nance. This speech sees the King scold Bertram for the contempt he has for Helen, something which makes the King appear a more sympathetic figure than he may have been in Shakespeare's original text; but his

language is also highly provocative when placed in the context of the early 1620s. Here, the King perceives that Bertram's dislike of Helen is primarily motivated by prejudice towards her lowly status:

> 'Tis only title thou disdain'st in her, the which
> I can build up. Strange is it that our bloods,
> Of colour, weight, and heat, poured all together,
> Would quite confound distinction, yet stands off
> In differences so mighty. If she be
> All that is virtuous, save what thou dislik'st—
> 'A poor physician's daughter'—thou dislik'st
> Of virtue for the name. But do not so.
> From lowest place when virtuous things proceed,
> The place is dignified by th' doer's deed. (2.3.109-18)

The King stresses to Bertram that people should be judged by their actions, by their nature, and for any virtues they may possess, not simply condemned for lack of title and rank. He proceeds to tell Bertram that 'Good alone | Is good, without a name' (120-1), that 'The property by what it is should go, | Not by the title' (122-3), and that 'If thou canst like this creature as a maid, | I can create the rest. Virtue and she | Is her own dower; honour and wealth from me' (134-6). Bertram, of course, remains steadfast – 'I cannot love her, nor will strive to do't' (137) – but is nevertheless wed to Helen by the King, who, feeling that 'My honour's at the stake' (141), dismisses Bertram's protestations. It is thus that Helen and the King provide Bertram with the motivation to flee to the Tuscan wars, rather than marry a woman he does not love.

Bertram's vehement dislike of Helen, then, is evidently not due to her lacking physical attractiveness, nor is it caused by any negative aspect of her character that Bertram has identified. In fact, his expression of disdain for her social status is articulated in lines which appear to have been part of Shakespeare's original text: 'A poor physician's daughter my wife? Disdain | Rather corrupt me ever' (107-8). What is interesting, however, is that the King's defence of Helen's low birth seems to be entirely confined to Middleton's textual intervention. Let us consider this moment in 2.3 with the King's speech omitted:

KING
Thou know'st she has raised me from my sickly bed.
BERTRAM
But follows it, my lord, to bring me down
Must answer for your raising? I know her well;
She had her breeding at my father's charge.
A poor physician's daughter my wife? Disdain
Rather corrupt me ever […]
I cannot love her, nor will strive to do't.
KING
Thou wrong'st thyself, if thou should strive to choose—
HELEN
That you are well restored, my lord, I'm glad.
Let the rest go.
KING
My honour's at the stake, which to defeat
I must produce my power. (2.3.103-42)

While the addition at lines 109-36 makes the King's views on social status appear quite progressive, without this speech his favouring of Helen can be interpreted much more cynically. When lines 109-36 are excised, he does not appear to be defending Helen against Bertram's classism, but is rather forcing marriage to Helen upon Bertram purely because he has already promised Helen, following her curing of his fistula, that 'Who shuns thy love shuns all his love in me' (67), and thus by refusing to marry her Bertram is insulting the King's honour by forgetting that 'It is in us to plant thine honour where | We please to have it grow' (148-9). Hence, by adding an additional speech of just twenty-eight verse lines, Middleton draws extra attention towards the fact that the King is here defending a character of lower status from the criticism of an established courtier. For her relieving of the King's suffering, Helen has achieved the status of a royal favourite, and the King finds himself compelled to remind even his ward that his judgment in this direction is not to be questioned: 'Good fortune and the favour of the King | Smile upon this contract' (169-70).

What significance does Middleton's expansion of the play's engagement with royal favouritism have for consideration of *All's Well that Ends Well* in the context of the early

1620s? Nance argues that 'The King values Helena because her virtue and honour derives from her deeds instead of a name begotten by "foregoers" […] This labour-based conception of worth is set in a cooperative relationship with royal authority: the King acknowledges Helena's ameliorative labour by granting her recognition and a special dispensation as a reward. This speech centres on Helena's worthiness (and her labour), and the recompensing agency of the King is structured as a complement to her actions.'[75] However, events of 1621-2 provide some evidence that Middleton had specific contemporary concerns in mind when writing the King's additional speech.

In April 1621, Sir Henry Yelverton, the member of parliament for Northampton who was at the time imprisoned in the Tower of London, made a powerful speech in the House of Lords in which he attacked the Duke of Buckingham, James's then-favourite, by implicitly comparing what he perceived to be his corrupting influence over the King to that of Hugh Despenser over King Edward II. As Perry informs us of this occurrence, 'The parallel drawn between Buckingham's alleged threats and the corrupting influence of Spencer, one of the notorious favourites of Edward II, caused an uproar, bringing the proceedings to a halt until Buckingham himself urged that Yelverton be allowed to continue.'[76] As we might expect, Yelverton's outburst saw him recommitted to the Tower, and on 15 May he was found guilty of slander; thereafter, on 16 June he was sentenced to prison, and was ordered to submit to the King and Buckingham, and to pay them 10,000 and 5000 marks respectively.[77] Like Lucio in *Measure for Measure*, Yelverton found his words met with anger by a ruler who shared Duke Vincentio's view that 'Slandering a prince deserves' harsh punishment (5.1.511). Thus, as Salzman writes of this episode, 'James made his support for Buckingham clear and Yelverton

[75] Nance, 'King's Speech', pp. 332-3.
[76] Curtis Perry, 'Yelverton, Buckingham, and the Story of Edward II in the 1620s', *Review of English Studies*, 54 (2003), pp. 313-35 (p. 313).
[77] S. R. Gardiner, rev. by Louis A. Knafla, 'Yelverton, Sir Henry (1566-1630), Judge and Politician', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (January 2008) <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-30214> [accessed 14 December 2020].

was disgraced', while Sir John Chamberlain observed that 'the course of the proceedings actually made Buckingham's position even stronger: "Thus we see that great men weakely opposed, thereby become the stronger, and yt is no small comfort to him and his (as he professes) that he is found parlement proofe"'.[78]

Buckingham may have perceived himself to be 'parlement proofe', but as Perry notes 'Surviving newsletters and libels make it clear that this episode was much spoken about, and helped make the parallel between Buckingham and Edward's favorites something of a commonplace.'[79] Indeed, accusations that James's relationship with his favourites was of a sexual nature were made for much of his English reign. Sometime around Yelverton's outburst, one particularly biting libel began to circulate which openly equated the King's love for Buckingham with sodomy: the libeller writes of 'Great Jove that swaies the emperiall Scepter | With's upstart Love | That makes him drunke with Nectar', comments that 'Her servant Mars | Should scourge the Arse, | Jove's marrow so had wasted' (explicitly hinting at anal intercourse), and observes how 'Still Jove with Ganymed lyes playinge'.[80] As Alastair Bellany explains, 'In Renaissance England, "Ganymede" was a common pejorative term for a sodomite, and the myth was frequently deployed in literary discourse as a metaphor for sodomy.'[81] The author of this libel, as is usually the case, has not been identified, but that person's words underline the nature of the gossip that was circulating at this time regarding James and his notorious favourite.

Paul Hammond remarks that 'In a culture where the perception of historical parallels was commonplace, and the writing of history often served as a scarcely veiled reflection on

[78] Salzman, *Literary Culture*, pp. 148-9.
[79] Curtis Perry, *Literature and Favoritism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 204.
[80] Anonymous, 'Arme, arme, in heaven there is a faction', *Early Stuart Libels* <http://www.earlystuartlibels.net/htdocs/king_and_favorite_section/L7.html> [accessed 29 October 2020].
[81] Alastair Bellany, *The Politics of Court Scandal in Early Modern England: News Culture and the Overbury Affair, 1603-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 255.

contemporary affairs, the arrival on the throne of James I, a king who, like Edward, was known to be susceptible to the attractions of handsome male favourites, made the story of Edward II topical and sensitive.'[82] Indeed, as Perry notes, 'This criticism included insinuations of sodomitical favoritism hearkening back to the accusations of sodomy leveled at Edward II in Marlowe's play. In fact, the story of Edward II – which had already received a few pointed Jacobean rehearsals – seems to have become urgently topical in England during the 1620s.'[83] Indeed, it was in 1622, the very year after Yelverton publicly compared Buckingham to Despenser (and, by association, James to Edward II), that Marlowe's history of *Edward II* was issued in its fourth quarto by the stationer Henry Bell, an occurrence which Charles R. Forker has suggested may have been occasioned by popular comparisons at this time between James and Edward and their respective favourites.[84] It is possible that the play itself had originally been inspired by rumours regarding James's relationships with his male favourites. Lawrence Normand, for example, has argued that James's early relationship with the Duke of Lennox may have influenced Marlowe's treatment of Edward II.[85] But its topicality would likely have made this play applicable throughout much of James's reign: as Orgel writes of *Edward II*, this play 'provides so clear a mirror of King James's behaviour toward Carr, Buckingham, and the other favorites that it is startling to find the play was reissued in 1612 and again in 1622, and was performed publicly in that year.'[86] It is clear, then, how concerns about royal favouritism at the court of James I may have inspired not only the emergence of biting libels on the subject, but also generated a clear theatrical response.

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[82] Paul Hammond, *Figuring Sex Between Men from Shakespeare to Rochester* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), p. 118.
[83] Curtis Perry, 'The Politics of Access and Representations of the Sodomite King in Early Modern England', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 53 (2000), pp. 1054-83 (p. 1072).
[84] Charles R. Forker, 'Sexuality and Eroticism on the Renaissance Stage', *South Central Review*, 7 (1990), pp. 1-22 (p. 2).
[85] Lawrence Normand, '"What Passions Call You These?": *Edward II* and James VI', in *Christopher Marlowe and English Renaissance Culture*, ed. by Darryll Grantley and Peter Roberts (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1996), pp. 172-97.
[86] Stephen Orgel, *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 48.

I cited in Chapter 1 in this thesis Hutchings's suggestion that Middleton and Rowley, when they came to write *The Changeling* in 1622, may have been inspired by the publication in that year of the sixth quarto of Shakespeare's *Richard III*. Going by the evidence of influence exerted by that play on certain lines in *The Changeling*, it is at least plausible to suggest that Middleton and Rowley could have been reading this quarto at around the same time as they were working on their own tragedy of that year. While it cannot be said for sure that Middleton was reading the newly published fourth quarto of *Edward II* at the same time as he was working on adapting *All's Well that Ends Well*, the Elizabethan play's commentary on royal favouritism does bear some similarity to Middleton's treatment of the issue in the King's speech. As Marlowe wrote in *Edward II* of Edward's relationship with his first favourite in the play, Piers Gaveston:

> GAVESTON
> Were I a king—
> MORTIMER JUNIOR
> Thou villain, wherefore talks thou of a king,
> That hardly art a gentleman by birth?
> EDWARD
> Were he a peasant, being my minion,
> I'll make the proudest of you stoop to him. (4.27-31)[87]

Here, Edward is seen to be defending Gaveston's rights despite his lower social status by pointing out that his authority within the kingdom is assured through his acquisition of the King's favour. Interestingly, we can see a similar attitude promoted by the French King in the added speech in *All's Well that Ends Well*, when he talks of how he has the power to 'create' better social standing for Helen. Along these same lines, following this added speech Bertram seems to agree with the King by stressing how royal favour can improve a person's status:

[87] Christopher Marlowe, *Edward II*, ed. by Martin Wiggins and Robert Lindsey, rev. by Stephen Guy-Bray (London: New Mermaids, 2014).

> Pardon, my gracious lord; for I submit
> My fancy to your eyes. When I consider
> What great creation and what dole of honour
> Flies where you bid it, I find that she, which late
> Was in my nobler thoughts most base, is now
> The praised of the King; who, so ennobled,
> Is as 'twere born so. (2.3.159-65).

As the audience quickly finds out, Bertram is being disingenuous in this expression of agreement with the King's power, as he quickly determines to flee to the wars in continued opposition to his marriage to Helen. However, in Middleton's augmentation of this scene, we can witness yet another instance of how *All's Well* might have been deemed a particularly appropriate work for revival in 1622 (or at the very least during the early 1620s). It surely can be no coincidence that at a time of great popular concern about the influence of Buckingham over King James, Middleton significantly expanded the discourse of favouritism in *All's Well*. This is another example of how Middleton would have ensured this work's topicality for the time of its revival.

It was thus that Middleton likely adapted the text of *All's Well that Ends Well* in order to provide further commentary upon the most pressing concerns of the early months of 1622. By adapting a play which, through its central themes of war and forced marriage, could so easily be related to events such as the Spanish Match and the Thirty Years' War, Middleton reshaped this play as a far more satirical dramatic endeavour than it may have been in its original form, thus allowing critics to compare it more readily with the dramatic concerns of Middleton's own works during this period of Jacobean history. Like *Measure for Measure*, this play displays many instances of additions to the text which seem designed to pass comment upon contemporary concerns; yet unlike *Measure*, *All's Well* was already a text featuring many concerns that would have been very appropriate for revival on the stage amid this later context. The temporal duality of *All's Well*, then, is certainly striking, although such readings have only been enabled by very recent research in authorship attribution with regard to this play's text.

Further work in this direction should certainly be encouraged, but based on our present and very new understanding of the partially Middletonian nature of the play's text I have nonetheless been able in this chapter to make several new suggestions for critical interpretation of this comedy. By reading the play as both a reaction to concerns regarding Spain and the Spanish Match during the 1620s, while also relating the text to anxieties regarding royal favouritism at the court of James I, I have been able to relate *All's Well that Ends Well* to Middleton's other dramatic works of this period. The play is not as direct in its criticism of the monarch's policies as Middleton's *A Game at Chess*, probably produced just over two years after he had worked on *All's Well*; but connections between the subject matter of both works is certainly suggestive, and might make us view *All's Well* as one way in which Middleton engaged which such points of criticism before launching his more determined and open attack on Anglo-Spanish relations just a couple of years thereafter.

CONCLUSION

At the end of Shakespeare's final solo-authored play *The Tempest* (*c*.1611), the hero, Prospero, resolves to leave behind his engagement with the arts of magic and return to his reclaimed dukedom, Milan:

> But this rough magic
> I here abjure. And when I have required
> Some heavenly music—which even now I do—
> To work mine end upon their senses that
> This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,
> Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
> And deeper than did ever plummet sound
> I'll drown my book. (5.1.50-7)

Prospero's farewell to magic has often been read as Shakespeare's own farewell to the theatre. As Raphael Lyne writes, 'Readers and audiences wonder how much Prospero's renunciation parallels the author's own turn towards retirement; quite understandably, though to do so relies on speculation (in constructing how Shakespeare ended his career) and an imaginative leap.'[1] Of course, it is now understood that Shakespeare did not end his career with *The Tempest*. In the years that followed, he proceeded to work on three further plays in collaboration with Fletcher: *Cardenio*, *All Is True*, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Hindsight is a fine thing. Indeed, it is tempting to consider Shakespeare's work after *The Tempest* as his training a younger playwright in preparation for that playwright to take over the reins as principal resident dramatist for the King's Men, and as Munro argues 'Shakespeare's multiple collaborations with Fletcher thus help us to reconsider his working practices, his final years of creativity, and his afterlife on the Jacobean stage and beyond.'[2] But writing in 1611, Shakespeare could have had no sure knowledge of the trajectory his final years would take, of such significant events

[1] Raphael Lyne, *Shakespeare's Late Work* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 2.
[2] Lucy Munro, 'His Collaborator John Fletcher', in *The Shakespeare Circle: An Alternative Biography*, ed. by Paul Edmondson and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 305-14 (p. 313).

as the burning down of the Globe during a performance of *All Is True* on 29 June 1613,[3] or of his own death on 23 April 1616. The very idea of *The Tempest* as a 'late play' is one we are only capable of forming through our present knowledge of the play's relative proximity to Shakespeare's ultimate passing.

Nor was Shakespeare's book 'drowned'. Of course, despite Prospero's words, in *The Tempest* 'no single book is named; nor do any appear on-stage', to quote from the work of Scott.[4] Prospero's book, then, might be a mere image or metaphor for the casting off of his learned art. For Shakespeare, conversely, his art lived on continuously after his death. It may have been seven years in the wake of his death before his own former colleagues put out a collection of his plays for purchase by the reading public, but Shakespeare's death was not felt by the silencing of his art on London's stages. Rather, his work was perpetuated in the repertory of his own company, the King's Men. To some extent, Shakespeare's theatrical presence continued in the work of his successor as the King's Men's leading dramatist: as Munro reminds us, Fletcher's 'agile creative intelligence was to take Shakespearean forms into the 1620s, spinning off *The Tempest* in *The Sea Voyage*, *The Island Princess* and *The Double Marriage*, returning to Chaucer in *Women Pleased*, and revisiting the materials of *Antony and Cleopatra* in *The False One*.'[5] Yet as this thesis has shown, Shakespeare's legacy was not simply communicated by the enduring influence his creations had upon the plays of the dramatists who plied their craft following his demise; rather, Shakespeare's own plays not only regularly returned to the stage, but also did so optimised for their reception under new social and political contexts, having been reshaped, added to, cut, augmented, and repurposed at the hand of another creative agent who had in his youth learned so much from Shakespeare: Thomas Middleton. Thus, in the gap between Shakespeare's death in 1616 and the beginnings

[3] Gordon McMullan (ed.), *King Henry VIII* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2000).
[4] Charlotte Scott, *Shakespeare and the Idea of the Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 157.
[5] Munro, 'Fletcher', p. 313.

of his canonisation in print with the appearance of the First Folio in 1623, Shakespeare's works continued to engage with developments in England's theatrical, social, and political landscape, although their original author lay buried in Stratford-upon-Avon's Holy Trinity Church.

This doctoral thesis had the objective of examining Middleton's adaptations of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and *Titus Andronicus* in the context of their renovation for revival in the much changed theatrical and socio-political circumstances of the period 1616-22, during which it is most likely that Middleton undertook his work in this regard. Following the revelations in authorship attribution that have been put forth in such major editions as the Oxford Shakespeare, Oxford Middleton, and New Oxford Shakespeare over the past three decades, and in separate publications produced since the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, I undertook to consider not how methods for authorship attribution itself can be further applied to the Shakespeare canon, but to question how these revelations alter our understanding of the implicated texts when we attempt to historicise them within the context of this period of adaptation. In the cases of *Titus Andronicus* and *Macbeth*, this primarily took the form of considering how the identified alterations to these plays would have worked if these plays were revived in the altered theatrical conditions of the King's Men's post-1616 repertory, when the adapted works would have been presented for new audiences in the indoor conditions of the Blackfriars Playhouse. These texts display many dramaturgical alterations, but they have not yet been confidently associated with any specific political occurrences from this period (other than *Titus*, which may have been designed to reflect the case of Lady Arbella Stuart, as mentioned in Chapter 3). *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well that Ends Well*, on the other hand, were demonstrably adapted with a view to providing commentary upon popular unrest in the latter years of the reign of King James I, reflecting public disquiet regarding such controversial events as the Spanish Match and James's reluctance to engage with the crisis in the Palatinate. In this sense, Middleton's adaptations of

these Shakespearean plays more obviously relate to his own demonstrable concerns as a dramatist during this period of time, as exhibited by his other references to these crises in works such as *The World Tossed at Tennis*, *Hengist, King of Kent*, *Women Beware Women*, *Anything for a Quiet Life*, *The Changeling*, *The Nice Valour*, *The Spanish Gypsy*, and finally his most notorious satire, *A Game at Chess*.

It is unlikely that Shakespeare would have had any creative control over who was entrusted with the adaptation of his works following his death. On 10 March 1613, Shakespeare did purchase a gatehouse in the Blackfriars district from one Henry Walker for the sum of £140; Shakespeare was £60 short, so as Robert Bearman informs us 'the following day the property was mortgaged back to the vendor subject to the payment of the outstanding sum by the following September.'[6] The close proximity of this gatehouse to Shakespeare's theatrical interests may indicate that he did not at this time perceive himself to be about to sever ties with the theatre industry with which he had been professionally associated since the late 1580s, but even if we imagine that Shakespeare intended to maintain links with the theatres at this time, and perhaps even strengthen those professional links, given that he had only ever rented property in London up to this point, we do not know when the decision was made to subject any of Shakespeare's plays to adaptation for revival, and even if we did, in the event of his continued association with the King's Men it would presumably have been Shakespeare who would have been responsible for revising his own play-texts (just as he had revised *King Lear* as recently as 1610). Nevertheless, it is clear that Middleton was a writer with a significant understanding of Shakespeare's writing, and it seems likely that Middleton worked closely with the King's Men in his work as an adapter: he was not only adapting works of which he clearly had a great familiarity, such as *Titus Andronicus* and *Measure for Measure*, but was

[6] Robert Bearman, *Shakespeare's Money: How Much Did He Make and What Did This Mean?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 167.

also (at least during the later years of his experience as an adapter for the King's Men) adapting works selected for revival apparently on the basis of how their subject matter would resonate with the contemporary interests and concerns of the company's audiences. As this thesis has shown, Middiscovereddleton's adaptations of the implicated play-texts can not only be said to augment and enhance the content of these plays to fit the theatrical circumstances in which they were to be revived – including new techniques in staging and effects at the Blackfriars Theatre – but also served to underscore their appropriateness to the contextual moment of their revival, strongly engaging with popular concerns which permeated discourse in England during the late 1610s and early 1620s. Of course, these play-texts were not the property of their author, Shakespeare, or of their adapter, Middleton, instead being owned by the company itself, the King's Men; but given the intense engagement of the repertory of the King's Men with such matters during this period, it seems logical that Middleton's own intense interest in such events, as displayed through his own canon of works, would have made him a strong candidate to introduce such dangerous matter into these much older plays.

In the years following the publication of the primary texts of this thesis in the First Folio in 1623, Middleton's own life and career was very short. His final satire, 1624's *A Game at Chess*, which ran for nine consecutive performances before being spectacularly closed down by official intervention, may ironically have brought an ignominious end to his career even as it brought such success on the stage. The Privy Council opened a prosecution against Middleton and the players on 18 August of that year. Although Middleton was able to escape imprisonment by demonstrating that the work had been licensed by the Master of the Revels, at the time Sir Henry Herbert, it is telling that Middleton never again wrote another play for the stage. He died in 1627 in Newington Butts, and was buried on 4 July that year in the churchyard of St. Mary's. By the end of 1626, he had been removed from his regular work as a writer of pageants for the City of London, and it seems that financial difficulties plagued the

final years of his life, his wife dying in poverty only a year after Middleton's passing. Yet Middleton left a lasting influence upon the English literary canon, not only through his own surviving body of works, compiled together and published in an authoritative critical edition in 2007, but also in creating the versions of many Shakespearean plays as audiences and readers experience them today. Unless earlier texts of *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, and *All's Well that Ends Well* are one day discovered, these elements of Shakespeare's revered canon can now only ever be accessed in the versions created at the hands of an alternative, and very different, figure of creative authority: Shakespeare's younger contemporary and sometime collaborator, Thomas Middleton.

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