The Diminution of Thomas Kyd

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Abstract

Thomas Kyd is traditionally accepted as the author of *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Soliman and Perseda*, and *Cornelia*. Kyd may also have written a lost *Hamlet* play that preceded Shakespeare's version. Among his contemporaries, Kyd enjoyed a far higher reputation than he does today. Thomas Dekker and Ben Jonson's respective epithets, 'industrious' and 'sporting', suggest that Kyd's canon was considerably larger than the three plays now acknowledged as his, and that he may have written comedies. The article explores the ways in which Kyd's reputation as a major dramatist has been impeded, with scholarly arguments for his authorship of anonymous texts often displaced by claims for Marlowe and/or Shakespeare. Furthermore, the theory that Kyd wrote the original *Hamlet* play has been countered by Terri Bourus, who argues that Q1 represents an older version of the play written by Shakespeare. The article thus surveys recent attribution and textual scholarship and suggests that Kyd has been the victim of a curious ideological phenomenon in early modern literary studies, which at once isolates Shakespeare, while enforcing notions of authorial plurality, even when the evidence for co-authorship is lacking. The article calls for a reassessment of Kyd's legacy as a major dramatist of the period.

Keywords: Arden of Faversham*, Authorship,* Hamlet*, Kyd, Shakespeare*

1. *Introduction*

In this article I provide an overview of the scholarship concerning Thomas Kyd's dramatic corpus, before demonstrating the ways in which older scholarship on Kyd's canon has been neglected in modern studies.[1] I survey the arguments for Shakespeare's hand in *Arden of Faversham* (1590),[2] which has been assigned to Kyd since the end of the nineteenth century, and the ways in which modern attributionists have revised or interpreted their data to support the theory of

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    [2] I have used Martin Wiggins and Catherine Richardson's *British Drama 1533-1642* (2013, 9) for dating.

Shakespeare's part authorship. I then examine arguments for Shakespeare's authorship of the so-called *Ur-Hamlet*, and suggest that we can broaden our understanding of Thomas Nashe's invective against the author of this lost play in his 1589 Preface to Greene's *Menaphon* (McKerrow 1958, III, 385-394) by comparing it to Robert Greene's criticisms of the dramatist responsible for *Fair Em, the Miller's Daughter of Manchester* (1590). I also explore the origins of Q1 *Hamlet*, specifically the connections between the printed text and aural memory, for the play seems to me, as Thomas Heywood might put it, to have been 'coppied only by the eare' (1608, sig. A2r). The article therefore argues for Kyd's authorship of texts in which his hand has been recently denied. By way of conclusion, I propose that Kyd has been the victim of a curious ideological phenomenon in early modern literary studies, which at once isolates Shakespeare, while enforcing notions of authorial plurality, even when the evidence for co-authorship is lacking. The article calls for a reassessment of Kyd's legacy as a major dramatist of the period, and a reappraisal of his influence on Shakespeare's drama.

2. *Thomas Kyd*

Thomas Kyd (1558-1594) deserves to be ranked among Marlowe (with whom he shared lodgings), Shakespeare, and Lyly as one of the greatest Elizabethan dramatists. He is traditionally accepted as the author of *The Spanish Tragedy* (1587), *Soliman and Perseda* (1588), and *Cornelia* (1594). Kyd also seems to have written a lost *Hamlet* play (1588) that preceded Shakespeare's version. The son of Anna Kyd and Francis Kyd, a scrivener (a professional scribe), he attended Merchant Taylors' School, which also boasted such alumni as Thomas Lodge, Lancelot Andrewes, and Edmund Spenser. It is probable that Kyd was at some point engaged in his father's trade. Arthur Freeman noted that 'Kyd's handwriting, as it survives in two letters of 1593-4 to Sir John Puckering, is remarkably clear and formal', which suggests the 'training of a scrivener' (1967, 12). Thomas Dekker, in his pamphlet *A Knight's Conjuring* (1607), linked 'industrious Kyd' with the actor John Bentley, and the poets Thomas Watson and Thomas Achelley (1607, sigs. K8v–L1r); while in his eulogy on Shakespeare, published in the First Folio (1623), Ben Jonson placed 'sporting Kyd' among Shakespeare's peers (Bevington, Butler, Donaldson, 2012, V, 639). Dekker and Jonson's respective epithets, 'industrious' and 'sporting', suggest that Kyd's canon was considerably larger than the three surviving plays now acknowledged as his, and that he may have written comedies. Lukas Erne notes that Edward Archer's 1656 catalogue misspells Kyd's name and assigns his *Cornelia* to 'Thomas Loyd', which demonstrates 'how rapidly Kyd was forgotten' (2001, 47). Nonetheless, Kyd's reputation enjoyed a transitory resurgence in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when several scholarly studies identified him as the author of anonymously published works, as I survey below.

3. King Leir *and* Arden of Faversham

Edmond Malone was the first scholar to suspect that Kyd was 'the author of the old plays of *Hamlet*, and of *King Leir*' (Boswell, 1821, II.316), while later, in 1891, F.G. Fleay (II, 52) proposed Kyd and Thomas Lodge as authors of *The True Chronicle History of King Leir* (1589). J.M. Robertson asserted in 1914 that there was 'some reason to think' Kyd (albeit recasting a play written by Lodge, as suggested by Fleay) was the play's author (109). Robertson expanded on his attribution in 1924, arguing that the 'play is ascribable to Kyd on the score' of 'the naturalness of the diction … the orderly planning and complication of the action throughout', and 'the frequent parallelism both in action and in phrase to those of Kyd's ascertained plays' (387).

William Wells also argued for Kyd's authorship of *King Leir*, for it is 'a play of simple, undisguised realism, with few flights of fancy. Its sentiment is extraordinarily naive, in content and expression, and yet, in its way, powerful. This accords with Kyd's characteristics' (1939, 434). Wells rightly dismissed any arguments for Lodge as part author, for 'the style of *Leir* is uniform throughout, one poet alone is involved' (437). He observed that *King Leir* is 'abounding in feminine endings, and this points directly to Kyd, for none but he, among the pre-Shakespearian dramatists, wandered far from the normal ten-syllable line' (438). In his 1931 study of eleven-syllable verse lines, Philip Timberlake recorded an average of 10.8% feminine endings in *King Leir*, which corresponds to the 10.2% for *Soliman and Perseda* and 9.5% for *Cornelia* (61-62). Kyd is the only known dramatist preceding Shakespeare who comes close to the proportion of feminine endings in *King Leir*, as we can see in the table below, which contains the ranges for dramatists' sole-authored plays:

Table 1

Greene	0.1-1.6
Lodge	1.0
Marlowe	0.4-3.7
Peele	1.5-5.4
Kyd (uncontested)	1.2-10.2
King Leir	10.8

P.V. Rubow, having identified numerous parallels of thought, language, and corresponding plot features, also ascribed *King Leir* to Kyd in 1948 (145-155).

Similarly, the case for Kyd's authorship of *Arden of Faversham* has been made by generations of scholars. Fleay proposed Kyd as the play's author in 1891 (29), as did Charles Crawford in 1903 (74-86). Crawford observed that the play 'echoes all parts of Kyd's work; and, therefore, it is a difficult thing

to make choice of illustrations, there being such an abundance of material to substantiate his claim to the play' (1906, 120). Having listed fifty close verbal matches between the domestic tragedy and *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Soliman and Perseda*, he concluded that

A man's vocabulary is the surest test by which he can be judged, for no author can jump out of his own language into that of another without betraying himself. His other work will condemn him, and vindicate the wronged party at the same time. It only means the exercise of much patience and minute inquiry to know 'which is which.' The proof lies before us here: the parallels from Marlowe and Lyly are of an entirely different character from those I have adduced from Kyd himself. I assert, then, that Kyd is the author of *Arden of Feversham*. (130)

In 1907 Walter Miksch, having studied the stylistic, metrical, and rhetorical features of *Arden of Faversham* in comparison to *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Soliman and Perseda*, ascribed the play to Kyd. He listed almost a hundred verbal matches between these texts (19-29). The following year, C.F. Tucker Brooke agreed with Fleay and Crawford that 'there are more parallels in feeling and expression between' the 'play and the tragedies of Kyd than coincidences will account for' (1908, xv). H.D. Sykes, in 1919, identified additional verbal matches, including some with Kyd's *Cornelia*. He argued that 'this play has rightly been assigned to Kyd', for 'the resemblances between *Arden* and the unquestioned work of Kyd extend to the most trivial details of phrasing and vocabulary, and the whole weight of the internal evidence supports the conclusion that it is the product of Kyd's own pen' (48-49).

Following these accounts, T.S. Eliot praised Kyd as 'that extraordinary dramatic (if not poetic) genius who was in all probability the author of two plays so dissimilar as *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Arden of Faversham*' (1920, 88-89). However, the influence of scholars such as E.K. Chambers (1930) and Samuel Schoenbaum (1966) meant that attribution studies were not taken seriously in the post-war years. Even more damaging for Kyd's reputation was the fact that M.P. Jackson dismissed the case for his sole authorship of *Arden of Faversham* in a 1963 Oxford B. Litt. thesis, where he first argued for Shakespeare's hand in the play. Decades later, Oxford University Press have accepted Jackson's arguments (Jackson is a member of the edition's attribution board) and included the play in the 2016 edition of *The New Oxford Shakespeare* (Taylor, Loughnane, Bourus and Egan 2016-2017). The adjunct volume (*The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, Taylor and Egan 2017), which lays out some of the evidence for the inclusion of the domestic tragedy, has been criticized by Joseph Rudman for not being externally peer-reviewed, which results in 'borderline ad hominem attacks on "opponents" – which is not a cabal but individuals who are also established Shakespeare scholars; Eric Rasmussen, Sir Brian Vickers, Darren Freebury-Jones, and others', while exemplifying a 'seeming experimental bias (bordering on a

God-complex)', despite containing 'methodological flaws and statistical faux pas in many of the individual papers and the volume in general' (Rudman, forthcoming). Similarly, J.F. Stephenson points out that some of the claims in the *Authorship Companion* are 'presented with a bit more self-assurance—not to mention a bit more personal animus—than is warranted' (Stephenson, forthcoming), while W.P. Williams observes that 'Thirteen of the twenty-five essays in this volume are written, or co-written, by people on the Advisory Board', which 'inspires very little confidence in the fairness and objectivity of what is published here' and equates to ' "studies for buddies" ' (2018, 132).

Indeed, there appears to be two opposing positions in early modern attribution studies, with Brian Vickers on the one side and the *New Oxford Shakespeare* team on the other, and Vickers' arguments for an 'extended' Kyd canon are thus heavily criticized throughout this volume. In a general essay published in the *Times Literary Supplement* in 2008, Vickers combined close study of verbal matches highlighted by anti-plagiarism software with analyses of Kyd's dramaturgy in order to strengthen the case for Kyd's authorship of *King Leir* and *Arden of Faversham* (13-15). He also argued for Kyd's authorship of *Fair Em*, of which more later, and followed scholars such as Robertson, Marley Denwood (quoted in Robertson 1930, IV, 31), and Wells (1940, 219) in assigning parts of *Henry VI Part One* (1592) to Kyd, and Gregor Sarrazin (1892, 124), Robertson (1924, 384-385), Wells (1940, 218), and Guy Lambrechts (1963, 160-174), in providing evidence for his hand in *Edward III* (1593). The possibility that Shakespeare co-authored *Edward III* with Kyd (Vickers 2014), and added scenes to Nashe and Kyd's 'Harey the vj' (Vickers 2007), suggests that Shakespeare's relationship with Kyd's drama deserves further study. However, the *New Oxford Shakespeare* team vehemently denied Kyd's hand in some of these texts, in favour of Marlowe's part authorship, but a variety of internal evidence suggests that these attributions to Kyd's roommate are doubtful (Freebury-Jones 2018a). My own researches have collected a wide range of evidence in favour of an 'expanded' Kyd canon. In the course of this study, I have scrutinized the Vickers ascriptions and the arguments against them. I suggest that the inclusion of *Arden of Faversham* in Shakespeare's canon should be taken *cum grano salis*, and here I should like to highlight some of the potential flaws in arguments for Shakespeare's part authorship, as opposed to Kyd's sole authorship. I also explore the ways in which modern attributionists seem willing to revise or interpret their data in line with emerging orthodoxies.

Jackson summarizes his arguments for Shakespeare's authorship of *Arden of Faversham*'s central scenes (Four to Nine) in a 2014 monograph titled *Determining the Shakespeare Canon: Arden of Faversham & A Lover's Complaint*, in which he also suggests that Shakespeare co-authored the play with an older dramatist who was probably not Kyd. He criticizes twentieth-century scholars' 'haphazard' searches for verbal parallels, which were

purportedly 'biased by the scholar's preconceptions' (16). Jackson notes that 'We need to know how rare such formulas are and who among all dramatists within an appropriate time frame used them' (16). This is a sensible notion, but Jackson uses the database *Literature OnLine*, or *LION*, to test the rarity of utterances that he himself has selected (it is possible that Jackson had Shakespeare's patterns of word associations in mind, and not Kyd's, when conducting his searches). Jackson concedes that this process of determining 'whether a parallel is close enough to be recorded' involves 'an element of subjectivity' and that 'no doubt some relevant data have been accidentally overlooked' (19). This method of picking out potentially significant phrases in each line is evidently time-consuming, which might account for why Jackson examines samples of text from just three of the play's scenes in his monograph. Moreover, many of Jackson's parallels are not contiguous (indeed, Jackson accepts the co-occurrence of a single word as valid evidence for authorship), and it is therefore questionable whether many instances truly constitute what he refers to as 'formulas' (16) at all. It seems that Jackson's case for Shakespeare's authorship on the basis of verbal parallels is therefore compromised by 'the scholar's preconceptions' (16). Elsewhere I have shown that Jackson misses several rare verbal matches with plays assigned to Kyd (Freebury-Jones 2018b; 2019), and that *Arden of Faversham* corresponds to the quantity, nature, and distribution of matches between Shakespeare texts and other Kyd plays.

My evidence suggests that Shakespeare was deeply influenced by the phraseology of *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Soliman and Perseda*, *King Leir*, and *Arden of Faversham* (Shakespeare's verbal borrowings from *The Spanish Tragedy* and *King Leir* exceed *Arden of Faversham*), having perhaps seen or performed in these plays (Freebury-Jones 2017c). Acknowledgement of Shakespeare's debt to Kyd can therefore offer an insight into the development of Shakespeare's dramatic language, and his aural, or 'actor's', memory of theatrical phrases. Nevertheless, as several recent quantitative studies have demonstrated, plays assigned to Kyd share more linguistic commonality with *Arden of Faversham*, in terms of phraseology, than do any Shakespeare texts. As I show below, Jackson's claim that 'In the two-horse race, Shakespeare beats Kyd' is doubtful (Jackson 2017a, 49).

For instance, Martin Mueller has created an electronic corpus called *Shakespeare His Contemporaries*, consisting of over 500 plays dated between 1552 and 1662. Mueller has applied a series of statistical tests to the putative Kyd texts, leading him to conclude that 'Vickers is right about the *Leir* play, *Fair Em*, and *Arden*' (2009a). In a blog post entitled 'N-grams and the Kyd canon: a crude test', on his (then) website *Digitally Assisted Text Analysis*, Mueller explained that he 'ran an experiment on 318 early modern plays in the *MONK* corpus' and 'extracted lemma n-grams' (contiguous word sequences) 'from bigrams to heptagrams that were repeated at least once'. He

computed 'their distribution across plays' and discovered that *King Leir* and *Soliman and Perseda* are placed above the median (the number separating the higher half of Mueller's data from the lower half) – with a percentage of 96.5 – for play pairs suggesting 'characteristic patterns of authorial usage' (2009b). We might note that this percentage is higher than that found for the uncontested Kyd play pair *Soliman and Perseda* and *Cornelia* (93.5%). Mueller also demonstrated that *Fair Em* and *King Leir* are 'in the top quartile for shared two-play n-grams by the same author', with a percentage of 98, which lends 'support to Vickers's argument' that these plays were written by the same author. Most noteworthy is the fact that *Soliman and Perseda* and *Arden of Faversham* are placed 'in the top quartile for shared two-play n-grams by the same author', with a percentage of 99.7, while *Arden of Faversham* and *King Leir* are given a percentage of 99, which provides compelling evidence for common authorship of these texts. Mueller's data also revealed that 'two plays by the same author may be expected to share about twice as many unique n-grams' (i.e. phrases occurring nowhere else in Mueller's corpus) 'as two plays by different authors' (2009b).[3]

In another blog post titled 'Vickers is right about Kyd' (2009a), Mueller applied 'Discriminant analysis to lemma trigrams' (three-word sequences) 'that occur at least 500 times in 318 early modern plays', which 'misclassifies 50 or 16% of 318 plays. It gets 84% right. Of 37 plays by Shakespeare, it gets 34 right'. Discriminant analysis, which establishes 'variance between groups on the basis of the combined effect of multiple variables', assigned *The Spanish Tragedy* to Kyd with a 96.1% chance, while *Soliman and Perseda* and *Cornelia* were given percentages of 85.3 and 79.7 respectively. Conversely, Mueller's Discriminant Analysis tests gave the anonymous burlesque, *The First Part of Hieronimo* (1600), a 30% chance of being Kyd's. Mueller noted that 'Discriminant Analysis rejects the prequel as Kyd's. It assigns it to the grab bag of anonymous plays with a 57.4% chance. So it is not fooled by the presence of many shared repetitions between it and *The Spanish Tragedy*'. Mueller also applied these tests to the plays Vickers attributes to Kyd: Discriminant Analysis assigned *King Leir* to Kyd with a 99.3% chance and gave *Fair Em* a 99.5% chance, while *Arden of Faversham* was given a 97.4% chance of having been written by Kyd. Mueller concluded that 'Discriminant Analysis very

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[3] Similarly, Pervez Rizvi notes on his website *Collocations and N-grams* (2017) that, having tested eighty-six uncontested plays in his corpus, 'unique N-grams are better than all N-grams' for correctly identifying authors, despite the fact that n-grams unfiltered for rarity 'provide a vastly greater amount of data'. He also establishes that 'unique 3-grams and 4-grams' are the most reliable phrasal structures for attribution purposes. Using this method in a document on his website titled ' "*Arden of Faversham*" and the Extended Kyd Canon', Rizvi discovered that the three accepted Kyd plays, *Arden of Faversham*, and *Fair Em*, are all assigned to Kyd, while the unique four-word unit test assigns large portions of *Edward III* to Kyd 'by a strong margin'.

strongly confirms' that these plays come 'from the same stable' as the three accepted Kyd plays, and 'If you combine my evidence from common trigrams' with the evidence 'from rare shared repetitions, you would have to be very sceptical about the power of quantitative analysis not to acknowledge the fact that the claim for an expanded Kyd canon rests on quite solid evidence'.

More recently, Pervez Rizvi has developed an electronic corpus of 527 plays dated between 1552 and 1657, titled *Collocations and N-grams*.[4] Users can download summary spreadsheets for play pairs sharing n-grams. The spreadsheet for *Arden of Faversham* as a whole ranks other plays in the electronic corpus according to all n-gram matches, as well as unique n-gram matches (i.e. occurring only in the domestic tragedy and one other play in the corpus), and takes account of composite word counts. Rizvi's results are fully automated and enable scholars to check for every contiguous word sequence (including lemmas), as well as all collocations (discontinuous word sequences), shared between texts. Searches of these lemmatized texts – drawn from Mueller's corpus and the *Folger Shakespeare Editions* website – allow a wider range of matches to be discovered than by searches using the unlemmatized forms of words. The summary spreadsheet for this play shows that *Soliman and Perseda* shares denser n-gram relations with the domestic tragedy than any other play of the period; *Fair Em* is ranked eleventh; and *King Leir* is ranked fifteenth. The highest Shakespeare text in this publicly accessible Excel spreadsheet is *Richard III* (1593), ranked twenty-first. I reproduce the list of the top twenty plays in this spreadsheet below. Readers might note that with the exception of the 'bad Quarto' *The Taming of a Shrew* (1594), no play associated with Shakespeare figures here:

Table 2

1. *Soliman and Perseda*
2. *Thomas Lord Cromwell*
3. *Edward the Second*
4. *A Knack to Know a Knave*
5. *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third*
6. *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*
7. *The Taming of a Shrew*
8. *2 Edward the Fourth*
9. *The Spanish Bawd*
10. *Bartholomew Fair*
11. *Fair Em*
12. *Englishmen for My Money*

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[4] Rizvi (2017) provides more detailed explanations for how these play links were recorded and weighted on his website.

13. *Wily Beguiled*
14. *The Massacre at Paris*
15. *The True Chronicle of King Leir*
16. *The Two Angry Women of Abingdon*
17. *Your Five Gallants*
18. *When You See Me You Know Me*
19. *The Duchess of Suffolk*
20. *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*

If we consult the spreadsheet for Kyd's accepted play, *Soliman and Perseda*, as a test case, we find that *The Spanish Tragedy* tops the list (followed closely by *Arden of Faversham*, while *King Leir* and *Cornelia* also feature in the top twenty plays), which demonstrates that though genre, source material, subject matter, playing companies, chronology, plagiarism, and so forth could influence the data, Kyd's habit of self-repetition is a major factor in these rankings. Thus, a variety of statistical tests, based on a number of weighting measures in large electronic corpora, in comparison to all dramatists of the period, suggest that arguments for an 'extended' Kyd canon are valid.

It is worth pointing out that in Rizvi's summary spreadsheets for Shakespeare's early plays, the 'non-Shakespeare' scenes of *Arden of Faversham* are ranked much higher than the central scenes, which Jackson and his *New Oxford Shakespeare* colleagues assign most securely to Shakespeare, i.e. scenes Four to Eight. To offer a couple of examples: in the spreadsheet for *The Taming of the Shrew* (1592), we discover that the 'non-Shakespeare' scenes are ranked 52; however, the scenes Jackson gives to Shakespeare are at 433. If we consult Rizvi's data for *Richard III*, we find that the 'non-Shakespeare' scenes are ranked 43, whereas the central scenes are much lower at 425. Aside from demonstrating that the Kentish tragedy does not share nearly as many distinct phrases with Shakespeare's early works as it does with other plays attributable to Kyd, the above results show that if one were to make arguments on the basis of n-gram distribution, stronger claims could be made for Shakespeare's authorship of scenes that the *New Oxford Shakespeare* team do not attribute to him.

Nonetheless, in his 2014 monograph, Jackson claims that there is a 'disparity' between the large number of verbal matches with Shakespeare in the middle portion of the play, as opposed to the remainder of *Arden of Faversham* (65). However, Jackson's claim is based on the distribution of parallels with plays of the period in M.L. Wine's appendix to his 1973 edition of the Kentish tragedy. As I have shown elsewhere (Freebury-Jones 2016b, 54-55), Jackson overlooks the fact that the overwhelming majority of non-Shakespeare parallels recorded by Wine are with Kyd's plays, and that adjusting the raw figures according to these dramatists' overall canon word counts shows that, on a quantitative basis, Kyd is the more likely author of both the 'Shakespeare' and 'non-Shakespeare' portions of the play.

Jackson concedes that Wine's parallels were 'haphazardly derived, largely from articles by proponents of Kyd's authorship of the play, and untested for rarity' (2017b, 127), but these criticisms also apply to the Shakespeare parallels, which were mainly derived from Jackson's 1963 thesis, in which he first argued for Shakespeare's hand in some of the play's central scenes. Given Jackson's awareness of the unreliability of Wine's cherry-picked parallels, it is peculiar that he should apply Fisher Exact Test probability arguments to their distribution (2014, 65). Jackson states that the 'complete exclusion' of Wine's parallels 'from my overall case would scarcely weaken it at all' (2017b, 127), but given that his arguments for Shakespeare's hand in the play are limited to 126 pages of his monograph, readers might question why such arguments were included in the first place.

Other 'less compelling, but nevertheless of interest' evidence that Jackson cites in his monograph, such as the distribution of 'Tush' and 'Ay, but', may also be called into question. Jackson notes that the exclamation 'Tush' is 'confined' to the 'earliest and latest scenes' of *Arden of Faversham* (2014, 78). He suggests it 'can hardly be coincidental that' this non-Shakespearean feature (according to Jackson) occurs in scenes outside of the middle portion of the play (79). However, this exclamation is not to be found in the second act of *The Spanish Tragedy* (there are four instances in total), while the two instances within *Soliman and Perseda* are confined to the play's opening two acts. Should we suppose that Kyd did not write the remaining scenes in these plays? Jackson also argues that as 'none of the nine instances' of 'Ay, but' feature in the middle portion of *Arden of Faversham*, and given that Shakespeare 'seldom used' this colloquialism, the play appears to have been written by Shakespeare and another dramatist (79). All six instances of 'Ay, but' in *The Spanish Tragedy* feature in the play's second act, so, according to Jackson's argument, the remaining acts could be considered Shakespearean. Moreover, on the basis of Jackson's argument, Shakespeare could have written the third and fourth acts of *Soliman and Perseda*. In my view, many of these claims concerning the distribution of linguistic items in *Arden of Faversham* amount to apophenia.

Similarly, Jackson's claim that compound adjectives in *Arden of Faversham* are 'more like the early plays of Shakespeare than like those of Marlowe, Greene, or Peele' (76) is symptomatic of the scant attention modern attributionists have afforded Kyd's candidature. Here Jackson is following Alfred Hart, who argued in 1934 that Shakespeare had a higher rate of use than his contemporaries (232-239). However, as Inna Koskenniemi observed: 'In the works of Shakespeare's immediate predecessors one finds the greatest variety of adjectival compounds', and 'The highest number of new compounds is found in Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda*' (1962, 31). A.M. Witherspoon pointed out that Kyd's 'translation of Garnier's *Cornélie*' is 'brimful of them' (1924, 171). In an essay-review of *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*

(Freebury-Jones 2018a, 77-79), I show that the examples Jackson gives for Shakespeare's authorship (none of which actually feature in the central scenes of the play that he assigns most securely to Shakespeare) are hardly beyond Kyd's capacity, and that the figures for compound adjectives formed by noun plus participle and present participle (which Jackson considers to be Shakespeare markers), are commensurate with Kyd's practice (conversely, Marlowe largely eschewed these forms in his dramatic works). Perhaps Shakespeare's debt to Kyd extends to this aspect of the dramatist's lexicon.

Another innovative aspect of Kyd's dramatic style that Shakespeare seems to have followed was his liberal use of feminine endings. Jackson does not acknowledge Timberlake's study of the domestic tragedy in his monograph. Timberlake's findings revealed that Shakespeare employed feminine endings with more frequency than his Elizabethan contemporaries. For example, Shakespeare's earliest plays, according to Martin Wiggins' chronology (Wiggins and Richardson 2013), *Henry VI Part Two* and *Part Three* (1591), have high percentages of 10.4 and 10.7 respectively (Timberlake 1931, 86-94), which presents an obstacle for scholars attempting to give large parts of the Henry VI trilogy to Marlowe – I attribute all of *Henry VI Part Two* and *Part Three* to Shakespeare alone (Freebury-Jones 2016a, 201-216; 2017a) – who 'only once reaches 8.0 per cent' in 'single long scenes' (Timberlake 1931, 45), and whose dramatic output reaches a peak of 3.7 percent feminine endings for *Edward II* (1592). However, as I demonstrated above, Timberlake also discovered that Kyd 'was customarily using feminine endings with a frequency surpassing that of any' pre-Shakespearean 'dramatist whom we have considered' (52-53). Significantly, Timberlake recorded an average of '6.2 per cent of feminine endings' in *Arden of Faversham*, 'with a range in long scenes of 0.9-12.9 per cent. *Soliman* has 10.2 per cent, and a range of 5.3-14.8 per cent'. He concluded that 'this is not entirely surprising. Kyd was a gifted playwright with a keen perception of dramatic values, and his metrical development may find its explanation in that fact' (52).

Given that Shakespeare and Kyd are the only known dramatists of the period with comparably high figures for feminine endings in their dramatic works, we might expect to see such variation in feminine endings between 'Shakespeare' portions and those of an older co-author as to identify the presence of two dramatists (as we can perceive in *Titus Andronicus* and *Edward III*, for example). This is not the case: feminine endings are used liberally throughout *Arden of Faversham*. In my computations, the 'Shakespeare' scenes average 6.4% feminine endings, while Jackson's conjectured co-author averages a strikingly similar percentage of 6.1, which would be too high for any known Elizabethan playwright except Kyd or Shakespeare. Some readers might object that these figures could also indicate Shakespeare's sole authorship but, as Jackson himself notes: 'no attribution scholar currently regards Shakespeare as more than a co-author of the play' (2017b, 128).

Jackson has criticized Marina Tarlinskaja's 2008 article 'entitled "Kyd Canon" ', which was 'posted on the London Forum for Authorship Attribution Studies website' but 'cannot currently be viewed' (Jackson 2014, 114). Tarlinskaja is a Russian-American prosodist who examines weak, or odd (called 'non-ictic'), and strong, or even ('ictic'), syllables in verse. Tarlinskaja notes that 'Strong syllabic positions of the iambic metrical scheme only tend to be filled with stressed syllables', while 'Weak syllabic positions only tend to be unstressed'. Different strong and different weak positions 'accept dissimilar numbers of deviating stresses depending on the period, genre, and preferences of a poet' (2014, 17). Tarlinskaja relies 'solely on syntax', which means that 'doubts and choices are inevitable' (for example, there are numerous ways in which a line's monosyllables can be stressed) in her manual analyses of plays (15), but hers is a powerful method for attributing the authorship of contested texts.

Jackson informs readers that Tarlinskaja 'argued, on metrical grounds, in favour of Vickers's expansion of the Kyd canon' (2014, 114). He calls Tarlinskaja's analysis 'subjective' (115), and refers readers to her monograph, which supposedly reveals that 'certain scenes of *Arden*, including 4-8, share metrical features with early Shakespeare' (116). In contrast to her original attribution to Kyd, Tarlinskaja now suggests that the 'stress profile' of Scene Eight, with its 'deep "dip" on syllable 6', points to Shakespeare (2014, 106). However, earlier in the monograph Tarlinskaja points out that Kyd 'consolidated the stress "dip" on position 6' in Elizabethan drama (67). Tarlinskaja notes that 'Scenes 4-8 contain a substantial "dip" on syllable 6', which 'could indicate a typical early Elizabethan text' or 'early Shakespeare, and Kyd' (109). The dip on position six in these scenes therefore provides no evidence for an attribution to Shakespeare and/or deattribution to Kyd. In fact, Tarlinskaja's figure of 71.8 for these scenes accords with *The Spanish Tragedy*'s 69.2; *Soliman and Perseda*'s 68.6; *King Leir*'s 69.2; *Fair Em*'s 70.6; and *Cornelia*'s (minus Chorus) 70.4.

According to Tarlinskaja's data, Kyd prefers a dip on position six in *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Soliman and Perseda*, while the later stage plays ascribed to him by Vickers contain almost equal stressing on positions six and eight; *King Leir* has a figure of 69.8 for the syllabic position eight, and *Fair Em* a figure of 69.6, while the translation *Cornelia* has a figure of 76.0 (Tarlinskaja 2014, Table B.1). *Arden of Faversham* has an almost equal percentage of missing stresses on six (73.7) and eight (74.5) overall, just like *King Leir* and *Fair Em*, which are closest to the domestic tragedy in terms of chronology. Furthermore, Tarlinskaja's figures for the play per scene show that the 'non-Shakespearean' scenes Twelve and Thirteen also feature a dip on six, while scenes Fifteen to Eighteen and the Epilogue feature a substantial dip on six, just like scenes Four to Eight. Given that there are signs of what Tarlinskaja calls a 'conscious versification experiment' in Kyd's plays and those of his roommate Marlowe

– with *Dido, Queen of Carthage* (1588) and *Edward II*, for instance, being 'quite different from *Tamburlaine*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Doctor Faustus*', in terms of stressing – the attribution of play portions with alternating stresses on syllables six and eight to different playwrights is problematic (74). It therefore seems to me that Tarlinskaja's data are compatible with my theory that *Arden of Faversham* was written solely by Kyd.[5]

Tarlinskaja also makes an 'argument for Shakespearean authorship' on the basis that 'Run-on lines prevail' in scenes Four to Eight (110). If we consult Tarlinskaja's 'Appendix B', we find that she records an average of 10.8 run-on lines in these scenes. She also records an average of 9.5 run-on lines in *The Spanish Tragedy*; 9.9 in *Soliman and Perseda*; 9.2 in *King Leir*; 14.1 in *Fair Em*; and 13.6 in *Cornelia*. We might ask ourselves: how does the figure of 10.8, which is in fact lower than Kyd's undoubted play, *Cornelia*, suggest Shakespeare's authorship rather than Kyd's? In my view, Tarlinskaja's evidence cannot be justifiably interpreted as lending support to Jackson's argument.

Examples of scholars interpreting their data in support of the hypothesis that Shakespeare had a hand in *Arden of Faversham* can also be found in studies by A.F. Kinney (2009), and Brett Greatley-Hirsch and Jack Elliott (2017). Kinney has concluded that '*Arden of Faversham* is a collaboration; Shakespeare was one of the authors; and his part is concentrated in the middle portion of the play' (2009, 99). Kinney's attribution to Shakespeare derives from the results of lexical and function-word tests. Even Jackson criticizes Kinney's failure to recognize Quarto spelling variants (Kinney's lexical-word tests do not give Scene Eight to Shakespeare), though he asserts that 'Whether or not anomalous spellings affected Craig and Kinney's lexical tests of *Arden*'s Scene 8, the multiplicity of evidence presented' in his monograph 'vindicates Kinney's conclusion' (2014, 51). The question is how are we to trust the results for any single scene in *Arden of Faversham* if the 'Craig-Kinney software' was 'flummoxed' by 'unusual spellings' when it came to Scene Eight? (51). Moreover, Peter Kirwan points out that the 'lexical-word tests employed by Kinney are questionable', for 'only 112 of 174 single-author plays from the period are tested, as opposed to the entire' *LION* corpus, and that 'rather than use the 2000-word chunks that Kinney's team claim are necessary for tests', he 'begins with individual scenes, which he admits are too short for reliable results' (2015, 78-99). It is widely accepted in scientific research that 'small sample size means smaller power' (Ioannidis 2005). I concur with Kirwan that 'The confidence of' Kinney's conclusion is 'not justified' (2015, 151). Furthermore, Kinney's interpretation of his function-word data leads him to claim that *Arden of Faversham* shows 'no sustained affinities with Kyd' (2009, 99). However, Lene Buhl Petersen has applied 'discriminant analysis'

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[5] I should like to thank Tarlinskaja for sending me her figures for the play per scene (email correspondence, 21 March 2016).

to 'principal data components' with 'cross-validation' (2010, 213). According to Petersen's use of Principal Component Analysis, '*Arden of Faversham* cross-validates as Kyd'. Petersen concludes, sensibly, that 'these classifications are by no means to be taken as truths' (214). We should therefore bear in mind the caveat that statistical analysis, like literary analysis, can aspire to objectivity, but it also relies upon an interpretative position.

Greatley-Hirsch and Elliott have extended Kinney's analysis and subjected the Kentish tragedy to a number of tests, utilizing Delta, Nearest Shrunken Centroid, Random Forests, and Zeta. They conclude that 'It is impossible to reconcile the results we have found with a belief that Shakespeare had no hand in *Arden of Faversham*, thus the play takes its rightful place in the canon of his works' (2017, 181). However, their tests assign a number of segments in *Arden of Faversham* to Kyd. Indeed, in direct contrast to Kinney's study, their function-word tests assign scenes Four to Eight, which Jackson attributes to Shakespeare, to Kyd (173). These studies, based on single words denuded of their linguistic and dramatic context, therefore, fail to agree, which surely casts doubt on their reliability. The objectivity of Greatley-Hirsch and Elliott's chapter is also open to question, in that the Kyd results are given no mention in their conclusion, while the fact that Zeta 'misclassifies the lone Kyd hold-out segment as not Kyd' (159) suggests to me that their tests cannot distinguish authentic Kyd texts anyway. In my view, the false negatives for *Arden of Faversham* samples thus do little to damage the substantial case for Kyd's sole authorship. As Greatley-Hirsch and Elliott concede, their tests are 'more likely to give a false negative for Kyd's authorship than a false positive' (159). I had previously commended 'the rigour of their analyses' (Freebury-Jones 2018a, 75), but major flaws in Greatley-Hirsch and Elliott's handling and interpretation of their data have since been highlighted by scholars such as Rizvi (2018), Rudman (forthcoming), Stephenson (forthcoming), and David Auerbach (2018). On this basis, their attribution of *Arden of Faversham* segments to Shakespeare can be considered illusory.

In order to contest these conclusions derived from computational stylistic tests, I present my findings for a single word: 'But'. In 1995, Thomas Merriam observed that there is a 'much higher word frequency of "but"' in Kyd's plays, as opposed to plays by Marlowe and Shakespeare, which led him to conclude that Kyd is 'the preferred author of *Arden of Faversham*' (340). Merriam's raw counts for the word 'But' reveal striking affinities with Kyd's plays: *The Spanish Tragedy* has a total of 203, *Soliman and Perseda* contains 208, and *Arden of Faversham* contains 202 (341). According to my count, of the 202 instances of 'But' in *Arden of Faversham*, 105 are placed in the initial iambic foot, compared to 81 and 49 instances in Shakespeare's *Henry VI Part Two* and *The Taming of the Shrew* respectively. The high figure for *Arden of Faversham* accords with *The Spanish Tragedy*'s 122 and *King Leir*'s (identical) 105. Kyd (by my argument) thus places 'But' in the initial iambic foot once

every 20 lines in *The Spanish Tragedy*, 23 lines in *Soliman and Perseda* and *King Leir*, and 19 lines in *Arden of Faversham*, which we might compare to Shakespeare's rate of once every 29 lines in *Henry VI Part Two*, and 46 lines in *The Taming of the Shrew*.[6] It also seems worth pointing out that of the 45 instances of 'But' in scenes Four to Nine of *Arden of Faversham*, which Jackson gives to Shakespeare, 25 occur at the start of verse lines, at a rate of one every 21 lines. I hope that future researchers will expand my work on Kyd's use of 'But' by examining other function words according to their prosodic characteristics and contexts of use.

In the pages above I have provided a selection of counterevidence in order to show the ways in which modern scholars have overlooked earlier studies and contrary findings in order to introduce a new play into Shakespeare's canon, at the expense of Kyd's dramatic corpus. This habit of reassigning plays commonly ascribed to Kyd also extends to works for which we have no extant text, as I show below.

4. Hamlet *and* Fair Em

Kyd, like Shakespeare, did not have a university education. He was therefore also open to criticism from the University Wits. Nashe seems to have attacked Kyd in his preface to Greene's *Menaphon* (1589), which has helped scholars, beginning with Malone, to identify Kyd as the author of the *Ur-Hamlet*. Nashe alludes to 'the Kidde in Aesop' who has left 'the trade of *Noverint*' (i.e. a scrivener) and now meddles 'with Italian translations', as Kyd had done with his translation of Torquato Tasso's *Padre di Famiglia*, known as *The Householder's Philosophy* (1588). Nashe claims that Kyd bleeds Seneca 'line by line' in order to 'affoord you whole *Hamlets*' (III, 316-317). He derides the opening of *The Spanish Tragedy* in particular, for Kyd 'thrusts Elisium into hell' during Andrea's account of his descent into the lower world. Nashe also claims that Kyd is prone to 'bodge up a blanke verse with ifs and ands' (McKerrow 1958, III, 316-317), which parodies a line from *The Spanish Tragedy*: 'What, Villaine, ifs and ands? offer to kill him' (Boas 1901, 2.1.77).

In 1942, Valdemar Østerberg argued convincingly that Kyd was indeed the subject of Nashe's attack (and therefore the author of the old *Hamlet* play) in his preface to Greene's *Menaphon* (McKerrow 1958, III, 385-394). Erne endorses Østerberg's argument:

the possible allusions to Kyd's father being a scrivener, Kyd's debt to Seneca, his very name, his new occupation as a translator, his 'intermeddling' with an Italian translation, the 'home-born mediocrity' of this translation, and Kyd's 'thrusting

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[6] My computations are based on the verse line totals for these plays, taken from 'Appendix B: Table B.1', in Tarlinskaja 2014.

Elysium into hell' in *The Spanish Tragedy*, I.i.72-5, make it more than likely that
Nashe's target is indeed Kyd. (2001, 147)

Erne elaborates that 'Italian translations were a rare phenomenon in the years
up to 1589 and Nashe could expect that his literary readership would easily
identify an allusion to Kyd's *The Householder's Philosophy*' (149). According to
Henslowe's diary, the old *Hamlet* play was performed at Newington Butts on
9 June 1594, by the Admiral's and/or Chamberlain's Men (Foakes 2002, 21).
Two years after the record of its performance, Thomas Lodge alluded to the
old play in his *Wit's Misery*: 'looks as pale as the vizard of the ghost which cried
so miserably at the Theator like an Oyster wife, Hamlet, revenge' (1596, 56).
    I have suggested elsewhere that our understanding of Nashe's diatribe
can be informed by a reading of Greene's attack against the author of *Fair
Em* (Freebury-Jones 2017b, 252-254). This comedy was likely performed
privately as a compliment to Sir Edmund Trafford, a friend and colleague of
Henry Stanley, in 1590 (Thaler 1931, 647-658; George 1991, xxxi, 180-181).
Henslowe's diary records a later performance of 'william the conkerer' on
4 January 1593 by Sussex's Men at the Rose Theatre (Foakes 2002, 20). In
1898, Josef Schick identified Henry Wotton's 1578 work *A Courtly Controversy
of Cupid's Cautels* as the source for the William the Conqueror plotline in
Fair Em (v-xliii). Kyd is the only (undoubted) Elizabethan playwright to
use *A Courtly Controversy of Cupid's Cautels* as a source for his dramatic
works and Wotton's translation was printed by Kyd's father's acquaintance,
Francis Coldocke. The story in Wotton's collection is a tragedy and ends
with Lubeck's execution and William's suicide. The dramatist responsible
for *Fair Em* transforms the tragic tale into a comedy. Richard Proudfoot
notes that the 'Shared source' for *Fair Em* and *Soliman and Perseda* 'speaks
strongly for common authorship, as does' the 'ingenious reversal of genre
in the dramatization of both source stories'.[7] To the best of my knowledge,
Vickers is original in attributing the play to Kyd, although it is worth noting
that P.V. Rubow identified verbal parallelisms between the comedy and Kyd's
The Spanish Tragedy in 1948 (132-133).
    Notably, Timberlake was puzzled by his findings for *Fair Em*, stating that
'one is hardly prepared to find a play of such undistinguished verse exceeding
in use of feminine endings the practice of such leading dramatists as Marlowe
and Greene' (1931, 63-64). *Fair Em* averages 6.5 percent feminine endings
(with a range of 0.0-15.9), which is very close to the figure of 6.2 found in
Arden of Faversham. Timberlake came to the unlikely conclusion that the play
had been 'originally composed in Poulter's measure (or possibly in straight
fourteeners) which has been altered' during revision 'to make the play blank

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[7] I should like to thank Richard Proudfoot for sharing his thoughts with me (email
correspondence, 7 October 2015).

verse throughout' (63-64). Nonetheless, *Fair Em* exhibits Kyd's practice (unique among Shakespeare's predecessors) of admitting a high proportion of feminine endings.

Greene ridiculed the play's author in his *Farewell to Folly* (1591). T.H. Dickinson, writing in 1909, noted that 'There are indications that Greene would have been quite willing to ridicule Kyd', for 'Nash, in the same preface to *Menaphon* in which he had ridiculed Marlowe, satirizes Kyd' (xxxvi). In fact, the opening of Greene's attack, 'Others will flout' (Grosart 1881-1886, IX, 232), resembles Kyd's hint 'at the existence of hostile critics' (Boas 1901, lxxvii), in his dedication to Thomas Reade in *The Householder's Philosophy*: 'Let others carpe' (Boas 1901, 233). In *Farewell to Folly*, Greene criticizes the dramatist's use of 'Biblical paraphrases, the first from I Peter 4:8 and the second from Romans 2:15' (Henning 1980, 64), as 'simple abusing of the Scripture' (Grosart 1881-1886, IX, 232-233). Greene also criticizes the dramatist's use of plots 'distild out of ballets' and his borrowings from 'Theologicall poets, which for their calling and gravitie, being loth to have anie profane pamphlets passe under their hand, get some other Batillus to set his name to their verses' (IX, 232-233). In a letter to Sir John Puckering, Kyd 'projected a poem on the conversion of St Paul' (Erne, 2001, 220). Kyd thus fits Greene's profile of a poet who writes works 'of theological cast' (Baldwin 1959, 515). Greene's image of 'a man' who 'hath a familiar stile and can endite a whole yeare and never be beholding to art' (Grosart 1881-1886, IX, 232-233) recalls Nashe's attack against Kyd: 'that run through every art and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *noverint* whereto they were born and busy themselves with the endeavours of art' (McKerrow 1958, III, 316-317). Greene's line, 'he that cannot write true Englishe without the help of Clearkes of parish Churches, will needs make him selfe the father of interludes' (Grosart 1881-1886, IX, 232-233), suggests that the author of *Fair Em* was a professional copyist, but had turned to playwriting. Furthermore, as Eric Sams pointed out in 1995, 'There is no direct evidence that Kyd was ever a churchman of any persuasion' but 'his scrivener father Francis had been a churchwarden at St Mary Woolnoth's in Lombard Street, not far from Cripplegate' (93). Nashe's claim that the author of *Hamlet* could 'scarcely Latinize' his 'neck verse' (i.e. a verse set before a person claiming benefit of clergy) may also allude to the fact that Kyd's father was a churchwarden (McKerrow 1958, III, 316-317).

It is possible that, in his allusion to 'Saint Giles without Creeplegate' (Grosart 1881-1886, IX, 233), Greene was following Nashe in evoking Kyd's name. Saint Giles (the protector of rams and deer) was a Christian hermit from Athens who, while living in Southern France, was crippled when a hunter's arrow, intended for his companion, a young deer, wounded him. More significant, perhaps, is the fact that the vicar of St Giles' Church at the time (between 1588 and 1605, having taken over as rector of the church after Robert Crowley) was Lancelot Andrewes, Kyd's schoolfellow. Both Nashe

and Greene label the subject of their respective attacks as a 'plagiarist, and dunce' (Henning 1980, 66), or, as T.W. Baldwin put it in 1959, a 'degreeless person' who produces plays that are 'compared favourably with the work' of better educated dramatists (515). Baldwin argued that Nashe and Greene were both attacking the same author (514-520). In my view, Greene's attack is practically identical to Nashe's invective against Kyd and his education at Merchant Taylors', as well as his background as a scrivener.

5. *The Origin of Q1* Hamlet

In a monograph titled *Young Shakespeare's Young Hamlet*, published the same year that Jackson summarized his arguments for Shakespeare, and not Kyd's, authorship of *Arden of Faversham*, Terri Bourus contended that Kyd was not responsible for the so-called *Ur-Hamlet*, and that the 1603 edition published by the bookseller Nicholas Ling represents an early version of Shakespeare's play referred to by Nashe. Bourus does not trust the testimony of Lodge, and compares his use of the phrase, 'Hamlet revenge', which appears to derive from the lost play (it does not occur in any of Shakespeare's texts), to popular misquotations from movies like *Casablanca*. This could be considered anachronistic, something that Bourus stresses scholars should avoid, as we shall see, while her point that many of these misquotations 'involve misplaced or interpolated vocatives' (2014, 146) would seem to undermine her argument that the use of the vocative, 'boy', uniquely emphasizes Hamlet's youth in Q1 (107), for these interpolations could also be memorial. (Similarly, the fact that Yorick has been dead for 'a dozen years', and that the fee paid for Hamlet's father's picture is 'a hundred—two hundred—pounds' in Q1, suggests to me vague numerical recollection, rather than revision). Bourus also notes that the phrase, 'Hamlet revenge', features in Dekker's *Satiromastix* (1601), and is contrasted with Horace 'a.k.a. Ben Jonson, who in his brief and unsuccessful career as an actor had performed "Suleiman"' in Paris Garden. Bourus suggests that 'the simplest explanation' for allusions that collocate 'Hamlet' and 'revenge' is that they 'refer to the same play, Shakespeare's', rather than a lost play by Kyd (149-150). But if Dekker were invoking Kyd's Turkish emperor in this passage (as well as Hieromimo in *The Spanish Tragedy*), it is not difficult to imagine that the allusion to Hamlet similarly refers to a play by Kyd. As G.I. Duthie noted: 'we are safe in assuming that the reference cannot be to a *Hamlet* Shakespearian in whole or in part, since presumably Shakespeare's work would not be ridiculed by his own company in his own theatre' (1941, 77).

Though Bourus does not trust contemporary witnesses such as Lodge, she is willing to take Nashe's satirical comment on 'two penny pamphlets' literally, noting that *The Householder's Philosophy* 'was not, as Erne implies, a two-penny pamphlet: it contains eight and a half sheets of paper, and

would have cost four pence'. Bourus continues: 'Erne's own argument here rules out Kyd, since none of his extant works was a two-penny pamphlet' (165). We might ask ourselves: how many two-penny pamphlets translating Italian were written by Shakespeare in the late 1580s? In my view, Erne, in his review of Bourus' monograph, appears to be justified when he states that the 'evidence that this earlier play was by Thomas Kyd, author of *The Spanish Tragedy* (1587), is strong' (2015, 54).

Bourus considers the notion that 'Shakespeare in the early seventeenth century wrote an entirely new play to replace an older *Hamlet* play written by someone else' to be unlikely: 'revision is the more economical hypothesis, not only intellectually but also financially' (2014, 150-151). But this is to gloss over the fact that, to offer just a couple of examples, Shakespeare wrote an entirely new play to replace an older *King Leir* play written by someone else (Kyd, by my argument), as well as a new *King John* (1596) play to replace an older play written by another dramatist (George Peele's *The Troublesome Reign of King John*). The theory that Shakespeare based a new play on an old one has precedence, and Shakespeare's company were demonstrably willing to pay the costs for such adaptations. Let us imagine that the text of *King Leir* had not survived: in such a scenario, it is easy to imagine a similar monograph being produced, suggesting that Shakespeare wrote *King Lear* in the late 1580s, and that the play performed in April 1594 at the Rose Theatre, by the 'Quenes men & my lord of Susexe to geather' (Foakes 2002, 21), was an earlier version of Shakespeare's tragedy.

In 1942, Alfred Hart provided evidence that the 1603 text of *Hamlet* does not derive from an older play, noting that 'Q1 contains 15 per cent' feminine endings 'compared with 23 per cent in Q2', and that lines from the conjectured 'old play have no less than 18 per cent'. He elaborated: 'Does the theory of double revision require that the old *Hamlet*, which probably goes back to 1589, contained what would then be a unique proportion of double endings?' (299). Bourus does not cite Hart in her monograph, while her observations concerning 'demonstrably old-fashioned' stylistic markers, such as 'hath' instead of 'has', and obsolescent word choices such as 'whilom' (it is worth pointing out that this adverb features within the play-within-the-play, which seems to have been written in deliberately archaic language), do not necessarily provide strong evidence that Q1 derives from the 1580s, given that Bourus supplies no comparative data for other suspected 'bad Quartos' (2014, 171).[8] Nor does Bourus make a sustained comparison between Q1 and any 'good Quarto' to consolidate the claim that 'known and necessary agents of normal transmission will account' for the superabundance of textual errors

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[8] The 1602 text of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* significantly decreases the number of 'has' in relation to 'hath', and increases the number of old-fashioned third person singular form 'doth'; should this be taken as evidence that the play derives from the 1580s?

in Q1 (88). Were we to accept the theory that Q1 reflects an early version of Shakespeare's play, we would also have to acknowledge that, at the beginning of his career, Shakespeare's grammar was exceptionally poor for a student at King Edward VI Grammar School; that he was more prone to garbled and incoherent speeches than 'any scribbler of the time' (Hart 1942, 447); that he was also prone to homonymic blunders like 'impudent' for 'impotent', 'Martin' for 'matin', 'right done' for 'writ down', and 'ceasen' for 'season'; that he had a proclivity for 'padding phrases' like '"contents me not", "I prithee", "And", "Marry", and so on'; and that he wrote hundreds of lines of 'fustian verse' (Vickers 1993, 5). If Shakespeare or piratical actors/spectators were not responsible for this 'disastrously brief and erratic version of *Hamlet*' (Gurr 2015, 171), then the integrity and competence of the printers (i.e. Compositor A's short-term memory and typesetters in Valentine Simmes' shop), whom Bourus devotes a chapter to defending (2014, 11-33), must surely be called into question. As Vickers points out: 'There are numerous instances in English publishing history during Shakespeare's life of books which had been printed by persons not having a legal title to the copy, in texts which were sometimes seriously defective, being replaced by authentic texts', and 'the two Quartos of *Hamlet* could be described in exactly the same terms' (1994, 15).

Bourus criticizes the 'anachronistic claims about piracy' (2014, 8) made by scholars such as Kathleen O. Irace (1994) and Tiffany Stern (2013). In direct criticisms of the latter scholar, Bourus states that 'Projecting our own experience and assumptions onto the blank screen of the past is a mistake that is extraordinarily easy for *any* of us to make' (2014, 76). Indeed, Bourus demonstrates this on several occasions, such as when she defends the handwriting of Elizabethan players by telling readers that 'I have known highly educated professionals who scribble more indecipherably than actors of my acquaintance' (37); or when she attacks 'proponents of memorial reconstruction', who have suggested the actor who played Marcellus was an actor-pirate, thus: 'I have met one or two incompetent amateur actors in my lifetime in the theatre, but I have never encountered any creature who matches this cartoon profile' (43-44). Such statements run contrary to Bourus' caveat that '"the past is a foreign country," where they did things differently than we do' (76). Another scholar Bourus dismisses is Petersen, whose 2010 monograph explores the possibility that 'bad Quartos' like Q1 could have been shaped by performance and that there are commonalities between play texts and orally transmitted folk narratives (56-58). Similarly, Bourus criticizes Laurie E. Maguire for conceding that Q1 could 'possibly' be a memorial text (Maguire 1996, 256), suggesting that Maguire 'suffered, here, uncharacteristically, from a failure of nerve' (Bourus 2014, 40). Memorial reconstruction, whether due to actor-reporters or spectator-reporters – regarding the possibility of the latter, I agree with Bourus that the origins of Q1 do not necessarily require a complicated note-taking hypothesis, despite

Stern's claim that 'too many features … recall the note-taking process to explain the whole text as the product of audience-memory' (18) – may no longer be of the fashion, but it seems to me that Q1 is largely the product of aural memory (possibly deriving from a touring version of the play), in a time 'when the aural rather than the visual understanding was much greater than in our own time' (Tobin 2012, 22).

Given 'the gravitational pull of Shakespeare's name' and Bourus' 'association with Gary Taylor … who has written a preface to her book, and whose revisionary rhetoric pervades the book' (Erne 2015, 54), it is perhaps unsurprising that the *New Oxford Shakespeare* team should consider the case for Shakespeare's authorship of the older play to be 'decisive' on such grounds as 'the odd plural' *Hamlets* representing a 'jibe at Shakespeare as a country bumpkin' (Taylor and Loughnane 2017, 546-547). The *New Oxford Shakespeare* team are willing to revise Shakespeare's chronology in order to include texts that appear to antedate Shakespeare's entire corpus, such as *Arden of Faversham* and the lost *Hamlet* play. But unless firm evidence to the contrary arises, it seems safe to assume that Shakespeare began his writing career circa 1591. It also seems to me that the evidence for Kyd's authorship of the old *Hamlet* remains strong, despite the recent diminution of Kyd's corpus. As Erne puts it: 'Once the dust will have settled, the scholarly community may well rediscover the good sense of what has long been the orthodox view' (2015, 54).

Kenneth Muir claimed that 'The revelation of the Ghost, the feigned madness, the play-scene', and 'the closet-scene' could all be 'found in the old play' (1957, 114). However, as Janet Clare points out, the fact is that we know almost nothing of the old play's 'style, technique, content or to what degree it underwent a transformation in Shakespeare's hands', although we can be confident that 'it was affective and popular before it was superseded by Shakespeare's *Hamlet*' (2014, 168). I suspect that Kyd's *Hamlet* was very different from Shakespeare's version, but that Shakespeare adopted sentiments, structural elements, and some vaguely remembered phrases from the old play. As Hart put it: 'If he preserved as little of this play as he did of his acknowledged source-plays', such as *King Leir*, 'not many more than ten or twenty lines' of the old *Hamlet* play 'would survive' in Shakespeare's version (1942, 64). Nonetheless, the fact that 'the play to which the arguably most famous piece of English literature is heavily indebted' (Erne 2001, 150) was likely written by Kyd, says much for his influence on Shakespeare's drama.

6. *Kyd and Shakespeare: A Reappraisal*

I suggest that Kyd's reputation has been impeded by a curious movement in early modern literary studies, which seeks to put an end to Shakespeare-centrism through emphasizing collaboration (privileging dramatists such

as Marlowe as co-authors), even when the evidence for co-authorship, as in *Henry VI Part Two* and *Three*, is dubious, while paradoxically admitting other dramatists' plays into his canon, such as (by my argument) the lost *Hamlet* play and *Arden of Faversham*. The curious gallimaufry of disintegration and Shakespeare-centrism in *The New Oxford Shakespeare* edition is aptly described by William Shaw:

Collaboration is this edition's watchword, reflecting the trend in Shakespeare scholarship over the last fifteen years or so … This edition has grabbed a few headlines for listing Christopher Marlowe as co-author of the *Henry VI* plays. Yet its other choices betray its bardolatry; Shakespeare is interminably front and centre, even when his hand in a play is minimal. The collaboratively-written *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Sir Thomas More* are represented only by the bits 'probably' written by Shakespeare, with no indication of what came before or after, obscuring his impact on the overall script, and frustrating any reader unfamiliar with the plays. (2016)

While there is firm evidence that Shakespeare collaborated with other dramatists early in his career, on plays such as *Titus Andronicus* (1592) and *Edward III* (with Peele and Kyd, respectively), we should bear in mind that 'collaborative plays were less likely to reach print' (Vickers 2002, 17) and that 'from the very start of his career' Shakespeare 'seems to have preferred to write alone' (Wiggins 2016). Shaw (2016) also notes that 'The insistence on isolating Shakespeare serves to increase his iconic stature, rather than qualify it'. Similarly, Emma Smith employs animal imagery to describe Shakespeare's legacy:

In the great food chain of being, Shakespeare is the apex predator in a cultural ecosystem where he has no rivals, only prey. The literary rabbits and deer and mice need to watch out. But the ecological model actually requires such a dominant figure – a keystone species – for the healthy functioning of the whole system.

Smith is correct that 'Attempts to decentre Shakespeare are thus often self-defeating' (2017). However, if we acknowledge the evidence for an 'enlarged' Kyd canon, we can identify the ways in which Shakespeare learned much from his predecessor, stylistically and dramaturgically. At present, Shakespeare attribution studies, rather like the ghost of Hamlet's father, appear to be in a state of limbo, with the pendulum swinging too far in the direction of co-authorship and disintegration, as opposed to Shakespeare-centrism.

In Tom Stoppard's play *Arcadia*, the character of Thomasina discusses the famous burning of the Ancient Library of Alexandria, which led to the devastating loss of knowledge and literature. She says to her tutor, Septimus:

Oh, Septimus! – can you bear it? All the lost plays of the Athenians! Two hundred at least by Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides – thousands of poems – Aristotle's own library brought to Egypt … How can we sleep for grief? (1993, 50)

Scholars wishing to compare Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1600) to the lost play are apt to share Thomasina's sentiment. However, it is worth bearing Septimus' response in mind:

By counting our stock. Seven plays from Aeschylus, seven from Sophocles, nineteen from Euripides, my lady! You should no more grieve for the rest than for a buckle lost from your first shoe, or for your lesson book which will be lost when you are old. We shed as we pick up, like travellers who must carry everything in their arms, and what we let fall will be picked up by those behind. (50)

This article has provided some of the internal and external evidence in favour of recounting Kyd's stock. Rather than three plays, it has shown that there is a case for assigning several extant texts to Kyd. It is unlikely that we will ever retrieve Kyd's *Hamlet*, but an 'extended' Kyd canon could lead to a reconsideration of the playwright's position in early modern drama. Indeed, it seems possible that Shakespeare's dramatic output, including two of the four major tragedies, was, in part at least, dependent on processes of adaptation and collaboration with Kyd, and owed much to the scrivener's son.

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