

THE RELATIONSHIP OF SHAKESPEARE'S THE TAMING OF THE SHREW
AND THE ANONYMOUS THE TAMING OF A SHREW

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Preface

As I worked diligently on this study, I would sometimes fancy that perhaps I should engage the services of a medium who could conjure Shakespeare's ghost from the fourth dimension. When his presence filled the darkened room, then I could simply ask him, "What happened? Who wrote The Taming of a Shrew? And why?" I imagined he would only laugh and reply, "My dear, a poor player that fretted his hour upon the desk. . .It is a tale told by an idiot. . .Signifying nothing."

But this was only a fancy, and one day, exhausted and relieved, I completed the task without resorting to supernatural or unscholarly means. Now that I can hold the concrete result of my studies in my hands, I feel a sense of accomplishment. I feel that I am a part, admittedly small, of the world of scholarship which I love. I am also pleased that my topic pleased me. It was never a tedious process working with my favorite comedy by my favorite poet.

It is customary in the preface to thank those who helped. But if I attempted to thank each individual specifically, the preface would soon run away with itself. Therefore, I would simply like to thank all my professors, all my friends, all my colleagues, and all my family.

I would like to thank Dr. Charles Walton in particular. He has been of great help and support not only with my thesis, but during my entire graduate career. I would also like to thank Dr. Mel Storm for his advise on my thesis. For his enthusiasm and support during my graduate career I thank Dr. George J. Thompson. Dr. Richard Keller certainly deserves a thanks for introducing me to the finer aspects of bibliographical and textual study as well as for the advice he has given.

In order to be as concise as possible I have narrowed the amount of material and presented in detail only the major or definitive studies. Therefore, the work of Ernest Kuhl, for example, has been examined in detail. I have included other works which were helpful in the bibliography.

However, for better or for worse, my professors are not the only men in my life. Therefore, I especially want to thank my own shrew tamer, Michael E. Holroyd, whose patience and support were vital ingredients in my study. Lastly, I would like to thank my dear friends and colleagues, Mary Helen Bain and Suzanne Campbell, who kept me smiling.

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Chapter I

The Conjectural History and the Nature of the Two Plays

The relationship between Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew and the contemporary, anonymous Taming of a Shrew is an enigma of Shakespearean scholarship. None of the solutions which have been offered satisfies everyone, and none can escape sound criticism. During the centuries that scholars have been working as private detectives, three basic hypotheses have been proposed, defended, and criticized: (1) The Taming of a Shrew is the original play which Shakespeare revised, thereby creating The Taming of the Shrew; (2) The Shrew is the original play from which A Shrew was adapted or pirated; and (3) behind both plays lies a common source now lost. The last hypothesis takes two different forms: one is that the two plays derive independently from a common source; the other is that the lost play was an early Shakespearean version imperfectly preserved in A Shrew. The theory of a common source has become the modern orthodox view although scholars are divided over whether or not this common source was Shakespeare's.

In 1945, Hardin Craig believed that acceptance of the modern view ended debate.¹ He was mistaken. The debate continues. The problem is complicated because evidence used by one scholar to support his thesis has also been used by another to support the opposite thesis. A study of the plays is also complicated by other questions which, although they have been studied separately, are nevertheless integral parts of the problem as a whole and complicate any resolution. These problems include the authenticity of The Shrew, the authorship of A Shrew, the Sly induction, and the means of dating both plays. Any conclusion must also take into account the practices of the playwrights, of the playhouses, of the Stationers' Company, and the origin of the bad quartos; these general questions are themselves open to debate.

The two plays are a riddle simply because there are no extant records which describe their relationship, the circumstances of their composition, or the date of their composition. As a result, any theory is only conjectural. However, after reviewing the quality and quantity of the evidence presented by numerous scholars to support their conclusions, it seems reasonable to conclude that A Shrew is an imperfectly preserved text of an early Shakespearean

¹"The Shrew and A Shrew: Possible Settlement of an Old Debate," in Elizabethan Studies and Other Essays in Honor of George F. Reynolds, p. 150.

version which Shakespeare wrote for Pembroke's company and later revised for the Lord Chamberlain's into the play which is preserved in the Folio. The text of A Shrew is probably a reconstruction done by Pembroke's either from memory or from Shakespeare's early rough draft. It may have been reconstructed for acting and later sold to the publishers, or immediately sold to the publishers. The arguments which support this hypothesis and the criticisms of it will be dealt with later in the text. First, however, it is imperative that an overview of the two plays and their conjectural history be presented.

The Taming of a Shrew was entered in the Stationers' Register on May 2, 1594, to Peter Short who printed it that year for Cuthbert Burby. The entry reads, "Secundo die Maij. Peter Short. Entred unto him for his copie under master warden Cawoodes hande, a booke intituled A Plesant Conceyted historie called the Tayminge of a Shrowe vj^d." ² It was again printed by Short for Burby in 1596. ³ All my references to A Shrew are taken from a facsimile reprint of the 1596 quarto.

W. W. Greg describes the play's history as it is recorded in the Stationers' Register and points out that

²Sir E. K. Chambers, William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems, I, p. 322.

³W. W. Greg, The Shakespeare First Folio, p. 62.

Short died in 1603 and was succeeded by his widow who married again in 1604 although no assignment of copies was made. On January 22, 1607, A Shrew was entered to Nicholas Ling by order of the Stationers' Court and with Burby's consent. Greg believes that at this point Burby surrendered whatever rights he may have had in the play. In 1607, a third quarto was printed by Valentine Simmes for Nicholas Ling, and on November 19, 1607, the copy was transferred to John Smethwick.⁴ Smethwick did not publish a quarto of A Shrew although he later published one of The Shrew in 1631.⁵ The Shrew first appeared in the 1623 Folio.

Scholars agree that since there is no entry on the Stationers' Register for the Folio text, the plays were probably considered as identical commercially, and, thus, the entry for A Shrew was valid for publication of The Shrew. Chambers states:

The bibliographical data up to 1607 relate to The Taming of a Shrew, but it is clear that A Shrew and The Shrew were regarded commercially as the same, and that the copyright acquired by Smethwick in 1607 covered both F₁ and the Q of 1631, which was printed from it.⁶

⁴The Shakespeare First Folio, p. 62.

⁵T. M. Parrott, "The Taming of a Shrew--A New Study of an old Play," in Elizabethan Studies and Other Essays in Honor of George F. Reynolds, p. 156.

⁶William Shakespeare, I, 323.

Leo Kirschbaum points out that "copyright in a bad work established copyright in the work" and that "the owner of copyright based on a bad version had to be the publisher of the good version."⁷ Thus, if A Shrew was a bad quarto, Smethwick's copyright remained valid, and he retained the right to publish good texts of The Shrew succeeding the Folio.

Henslowe records that on June 11, 1594, shortly after the companies' return to London, "the tamyng of a Shrow" was performed at Newington Butts by the combined Admiral's and Chamberlain's men.⁸ Thomas Parrott hypothesizes that the play probably belonged to the Chamberlain's men because there is no further mention of it in Henslowe's records of the Admiral's Company.⁹ It has been suggested by various scholars that the play may have been Shakespeare's because Henslowe may have made an error in his records. This explanation may be a possibility, but it is just as likely that Henslowe's records are accurate. However, if Henslowe's records are accurate, this theory or solution does not necessarily mean that the play was not Shakespeare's for its title may have undergone changes during the play's evolution.

⁷Shakespeare and the Stationers, p. 22.

⁸Cited in Parrott, p. 155.

⁹Parrott, p. 155.

Parrott believes that Henslowe's record is inaccurate although he admits that the theory:

. . . is a mere conjecture, and Harrington, who is likely to be more accurate, refers in 1596 to "the book of the Taming of a Shrew." As a matter of fact there is no reference to Shakespeare's play by the name it bears till 1609, when Samuel Rowlands speaks of "a work called taming of the Shrow."¹⁰

Chambers points out that since Henslowe does not mark the play "ne," or new, the play probably was in existence before the performance at Newington Butts.¹¹

The title pages of the 1594 and 1596 quartos of A Shrew read, "As it was sundie times acted by the Right honorable the Earle of Pembroke his seruants."¹² Chambers believes that A Shrew originally belonged to the Alleyn Company who handed it to Pembroke's in 1592, recovered it in 1593, and then allocated it to the Chamberlain's in 1594. The Chamberlain's men proceeded to base The Shrew upon it and sold the old book to the printers in May.¹³

Chambers's theory involves more passing back and forth than the facts demand. It is just as likely that the play originally belonged to Pembroke's. As Joseph Quincy Adams points out, Pembroke's men were probably a company of great

¹⁰Parrott, p. 155.

¹¹William Shakespeare, I, 327.

¹²The Taming of a Shrew, ed. John S. Farmer, sig. A1^r. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parentheses within the text.

¹³William Shakespeare, I, p. 327.

size and importance.¹⁴ They seem to have been successful enough to warrant an invitation to perform at Court during the 1592-93 Christmas season.¹⁵ They were apparently successful enough to commission a playwright, although they may have purchased the play elsewhere.

Their success did not last. When the plague broke out again in February, 1593, Pembroke's Men apparently could not succeed as well on tour as they had in London.¹⁶ They returned to London on the verge of bankruptcy in August, 1593.¹⁷ A letter from Henslowe to Edward Alleyn dated September 28, 1593, reads:

. . .as for my Lord Pembrokes which you desire to know where they be they are all at home and have been this five or six weeks for they cannot save their charges with travel as I hear and were fain to pawn their apparel for their charge.¹⁸

It has been suggested by numerous scholars that at this point in their career Pembroke's sold A Shrew to the Printers. I suggest they had more reason to sell it than did Chamberlain's, for they needed the money which could be obtained from a publisher, while the Chamberlain's may have

¹⁴A Life of William Shakespeare, p. 131.

¹⁵Scott McMillan, "Casting for Pembroke's Men: The Henry VI Quartos and The Taming of a Shrew," Shakespeare Quarterly, XXIII (1972), 155.

¹⁶Adams, p. 187.

¹⁷Adams, p. 187.

¹⁸Adams, p. 187.

been reluctant to see a play from their repertoire appear in print.

At this point, Joseph Adams believes, Henslowe apparently purchased Titus Andronicus, Hamlet and A Shrew from Pembroke's for Stange's men who later became the Lord Chamberlain's company.¹⁹ As Peter Alexander points out, of the five or six plays which Henslowe records as performed by the Chamberlain's men at Newington Butts, two others, in addition to A Shrew, were Titus Andronicus and Hamlet. The title-page of the quarto of Titus Andronicus, as well as those of A Shrew and Richard, Duke of York, cites their performance by Pembroke's. Therefore, it appears that the Chamberlain's Men acquired plays which were formerly in Pembroke's repertoire. Alexander believes that the Chamberlain's Men obtained these plays directly from Shakespeare who had recently joined them.²⁰ However, it seems just as likely that they were purchased by Henslowe, who was then the Chamberlain's business manager. Adams believes that Shakespeare did not join the Chamberlain's Men until they terminated their contract with Henslowe, after the performance at Newington Butts.²¹

¹⁹A Life of William Shakespeare, p. 187.

²⁰"The Taming of a Shrew," The Times Literary Supplement, 16 Sept. 1926, p. 614.

²¹A Life of William Shakespeare, p. 190.

Adams also believes that Shakespeare was probably associated with Pembroke's early in his career, although many scholars believe he was associated with Lord Strange's Company from the beginning. In support of this hypothesis, Adams cites the fact that the records of Strange's Company are extensive, and there is no mention of Shakespeare as actor or playwright, nor any reference to the plays believed to be his earliest. There is no record of Shakespeare in Henslowe's detailed records of the company, in the Alleyn papers, kept from the spring of 1592 to the summer of 1594, in the traveling license of 1593, or in the plot of The Seven Deadly Sins (1592).²² Peter Alexander also agrees that "the evidence points to his having been before these plague years one of Pembroke's company."²³ Shakespeare's affiliation with Pembroke's would certainly account for the presence of plays bearing Shakespearean titles in their repertoire.

The conjectural history of the plays will be described in greater detail later as it bears on the arguments presented. At this point, it is necessary to provide a comparison of the plays in question in order that the reader who is not well acquainted with A Shrew can better

²²A Life of William Shakespeare, p. 130.

²³Shakespeare's Life and Art, p. 56.

understand its nature and the ways in which it differs from The Shrew.

From the aesthetic point of view, A Shrew is the inferior play. It is not as well unified as The Shrew, the motivations behind the characters' actions are vague, the characters are flat, inappropriate classical allusions abound, and it is not very funny. It is much shorter and duller than The Shrew.

One striking difference between the two plays for which scholars have tried to account is the form of the Sly induction. In A Shrew, Sly appears throughout the play proper; he interrupts the action of the play proper three times before he falls asleep, is removed from the stage, and replaced at the tavern door. Although the Lord orders him to be removed from the stage before the wager scene and the following public proof of Kate's submission, he, nevertheless, awakens convinced that he has learned how to tame a shrew and proceeds home to practice on his own wife. In The Shrew, the induction is almost twice as long, but Sly interrupts the action only once, immediately following the first scene. He, then, disappears completely from the play proper; there is no explanation of his disappearance and no closing epilogue to conclude the Sly framework.

In The Shrew, Kate has only one sister, Bianca, who has three suitors, Hortensio, Gremio, and Lucentio. However,

Baptista, her father, has resolved that no one shall be allowed to woo Bianca until a husband has been found for Kate. Instead, Baptista declares that Bianca will tend to her studies, which decision gives Hortensio and Lucentio an opportunity to woo her, disguised as schoolmasters. Lucentio changes identity with his servant, Tranio, in order to appear as a formal suitor and win Bianca by offering the most impressive dowry. Tranio accomplishes this feat by persuading a traveling pedant to appear as his father.

In A Shrew, things are not quite so clearly motivated. Kate has two sisters, Emelia and Philena; there is no rivalry for their hands, and they have not been denied suitors. Polidor (Hortensio) loves Emelia, and his old friend Aurelius (Lucentio) falls in love with Philena.

At this point, Aurelius changes identity with his servant, Valeria (Tranio), in order to court Philena in disguise. However, he does not change his name, and he courts Philena openly. Valeria persuades a traveler to pose as Aurelius' father in order that dowry arrangements may be entered into with Alphonso (Baptista). Valeria is simply known as the Duke of Cestus' son, Aurelius' title, and he never appears as a suitor as does Tranio.

Scholars have long argued that this incident is a flaw in the play, since Alphonso, although he has forbidden his two daughters to marry before their shrewish sister, has never forbidden them suitors, and, thus, Aurelius' disguise

is unmotivated and unnecessary. However, as G. I. Duthie has pointed out, Aurelius' disguise is well motivated, and "the error in A Shrew is that the writer does not make absolutely clear what is happening."²⁴ Duthie argues soundly that Aurelius' princely rank prevents him from courting Philena, who is of a lower class, and, thus, he changes rank with his servant and poses as a merchant's son. Duthie shows that this consideration of rank is obvious when the real Duke confronts Alphonso:

Alphonso: I did not thinke you would presume,
To match your daughter with my princely house,
And nere make me acquainted with the cause.
(sig. F2^r)

In reply, Alphonso swears that neither he nor his daughter knew Aurelius to be the Duke's son, but instead believed Valeria to be.²⁵ However, someone must discharge Aurelius' duties. Duthie shows that this consideration is made clear in The Shrew when Tranio asks Lucentio:

who shall bear your part,
And be in Padua here Vincentio's son,
Keep house and ply his book, welcome his friends,
Visit his countrymen and banquet them?²⁶

²⁴"The Taming of a Shrew and The Taming of the Shrew," Review of English Studies, XIX (1943), 355.

²⁵Duthie, p. 354.

²⁶Hardin Craig, ed., The Complete Works of Shakespeare, I.1.199-202. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parentheses within the text.

Duthie believes that this is the reason Valeria disguises as the Duke's son.²⁷ However, Valeria not only poses as the Duke's son, but also as a lute instructor to Kate, the role which is taken over by Hortensio in The Shrew. Kate smashes the lute over Valeria's head; it is the same fate Hortensio meets. However, in A Shrew, the scene is enacted, but in The Shrew it is only reported by Hortensio.

The rest of the subplot in A Shrew parallels that of The Shrew, A Shrew being much shorter. The real father meets the tamer and the shrew on the road and is greeted as a young gentlewoman. In The Shrew, the mistake is corrected and Vincentio accompanies Kate and Petruchio to Padua. During the journey, they tell him of his son's marriage to Bianca. However, in A Shrew, the Duke rides away, convinced that he has met up with two lunatics, and, as a result, the Duke never learns of his son's marriage until he arrives in Athens. Another flaw emerges in A Shrew at this point. In a short soliloquy, the Duke reveals that he is traveling in disguise; however, no reason is given for this disguise, and he is easily recognized by Valeria when he reaches Athens. Here, too, the author has failed to make clear what is happening.

Whatever the differences in the subplot, the taming plots in both plays are nearly identical. The scenes between

²⁷Duthie, p. 355.

Kate and Petruchio are nearly the same, all the scenes in Petruchio's house are parallel, and in some instances even the language in corresponding scenes is parallel. This similarity in the main plot and dissimilarity in the subplot has been accounted for in various ways. The alternatives will be examined further in the text.

Although the taming plots are parallel, Kate and Petruchio are richer, fuller characters than the other shrew and tamer. In A Shrew Kate is one-dimensional. As Ernest Kuhl has pointed out, her only characteristic is her shrewishness, she has no redeeming qualities, and "she is merely obstinate, unruly and coarse."²⁸ Moreover, she is often vulgar, while the other Kate is not, and makes coarse remarks to whoever arouses her wrath. Kuhl adds that, while Kate's only characteristic in A Shrew is her shrewishness, in The Shrew Kate's only fault is her shrewishness. In The Shrew, she is feminine and often gentle. She weeps when Petruchio is late for their wedding, she often addresses him tenderly and affectionately, and she is gentle to the servants in his house.²⁹

Kate's actions in A Shrew are poorly motivated, especially her sudden decision to marry Ferando. After

²⁸"The Authorship of The Taming of the Shrew," PMLA, XL (1925), 586.

²⁹Kuhl, p. 586.

Ferando has wooed her and announced their wedding day to the assembled company, she suddenly changes her mind and in an aside to the audience remarks:

But yet I will consent and marry him,
 For I methinkes have livde too long a maid,
 And match him to, or else his manhoods good.
(sig. B3^r)

This sudden change of heart is unprepared for; nothing in the preceding action, in Kate's personality, or in Ferando's personality foreshadows this decision.

Shakespeare's Kate makes no startling asides to the audience and simply replies to Petruchio, "I'll see thee hang'd on Sunday first." (II.1.301) She does, of course, accept the marriage in the end, but her acceptance of Petruchio is not so poorly motivated. In the first few scenes, Kate is humiliated by the jests of Hortensio and Gremio, and later she recognizes that Baptista favors Bianca. Into the midst of her discontent, rejection, and humiliation comes Petruchio, a charming fellow who praises her virtues, patience, and wit.

In A Shrew, Kate's final submission is not well prepared for. Ferando simply browbeats her into submission, and she agrees to the absurd statements he makes on the road to Athens only because he threatens that they will turn back if she is not yet agreeable. Her final submission is rather surprising because there is no evidence that she has truly changed, only that she has been forced to submit through

exhaustion and frustration. On the other hand, Kate's final submission in The Shrew is not so surprising; indeed it seems natural. The public kiss which Petruchio demands and which Kate willingly gives is, as Kuhl points out, a symbol of mastery that prepares for Kate's final submission in the last scene. Although A Shrew's Kate becomes listless and passively accepts Ferando's dominance, Shakespeare's Kate retains her spirit and wit.³⁰

In both plays, the tamers, also, have completely different personalities. Ferando has been described by Thomas Parrott as "a stupid, mercenary lout."³¹ Petruchio, on the other hand, is a gentleman at all times. He is almost the perfect lover. He is gentle, gallant, witty, courteous, romantic, and immediately wins the audience's sympathy.³² Kuhl describes Petruchio as follows:

He has an abounding effervescence, amounting at times to ebullition. In fact, in his elemental energy, fearlessness, and undaunted spirit he is slightly akin to Tamburlaine. . . . [he is] an imaginative character, [with] complete presence of mind and self-confidence.³³

Ferando possesses none of these winning qualities. The difference between the two characters is evident in the methods

³⁰Kuhl, p. 569.

³¹Shakespearean Comedy, p. 148.

³²Kuhl, pp. 572-4.

³³Kuhl, pp. 572-4.

which each use to tame their shrew. Ferando simply wears Kate down through frustration and exhaustion, whereas, Petruchio, using the same method, employs it with a gentleness and wit which Ferando lacks. Part of Petruchio's method, as he describes it in a soliloquy, is "to kill a wife with kindness." (IV.1.211) As Cecil Seronsy points out, "He [Ferando] is simply wearing down her physical resources, with no hint of killing her with kindness."³⁴

Another striking difference between the plays is the use of classical allusions. A Shrew abounds with classical allusions that call attention to themselves and are usually absurd and inappropriate. In The Shrew, they are used in greater moderation and are neither awkward nor inappropriate.

Kuhl notes:

It would be difficult to find a more grotesque use of mythological material than in A.S.: the author [whom Kuhl believes to be an imitator of Marlowe] has actually out-Marlowed Marlowe.³⁵

Although A Shrew is also a comedy, The Shrew is by far the more humorous play. Kuhl writes, "It is a striking fact that the older play [A Shrew], with but few exceptions, lacks humor: indeed, a mist of soberness hangs over it."³⁶

³⁴"'Supposes' as the Unifying Theme in The Taming of the Shrew," Shakespeare Quarterly, XIV (1963), p. 24.

³⁵Kuhl, p. 595.

³⁶Kuhl, p. 595.

For example, when the real Duke comes to Athens and finds his son, he threatens to rip open his chest and hew him to pieces. Kuhl adds that the characters of A Shrew lack any sense of humor,³⁷ an understatement and certainly an accurate and concise evaluation of the difference in the nature of the two plays.

³⁷Kuhl, p. 596.

Chapter II

Peripheral Problems to Consider

The Shrew is not a perfect play by any means; its style is not consistent, and it contains poorly worked passages. Its inconsistent style has led many scholars, apparently operating under the assumption that Shakespeare could not have written any such poor verse, to conclude that he had, here, the help of a collaborator. John Parker adequately sums up the problem:

However they may differ in other matters, scholars who believe The Shrew is a product of dual authorship generally concur in assigning to Shakespeare's unknown assistant whatever they regard as the weaknesses of the play.³⁸

H. D. Sykes, in tracing the theory of collaboration, points out that, as early as 1747, Dr. Warburton in his edition of Shakespeare's plays doubted the authenticity of The Shrew, believing that Shakespeare had only "here and there corrected the dialogue and now and then added a scene."³⁹ Sykes also quotes Swinburne from his Study of Shakespeare, "Few scholars would refuse to admit a doubt of the total

³⁸"Some Comments on the A Shrew--The Shrew Controversy," College Language Association Journal, II (1958), 180.

³⁹Rev. of "The Authorship of The Taming of the Shrew," by Ernest P. Kuhl, Modern Language Review, XXII (1927), 329.

authenticity or uniform workmanship of The Taming of the Shrew."⁴⁰

Edmond Malone suggested, in 1821, "It is very obvious that the Induction and the Play were either the works of different hands, or written at a great interval of time."⁴¹ As Kuhl points out, in 1857, Grant White was the first to formulate a specific theory, assuming that three hands were present in The Shrew: that of the author of A Shrew, of Shakespeare, and of his collaborator. White assigned the collaborator to the Bianca subplot and Shakespeare to the Induction and all of the scenes between Kate, Petruchio, and Grumio. He believed that Shakespeare brought to the work of A Shrew's author and to the work of his collaborator, "the strong, clear characterization, the delicious humor, and the rich verbal coloring."⁴² Frederick Fleay writing in 1886 believed that Shakespeare's part was confined to the Kate/Petruchio scenes, but that Shakespeare did not write in conjunction with another; rather, that he replaced the original author's work sometime in 1603 when the theatres were again closed by the plague and the companies forced to travel.⁴³

⁴⁰Sykes, p. 328.

⁴¹The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare, V, 351.

⁴²Kuhl, p. 551.

⁴³A Chronicle History of the Life and Work of William Shakespeare, pp. 224-5.

To my knowledge, no successful attempts have been made to identify positively this collaborator. Albert Tolman points out that the suspected parts of The Shrew bear a resemblance to Robert Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay. However, Greene had died in 1592, and Tolman does not believe The Shrew to have been this early. Instead, he suggests that the collaborator was probably only an admirer of Greene, especially of Friar Bacon.⁴⁴ On the other hand, Marlowe has also been suspected of being the collaborator because some of the diction in The Shrew is Marlovian.⁴⁵ However, many scholars have suggested that, since Shakespeare was influenced by Marlowe early in his career, these echoes may be remnants of the writing he accomplished as a young playwright.

Scholars now generally agree that The Shrew is authentic and that the poorly worked passages and slips in plot are the result either of Shakespeare's haste or of his later revision. Thomas Parrott seems to have pinpointed the possible motivation behind support of the dual authorship theory; he writes, "The collaboration theory seems a desperate attempt to absolve Shakespeare from the guilt of having written much poor blank verse in The Shrew."⁴⁶ Parrott also

⁴⁴"Shakespeare's Part in The Taming of the Shrew," PMLA, V (1890), 276.

⁴⁵Parker, p. 179.

⁴⁶Shakespearean Comedy, p. 150.

maintains that the bad lines in the subplot are the result of Shakespeare's haste in composition, of his concentration on the taming plot, and of his writing mechanically to carry the action.⁴⁷

Scholars apparently have forgotten to point out that, as early as 1768, Edward Capell in the introduction to his edition of Shakespeare defended the authenticity of The Shrew, as follows:

That the Taming of the Shrew should ever have been put into this class of plays, and adjudg'd a spurious one, may justly be reckon'd wonderful when we consider its merit. . . .[it is] a fable of very artful construction, much business, and highly interesting; and [characterized] by natural and well-sustained characters, which no pen but Shakespeare's was capable of drawing.⁴⁸

In 1925, Ernest Kuhl's exhaustive essay defending the authenticity of The Shrew was presented, and it remains the most important work on the subject. Kuhl effectively argues that the tests used to pinpoint non-Shakespearean passages in The Shrew were not sound, either because other plays accepted as authentic bear the same characteristics, or because the characteristics in question also appear in parts of The Shrew accepted as genuine. Kuhl's essay is exhaustive, and the brief summary presented hereafter does not adequately

⁴⁷Shakespearean Comedy, p. 151.

⁴⁸Quoted in Edmond Malone, ed., The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare, I, pp. 147, 148.

illustrate the scope and depth of his argument. According to Kuhl, the tests used by some scholars to detect the collaborator's work are "(a) once-used words (b) classical allusions (c) scraps of Latin and Italian (d) slips in plot structure (e) metrical peculiarities--accent on unimportant words, doggerel, and the like."⁴⁹ Responding to the first test, once-used, or nonce words, words that were apparently not in Shakespeare's vocabulary, Kuhl argues that accepted passages also contain once-used expressions, both common and technical, that once-used words are not unusual with Shakespeare, and that the technical, academic terms, which occur specifically in I.i. between Tranio and Lucentio, are not beyond Shakespeare's ability; indeed the "royal attribute" of Shakespeare is his concreteness.⁵⁰

The second test which Kuhl exposes is the presence of classical allusions, arguing that, since the allusions all occur in the first act and all but two in the student's speeches, they are appropriate and not the result of accident, indicating that Shakespeare was trying to create an academic setting and color. The scraps of Latin and Italian, which some scholars believe to be the work of a collaborator, are also Shakespeare's conscious effort to create the color of an

⁴⁹Kuhl, p. 553.

⁵⁰Kuhl, p. 554.

academic setting. Kuhl points out that R. W. Bond has argued that a use of Italian was not a habit of Shakespeare's. Kuhl adds that the use of any foreign language was not a habit of Shakespeare's, but that, at any rate, it is not unShakespearean since bits do appear in the other plays accepted as genuine. He points out that, in any event, it is quite probable that Shakespeare could easily have picked up bits of Italian, since the Italian influence was strong in Elizabethan England, and, consequently, many people knew bits of the language.⁵¹

Slips in plot are another flaw in The Shrew leading some scholars to argue for dual authorship. For example, although Petruchio and Tranio meet only briefly, Tranio later appears to be well acquainted with Petruchio. Kuhl thinks that this argument is not sound, "for oversights are not uncommon throughout Shakspeare [sic]."⁵²

Lastly, Kuhl attacks those metrical peculiarities supposed to be the work of another hand. He points out that run-on lines, or unstopped lines, are equal in both the genuine and suspected parts, and that, since the frequency of run-ons increases as Shakespeare develops, this may be an early sign of the technique which was to be perfected in his

⁵¹Kuhl, pp. 562-5.

⁵²Kuhl, p. 565.

maturity. The use of inversion, especially the use of a proper noun followed by a verb that closes the line, is also not an infalliable test, since it occurs in the accepted, genuine parts of The Shrew as well as in other plays. The doggerel lines believed to be the collaborator's, including an emphasis on unimportant words and syllables, lack of uniformity in pronunciation, the "dancing verse," or four accent lines, and the anapaestic lines, are all found in the accepted parts of The Shrew and other genuine plays and, thus, are not reliable measures. He also points out that the anapaestic lines serve an artistic purpose because they heighten the humor and are not used carelessly; they usually crown an act or scene.⁵³

After dismissing these tests employed by scholars to pinpoint the collaborator's work, Kuhl demonstrates that the remarkable unity of The Shrew is also evidence of single authorship. Petruchio, Kate, and Grumio are consistently portrayed throughout the play, the mood of naturalism and realism is consistently maintained, and the spirit of comedy which pervades the entire play is consistent; therefore, he concludes that only one hand could be responsible for a play that is so consistent and unified throughout.⁵⁴ He concludes:

⁵³Kuhl, pp. 555-60.

⁵⁴Kuhl, pp. 572-95.

Is it probable that two writers. . .should in conjunction construct such a united narrative. If so, we must assume intimate relations between the two workmen: a practice not found to all appearances in Shakspeare's other early attempts at collaboration. Moreover, this was at a time when Shakspeare was giving considerable attention to plots, and no contemporary, as far as known, was planning such skillfull dramas. All this, moreover, in view of the fact that the chief emphasis in the Bianca (rejected) scenes is on the plot.⁵⁵

Although Kuhl's essay is cited by many critics as the definitive work in establishing the authenticity of The Shrew, it has been criticized by prominent scholars, including Chambers and Sykes. Nevertheless, I join with the majority of scholars, one premise of my argument being that The Shrew is authentic. The slips in plot and the stylistic differences in The Shrew become for some scholars evidence of revision rather than evidence of collaboration. No one has successfully identified the author of A Shrew. If one could positively identify the author of A Shrew, it would probably help to determine the relationship between the two plays. However, it appears to be an impossible task, and the solutions offered are at best only conjectural.

Many have described the author as a bungling hack poet and imitator. Peter Alexander labels him a "clumsy journeyman."⁵⁶ However, Swinburne praises him highly: "Of all the

⁵⁵Kuhl, p. 568.

⁵⁶"The Taming of a Shrew," p. 614.

pre-Shakespeareans incomparably the truest, the richest, the most powerful and original humorist."⁵⁷

Interestingly enough, A Shrew has also been suspected of collaboration. It contains many passages which are either borrowed directly from or echo Marlowe, and, thus, some nineteenth-century critics believed Marlowe to be the author, although it is now generally agreed that the author was only an imitator of Marlowe. In 1850, Samuel Hickson, on the basis of the Marlovian passages in A Shrew, concluded that Marlowe was indeed the author.⁵⁸ In 1857, Richard Grant White believed that Greene, Marlowe, and possibly Shakespeare collaborated on A Shrew.⁵⁹

In 1890, Albert Tolman argued that, because "the two styles are at some points so intimately woven together," A Shrew is probably the work of one hand, probably not Marlowe's because he would not have repeated himself so exactly.⁶⁰ VanDam also points out that Marlowe would not have used his own lines so inappropriately and so far out of context.⁶¹ Scholars generally agree with this criticism.

⁵⁷Quoted in A. P. VanDam, "The Taming of a Shrew," English Studies, X (1928), 97.

⁵⁸"Marlowe and the old Taming of a Shrew," Notes and Queries, I (1850), 194.

⁵⁹Tolman, p. 276.

⁶⁰Tolman, p. 243.

⁶¹VanDam, p. 97.

In 1886, Frederick Fleay advanced the unique hypothesis that A Shrew was written by Thomas Lodge about 1596 and based on an old Kyd play of 1589.⁶² Albert Frey in 1888 believed that Shakespeare himself was the author of A Shrew:

Two years ago I should not have ventured to declare the older comedy to be the production of Shakespeare; but a critical study of the play has convinced me that it was rightly assigned to him by that forgotten commentator Edward Capell.⁶³

This was a bold hypothesis in 1888 at a time when most scholars believed that A Shrew was the original play which Shakespeare later revised. However, in retrospect, it appears that Frey may have been closer to the truth than his contemporaries imagined. The one modern view that A Shrew is an imperfectly preserved text of an early lost Shakespearean version would help explain why Frey recognized Shakespeare's hand in A Shrew.

Believing that two hands are evident in A Shrew, H. D. Sykes concluded in 1920 that one hand was Samuel Rowley's, although he was unable to identify the other playwright. By noting stylistic similarities between Rowley's When You See Me You Know Me, or The Famous Chronicle History of King Henry the Eight, and the anonymous plays The Taming of a Shrew, The Famous Victories of Henry V, Wily Beguiled, and the additions

⁶²A Chronicle History of the Life and Work of William Shakespeare, p. 46.

⁶³The Taming of the Shrew, p. 1.

to the 1616 quarto of Dr. Faustus, Sykes concluded that Rowley's hand was evident in the anonymous plays. He also cited the external evidence that on November 22, 1602, Henslowe recorded that he had paid William Birde and Samuel Rowley for their additions to Dr. Faustus; and, argues, therefore, that Rowley must have been responsible for parts of that play. Sykes concludes further that, since the similarities occur in the prose passages of the plays, particularly in the comic prose passages of the clowns, Rowley was responsible for the Induction, the interludes, and the prose taming scenes of A Shrew.⁶⁴

However, there are weaknesses in Sykes' argument which seriously weaken his conclusion. For example, Sykes uses stylistic similarities such as "souns," "O brave," "I warrant you," "hard at hand," and other similar idioms. As VanDam points out, these idioms are too common in the works of other authors to be conclusive evidence of Rowley's authorship.⁶⁵ Henry D. Gray criticizes Sykes argument as follows:

In A Shrew, as Sykes realized, the verse is obviously not by Rowley, and Sykes therefore gave him the prose scenes only; but the verse and prose are too closely interwoven to make this possible. The test words and phrases are not confined to a separate set of scenes.

⁶⁴"The Authorship of The Taming of a Shrew, The Famous Victories of Henry V, and the Additions to Marlowe's Faustus," pp. 1-31.

⁶⁵VanDam, p. 102.

Rowley is therefore out as a possible claimant to the authorship of A Shrew.⁶⁶

Thomas Parrott has another imaginative and interesting suggestion, although it cannot be proved. He believes that a young scholar who had witnessed Gascoigne's academic comedy, The Supposes (a source of The Shrew to be examined later) may have had a desire to test his ability as a playwright and approached Samuel Rowley to help him. Rowley, recognizing the potential of the young scholar's ideas, collaborated with him and wrote the Induction, the Sly interludes, the clowning scenes of Sander, and the horseplay in the taming scenes. Since the young scholar was responsible for the subplot, its inappropriate classical allusions and Marlovian passages are the result of his education, inexperience, and admiration of Marlowe.⁶⁷ However, VanDam and Gray's arguments also apply to Parrott's suggestion.

Gray, believing A Shrew a bad quarto, hypothesizes that its author was an actor who reconstructed The Shrew from memory, falling back on his own poetic ability when memory failed, often adding recollected passages from Marlowe to supplement his own work.⁶⁸ Gray, however, does not attempt

⁶⁶"The Taming of a Shrew," Philological Quarterly, XX (1941), 332.

⁶⁷"The Taming of a Shrew--A New Study," pp. 158-65.

⁶⁸Gray, p. 328.

to identify this actor. VanDam favors the idea that the author was not a playwright or an actor, but a shorthand reporter.⁶⁹

From problems of authorship and collaboration in both plays, one turns to the dating of both plays. Since no extant records conclusively date either play, dating of the plays is only conjectural. For the most part, allusions by contemporaries and parallels in other works must be presented as evidence for dating.

Some scholars, including Thomas Parrott and Albert Frey, date A Shrew on the basis of parallels discovered between Robert Greene's novel, Menaphon, Thomas Nashe's preface to this novel, and A Shrew. Greene's passage reads, "We had, answered Doron, an Eaw amongst our Rams, whose fleece was as white as the haire that grow on father Boreas chinne, or as the dangling deawlap of the silver Bull."⁷⁰ Nashe's preface reads, "thinking themselves more than initiated in poets immortalitie, if they but once get Boreas by the beard, and the heavenlie bull by the deaw-lap."⁷¹ The corresponding passage in A Shrew reads:

⁶⁹VanDam, pp. 104-6.

⁷⁰Quoted in Tolman, p. 210.

⁷¹Quoted in Tolman, p. 211.

Sweete Kate thou lovelier than Dianas purple robe,
Whiter then are the snowie Apenis,
Or the icie haire that groes on Boreas chin.
(sig. C4^r)

Menaphon was entered in the Stationers' Register on August 23, 1589, and, therefore, can be accurately dated.⁷² Hence, Parrott dates A Shrew later than August, 1589, arguing that this type of pastoral simile is typical of Greene and, therefore, was probably original in his novel from which the author of A Shrew lifted it.⁷³ On the other hand, Frey dates A Shrew before August, 1589, believing that Greene borrowed from the play.⁷⁴ As Tolman points out, Professor Arber also dates A Shrew before the time of Greene's novel, although J. O. Halliwell-Phillips points out that it is just as likely that A Shrew borrowed from Menaphon.⁷⁵

Because Nashe's preface satirizes would-be poets who believe their ability to use classical allusions is proof of their skill, it is possible that he may have been referring to the author of A Shrew and his wild use of classical allusions. However, since the author of A Shrew may not have had any illusions that he was a poet, his work may have simply been that of a mechanical reconstruction of a play. I

⁷²Tolman, p. 211.

⁷³"The Taming of a Shrew--A New Study," p. 160.

⁷⁴The Taming of the Shrew, p. 3.

⁷⁵Tolman, pp. 210-1.

propose, nevertheless, that Greene may just as easily have been satirizing other poets, and that the author of A Shrew, who borrowed freely from Marlowe, and probably from Shakespeare, would have had no qualms about borrowing from Greene. At any rate, the allusion cannot be used positively to date the play since either author may have borrowed from the other, or even from a text no longer extant.

Attempts have been made to date The Shrew on the basis of its possible allusion to Women Pleas'd by Fletcher or Beaumont and Fletcher. In this play Soto, the son of a farmer, attempts to woo a lady on behalf of his master. The Lord apparently alludes to this incident in the Induction as he speaks with the players:

Lord. This fellow I remember,
Since once he play'd a farmer's eldest son:
'Twas where you woo'd the gentlewoman so well;
I have forgot your name; but, sure, that part
Was aptly fitted and naturally perform'd.
A Player. I think 'twas Soto that your honour means.
Lord. 'Tis very true: thou didst it excellent.
(Ind.1.83-89)

There does seem to be an undeniable link here, but as Tolman points out, Women Pleas'd has never been conclusively dated itself, although 1604 and 1607 have been suggested.⁷⁶

One method of dating A Shrew, perhaps more accurate than those described above, is by considering its allusions to and borrowings from Marlowe. The Marlovian echoes come

⁷⁶Tolman, p. 212.

from specific plays, and some scholars argue that, since the echoes come from Marlowe's early plays, A Shrew was probably composed before his later plays were written. Sykes dates A Shrew in or about 1590 because it borrows freely from the early plays (both parts of Tamburlaine [1587-88] and Faustus [1589]) but makes no use of the later works (The Jew of Malta [1590] and Edward II [1591]).⁷⁷ Parrott comes to the same conclusion, although he dates A Shrew nearly one year earlier by dating Faustus in 1588 and The Jew in 1589-90.⁷⁸ F. S. Boas and T. W. Baldwin both conclude that A Shrew was no later than August 1589. Although they recognize the value of using Marlowe's plays as an indicator, in addition to this evidence they believe that Greene satirized A Shrew in 1589.⁷⁹ As shown above, the parallels between Greene's novel and A Shrew are inconclusive data.

Raymond Houk suggests that parallels between A Shrew, The Shrew, and Greene's The Historie of Orlando Furioso support the conclusion that The Shrew, at least in a rough draft form, was in existence as early as 1592-93. Because both plays correspond more closely with the 1594 quarto of Orlando, probably a memorial reconstruction by actors, than

⁷⁷"The Authorship of The Taming of a Shrew," p. 32.

⁷⁸"The Taming of a Shrew--A New Study," p. 160.

⁷⁹Rev. of The Taming of the Shrew, ed. Sir Authur Quiller-Couch and John Dover Wilson, Journal of English and Germanic Philology, XXXI (1932), 155.

with Greene's original which was probably composed in the autumn of 1591, Houk concludes that the original author, who he believes was Shakespeare, witnessed Greene's play "in an advanced state of its evolution towards the Orlando Furioso of 1594."⁸⁰ Because the quarto of Orlando was entered in the Stationers' Register on December 7, 1593, Houk believes Shakespeare witnessed the advanced form sometime between 1592 and 1593. He hypothesizes further that Shakespeare wrote a rough draft sometime in 1592-93, which he later worked into The Shrew and which another author worked into A Shrew.⁸¹

William Moore advances the theory that The Shrew was probably in existence earlier than June, 1593, and his conclusion supports Houk's conclusion, although the two scholars use different methods with which to arrive at roughly the same date. On June 16, 1593, Anthony Chute's work Beawtie Dishonored written under the title of Shores Wife was entered in the Stationers' Register and published a few weeks later. Chute's work deals with the idea of a husband's dominance over his wife, although the situation is not completely analogous to The Shrew, and contains the line, "He calls his Kate, and she must come and kisse him." Moore notes that the use of this proper name in an otherwise generalized narrative

⁸⁰"Shakespeare's Shrew and Greene's Orlando," PMLA, LXII (1947), 664.

⁸¹Houk, pp. 657-71.

is emphatic and calls attention to itself. Of course, the use of Kate does not specifically single out an allusion to either play since both heroines are "Kates." However, Moore believes that Chute's use of the word kisse is more specific evidence and a definite allusion to The Shrew, because in The Shrew the kissing motif is used six different times to symbolize Petruchio's mastery. Moore labels these kissing references in The Shrew as "forceful," while in A Shrew he notes that they are fewer in number and "ordinary." From this evidence he concludes that Chute was alluding to The Shrew. Because the theatres were closed because of the plague from the summer of 1592 to the Christmas season of 1593, with a possible short London season in December and January 1592-93, The Shrew "must have been composed and first presented at least as early as the winter of 1592-93, with the spring of 1592 a more probable date."⁸²

Mincoff suggests that The Shrew is probably earlier than The Comedy of Errors (1592-93), traditionally thought to be the earliest comedy, and proposes the close of 1592 as the latest date possible for The Shrew. Mincoff argues that the style of The Shrew, the technical skill, and the treatment of marriage are evidence that The Shrew predates The Comedy

⁸²"An Allusion in 1593 to The Taming of the Shrew?" Shakespeare Quarterly, XV (1964), 55-60.

of Errors. Mincoff writes:

It is in fact the style of The Shrew that to my mind represents the best argument for an early date. For style is the element in which one is least likely to meet with relapses into earlier methods, except perhaps occasionally in separate scenes or passages.⁸³

Mincoff points out that a characteristic of Shakespeare's early style is the use of "decorative classical similes," a trait he probably picked up from Marlowe early in his career. There are many of these similes in The Shrew, but they have almost disappeared from Errors. Further evidence is that the presence of the compound epithet, a characteristic of Shakespeare's later work, is not found in The Shrew except in the case of a few common terms.⁸⁴ Mincoff supports his proposition by tracing parallels in the evolution of the histories. Although he admits that the different genres do not allow exact parallels, stylistic characteristics are shared by different genres of the same period. Thus, further evidence for dating The Shrew before Errors is that, "on the whole one can say that The Shrew is most clearly affiliated with the first two parts of Henry VI, while Errors, in so far as it can be connected with any of the histories, is closest to Richard III."⁸⁵

⁸³"The Dating of The Taming of the Shrew," English Studies, LIV (1973), 559.

⁸⁴Mincoff, pp. 559-61.

⁸⁵Mincoff, p. 560.

Mincoff also believes that the treatment of marriage and a shrewish wife is more complex, mature, and intellectual in Errors than in The Shrew, and it is likely that Shakespeare advanced from the "simple vision" of The Shrew and improved on it in the more mature viewpoint of Errors. He also believes that Errors is the more sophisticated play technically, suggesting its development after The Shrew because technical skill will probably improve steadily with each play rather than regressing.⁸⁶

A problem which arises from dating The Shrew as early as 1592 or 1593 is that it is not alluded to until 1609 when Samuel Rowlands in A Whole Crew of Kind Gossips refers to "a worke cald taming of the Shrew."⁸⁷ As late as 1596 Sir John Harington in his Metamorphosis of Ajax commented, "Read the booke of Taming of a Shrew, which hath made a number of us so perfect, that now every one can rule a Shrew in our Countrey, save he that hath hir."⁸⁸

If The Shrew were in existence as early as 1592, one wonders why A Shrew seems to be the play that everyone remembers. I suggest as a hypothesis, which is admittedly only conjectural, that The Shrew's title may have undergone a

⁸⁶Mincoff, pp. 557-8.

⁸⁷Cited in Parrott, "The Taming of a Shrew--A New Study," p. 155.

⁸⁸Cited in Frey, p. 34.

change in the play's evolution; the title of Shakespeare's comedy may have been "a Shrew" in its early form. It may have been changed accidentally, or it may have been changed deliberately to distinguish it from the other play in circulation labeled A Shrew. If Shakespeare did revise The Shrew later in his career, as some scholars suggest, he may have wanted to reflect its changed nature by a new, changed title. It may even be that the Elizabethans were not completely accurate scribes and did not distinguish carefully between "a" and "the" in their records. At any rate, assuming that The Shrew always bore the title it bears in the Folio may be a false premise.

Chapter III

The Relationship of the Plays

The three hypotheses to be considered are: (1) A Shrew is the original play which Shakespeare revised, thereby creating The Shrew; (2) The Shrew is the original play from which A Shrew was adapted or pirated; and (3) behind both plays lies a lost source which may have been Shakespeare's work or that of another playwright. The belief that A Shrew is the original play is the old, traditional view generally discarded because scholars have not been satisfied with it. As a result, the two remaining theses were developed. The belief that behind both plays lies a common source now lost has become the modern view. I support the modern view not only because it is the one generally accepted, but also because the arguments in support of this hypothesis seem to be the soundest, because this theory is the one which is the most probable in view of all the evidence, and because this theory can most easily explain the differences and similarities in the plays.

H. D. Sykes, pointing out that Swinburne believed A Shrew to have been the original play, cites his comment, ". . .all the force and humour alike of character and situation belong to Shakespeare's eclipsed and forlorn precursor;

he [Shakespeare] has added nothing; he has tempered and enriched everything."⁸⁹ Edmond Malone believes that Shakespeare restored A Shrew to the stage, polished the Induction, and added "occasional improvements; especially in the character of Petruchio."⁹⁰ Albert Tolman reached the same conclusion.⁹¹

Joseph Quincy Adams believes that The Shrew is a revision of A Shrew which Shakespeare did for the Chamberlain's Men from the copy of A Shrew which, as pointed out earlier, Henslowe purchased for them from Pembroke's.⁹² Thomas Parrott reaches the same conclusion by arguing that A Shrew was hastily revised by Shakespeare when his company needed a new comedy and when he was busy working on his series of histories in 1594-99.⁹³ Chambers supports the traditional view and comments:

Shakespeare in particular follows . . . [A Shrew's] details pretty closely, and although his dialogue, as well as that of his collaborator, is new, the recurrence of stray words and phrases and of half a dozen practically identical blank verse lines. . .⁹⁴ shows that the old text was continuously before him.

⁸⁹"The Authorship of The Taming of a Shrew," p. 34.

⁹⁰The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare, V, 351.

⁹¹Tolman, p. 203.

⁹²A Life of William Shakespeare, p. 224.

⁹³Shakespearean Comedy, p. 144.

⁹⁴William Shakespeare, I, 325.

Kuhl in his defense of the authenticity of The Shrew also believes that Shakespeare rewrote A Shrew.⁹⁵

However, as early as 1768, Edward Capell suggested that the plays which came out in Shakespeare's lifetime and which bear titles similar to those in the Folio, but which do not resemble those in the Folio, including A Shrew, "are no other than either first draughts, or mutilated and perhaps surreptitious impressions of those plays, but whether of the two is not easy to determine."⁹⁶ Although Capell suggested this possibility, it was not until 1850 that Samuel Hickson first challenged the traditional theory with a specific argument, as follows:

That result I lay before your reader, in stating that I think I can show grounds for the assertion that the Taming of the Shrew, by Shakespeare, is the original play; and that the Taming of a Shrew, by Marlowe or what other writer soever, is a later work, and an imitation.⁹⁷

Hickson believes that the passages in A Shrew which parallel those in The Shrew were not the original passages which Shakespeare improved upon, as the traditionalists argued, but rather were imitations. He hypothesizes that the imitator remembered key words from The Shrew but was unable to

⁹⁵Kuhl, p. 552.

⁹⁶Quoted in Malone, I, 121.

⁹⁷"The Taming of the Shrew," Notes and Queries, I (1850), 345.

reconstruct the passages accurately, resulting in passages which are awkward and which often miss the point of the originals.⁹⁸ I propose to examine nearly all of Hickson's parallels since they are referred to repeatedly by other scholars.

The first passage to which Hickson points occurs in Petruchio's house and is between Grumio and the Tailor. The Shrew reads:

Grumio. Thou hast faced many things.
Tailor. I have.
Grumio. Face not me; thou has braved many men; brave not me; I will neither be faced nor braved.
 (IV.iii.123-126)

The corresponding passage in A Shrew reads:

Sander. Doost thou heare Tailor, thou hast braved
 Many men brave not me.
 Thou'st faste many men.
Tailor. Wel sir.
Sander. Face not me, ile neither be faste nor braved
 At thy hande I can tel thee.
 (sig. E2^v)

Hickson does not define the punned words clearly. However, L. E. Orange defines the Elizabethan usage of "faced" as either "to decorate" or "to be impudent with," and "braved" may mean either "to adorn" or "to defy."⁹⁹ As Hickson points out, in A Shrew the pun on "faced" is lost. Sander does not ask the tailor if he has "faced" many "things," as any tailor

⁹⁸Hickson, pp. 346-7.

⁹⁹"The Punning of The Shrew," The Southern Quarterly, III (1965), 299.

has, thereby trapping the tailor into an affirmative answer and playing on the double meaning of the word as does Grunio. Instead, Sander insists that the tailor has "faced" many "men," and, thus, the pun is lost for the double meaning is not played upon.¹⁰⁰

Hickson points to another passage which occurs in the text before Petruchio meets Kate. Petruchio reveals his strategy and says, "Say that she frown; I'll say she looks as clear/As morning roses newly wash'd with dew." (II.1.173-4) In A Shrew, the passage is transferred into the scene in which Kate and Ferando meet the real Duke on the road. In greeting the Duke as though he were a young maiden, Kate says that he is "As glorious as the morning washt with dew." (sig. Fl^r) Hickson believes that this passage again shows that the imitator has become mixed up:

As the morning does not derive its glory from the circumstances of its being "washed with dew," and as it is not a peculiarly apposite comparison, I conclude that here, too. . .the sound alone has caught the ear of the imitator.¹⁰¹

Henry D. Gray reached the same conclusion in 1941. However, in the one hundred years that passed between Hickson's conclusion and Gray's, Shakespearean scholars had made remarkable inroads into the study of the bad quartos.

¹⁰⁰Hickson, p. 346.

¹⁰¹Hickson, p. 347.

With this additional background Gray was able to add that A Shrew is suspect because the transference of a passage from one part of the play to another is a characteristic of the bad quartos.¹⁰²

However, John Shroeder points out that popular Elizabethan science believed that dew fell from the sky and that the use of dew as a simile is appropriate because dew is traditionally used as a metaphor for youth and beauty, for which Kate is praising the Duke. He concludes that the passage "is perfectly logical, perfectly apposite, and poetically rather fine." Shroeder believes this criticism invalidated this part of the argument.¹⁰³ Shroeder's criticism does weaken the strength of this particular example. Another criticism might be that Shakespeare was the one who transferred the simile from its original place in A Shrew. However, in view of all the other evidence this idea seems unlikely.

I propose that this peculiar simile in A Shrew may be simply the result of a compositor's error. The omission of one word, "roses," would create the simile found in A Shrew. The simile may very well be an imitation, but its peculiar

¹⁰²Gray, pp. 326-7.

¹⁰³"The Taming of a Shrew and The Taming of the Shrew: A Case Reopened," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, LVII (1958), 428.

form may not be the error of the imitator; he may have imitated The Shrew more exactly than Hickson or Gray supposed.

Hickson also illustrates his argument with the following passages. In The Shrew, as Kate demands the cap which the haberdasher has made, she says:

Kate. I'll have no bigger: this doth fit the time,
And gentlewomen wear such caps as these.

Petruchio. When you are gentle, you shall have one too,
And not till then.

(IV.iii.69-72)

The corresponding passage in A Shrew has been transposed to an earlier scene in which Kate threatens:

Kate. Thou shalt not keepe me nor feed me as thou list,
For I will home againe unto my fathers house.

Ferando. I; when you'r meake and gentil but not before.
(sig. D4^v)

Hickson argues that here again the imitator has remembered Petruchio's use of the word "gentle" but has transposed it to a different scene and omitted Kate's suggestive cue.¹⁰⁴

G. I. Duthie reached the same conclusion in 1943.¹⁰⁵

On the other hand, Shroeder examines the passage and concludes that A Shrew's reading makes perfectly good sense. He points out that the two passages are not exactly parallel since Kate and Ferando are arguing about diet while Kate and Petruchio are arguing about fashion, and that the absence of

¹⁰⁴Hickson, p. 346.

¹⁰⁵Duthie, p. 338.

the suggestive cue in A Shrew does not weaken the passage at all since "not all conversation is stichomythia."¹⁰⁶

Although the passage may be an echo from The Shrew, it is certainly not inferior and not dependent on The Shrew's reading. However, as Gray pointed out in reference to the dew simile, its transference to a different part of the play increases the suspicion that it may be a mark of a bad quarto.

There is yet another passage which Hickson believes shows signs of imitation. He points out that Shakespeare had the habit of rhyming words such as in these passages:

Haply to wive and thrive as best I may.
(I.11.56)

With ruffs and cuffs and fardingales and things.
(IV.111.56)

That would thoroughly woo her, wed her and bed her
and rid the house of her!
(I.1.149-50)

Hickson believes that this last passage is imitated in Ferando's speech, "My mind sweet Kate doth say I am the man,/ Must wed, and bed, and marrie bonnie Kate." (sig. B3^r) In this instance, the imitator has imperfectly remembered the original passage in The Shrew and has consequently confused its logical order.¹⁰⁷ Shroeder believes that this passage

¹⁰⁶Shroeder, p. 427.

¹⁰⁷Hickson, p. 347.

is "the sole acceptable piece of evidence which Hickson offers."¹⁰⁸ The confused order in A Shrew is probably not a conscious design by the author since he was apparently clumsy enough to miss Grumio's pun and unskilled enough to botch Kate's closing speech.

Kate's closing speech is another example which Hickson offers as evidence of imitation. In The Shrew Kate says:

Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,
And place your hands below your husband's foot:
In token of which duty, if he please,
My hand is ready; may it do him ease.

(V.ii.176-79)

In A Shrew the passage reads:

Laying our hands under their feet to tread,
If that by that, we might procure their ease,
And for a president Ile first begin,
And lay my hand under my husbands feet.

(sig. G1^v)

Hickson suggests that here the author of A Shrew remembered something of the words of the original and "has laboured to reproduce [them] at a most unusual sacrifice of grammar and sense."¹⁰⁹ Shroeder offers no criticism of this example. I believe one would have to agree with Hickson on this point.

Hickson cites more parallel passages, all of which he believes the author of A Shrew has bungled, losing the sense

¹⁰⁸Shroeder, p. 429.

¹⁰⁹Hickson, p. 347.

and meaning of the original. There is a striking similarity between all the passages, however, concluding that all the ones from A Shrew are senseless does not seem valid. Some of them are; some are not. Hickson admits that his research was stimulated by his belief that Shakespeare would not have directly imitated another's work. This premise seems to have made him see inferior imitation in passages which are not without their own merit when examined objectively. The ones which do appear bungled, such as Sander's missed pun on "faced" and Kate's rather awkward closing speech, may be evidence of imitation. These possible instances of imitation increase the probability that the author of A Shrew was also echoing The Shrew in the other passages. Hickson may, therefore, have been right in assuming that the passages echoed The Shrew but wrong in assuming they are grossly inferior.

In the nineteenth century, Ten Brick also suggested that A Shrew may be a piracy.¹¹⁰ But the first individual to develop Hickson's thesis was Wilhelm Creizenach. In 1909, Creizenach proposed that an unknown author, perhaps an actor, pirated The Shrew in order to present a rival comedy to Elizabethan audiences. He was able to supplement Hickson's argument by arguing that because A Shrew is farther removed

¹¹⁰
Tolman, p. 228.

from Ariosto's I Suppositi, the source of the subplot in The Shrew, it was derived from Shakespeare.¹¹¹

In 1926, Peter Alexander also defended the priority of The Shrew. Although not the first to propose that A Shrew is a bad quarto, he stimulated the debate, and his work is the one most often cited by scholars. At the time of Alexander's writing, the study of the bad quartos had been advanced by W. W. Greg and A. W. Pollard; as a result, Alexander is able to incorporate their findings with Hickson's, Creizenach's and his own to argue that A Shrew is a bad quarto.

Alexander believes that if A Shrew can be shown to be a bad quarto, the play which Henslowe records as performed at Newington Butts must be Shakespeare's, for he believes the Chamberlain's Men would not have produced the stolen version.¹¹² This hypothesis seems to be sound; as explained above, it seems likely that Henslowe purchased the play from Pembroke's company for the Chamberlain's, and the play may have been written by Shakespeare when he was affiliated with Pembroke's. With this play legitimately in their possession, it does seem unlikely that the Chamberlain's Men would produce the bad quarto.

Alexander points out that the theory of evolution which has been applied to A Shrew and The Shrew by the

¹¹¹Parrott, "The Taming of a Shrew--A New Study," p. 156.

¹¹²Alexander, "The Taming of a Shrew," p. 614.

traditionalists can no longer stand under the weight of Pollard's and Greg's discoveries about the bad quartos. He writes:

Till recently the idea of evolution has been applied uncritically to problems of Shakespeare's text; and when two texts were compared, the cruder has been, almost invariably, regarded as the earlier. . . . [Pollard's and Greg's work has shown that] The less developed and finished text need not, it is clear, be the earlier. It may easily prove to be a later and degraded version.¹¹³

Part of Alexander's argument centers on the play's use of Ariosto's I Suppositi, or Gascoigne's English translation The Supposes, long recognized as a major source of the subplot of The Shrew. Picking up Creizenach's earlier thesis, Alexander argues that, because A Shrew is farther from the source, it was derived from The Shrew. In Ariosto's play, as in Shakespeare's, the hero changes identity with his servant in order to gain access to his beloved by posing as a servant in her house. The disguised servant then carries out his master's duties and presents himself to the maiden's father as a formal suitor in rivalry with another, aged suitor. Ariosto's disguised servant persuades a traveler to pose as his father in order to make arrangements for the dowry, and, in the meantime, the real father arrives on the scene. The action parallels The Shrew. However, in A Shrew this plot has become muddled. The

¹¹³Alexander, p. 614.

disguise is unmotivated because the lady has not been denied suitors. Valeria never appears as a suitor, and the stranger appears as Aurelius' father rather than Valeria's. The aged suitor is maintained but has no rival since there are enough sisters for everyone.¹¹⁴ Alexander concludes:

What the Quarto plotter saw clearly was that in the closing scenes he had to introduce the discovery of these three disguised characters by the real father; but their exact position on discovery or the moves by which they reached that position he could not represent with coherence or probability. He is obviously fumbling with borrowed material.¹¹⁵

Alexander recognizes that it may just as easily be argued that the quarto writer was fumbling with Ariosto rather than Shakespeare. However, he believes that the remainder of the evidence he presents clearly shows that it was Shakespeare's work which the quarto writer distorted.¹¹⁶

He points to Hickson's parallel passages, especially focusing on the exchange between Grumio and the Tailor, as evidence of piracy. In addition, he believes that the lute episode, in which Kate smashes the lute over her tutor's head, bears marks of imitation. In A Shrew, Valeria disguises himself as both Aurelius and the lute instructor, the role taken by Hortensio in The Shrew. Alexander believes

¹¹⁴Alexander, p. 614.

¹¹⁵Alexander, p. 614.

¹¹⁶Alexander, p. 614.

that the episode is imperfect in A Shrew and reasons that, because the episode does not have its source in Ariosto, it is logical to assume that it was derived from Shakespeare. Because the scene was derived from Shakespeare, it becomes more likely that the remainder of the subplot was derived from The Shrew.¹¹⁷

As Alexander points out, the lute episode in A Shrew is not a logical and integral part of the action as it is in The Shrew. Hortensio, in order to gain an edge on his rival, must disguise himself to gain access to Bianca and is able to do so because of Baptista's plan to acquire schoolmasters. In A Shrew, the episode is poorly prepared for, because there is no rivalry among the suitors, because the sisters have not been denied suitors, and because the father has no plans to hire tutors. Alexander argues that the quarto writer apparently wanted to retain the episode, but was unable to remember how it related to the rest of the action. Since he had no one else whom he could logically introduce as a musician, he was forced to disguise Valeria a second time.¹¹⁸

Alexander was convinced that A Shrew derived directly from The Shrew as it is preserved in the Folio. He saw no reason to hypothesize an earlier version of the play and stated:

¹¹⁷Alexander, p. 614.

¹¹⁸Alexander, p. 614.

. . . before it can be considered necessary to introduce a hypothetical X it must be shown:

- (1) That The Shrew cannot have been written before the Quarto version was put together
- (2) that A Shrew contains passages which can be accounted for only by postulating X.¹¹⁹

Other scholars have shown that these two conditions are met, and concluded, as this study does, that an earlier version must be postulated.

B. A. P. VanDam also believes that one need look no further than the Folio text of The Shrew to find the source of A Shrew. VanDam is one of the few scholars who believes that a shorthand reporter was responsible for reconstructing The Shrew and that the discrepancies between the plays can be explained as actors' mistakes combined with the reporter's inaccuracy. For instance, VanDam suggests that the stenographer was responsible for the confusion which surrounds Valeria's role throughout the play. He hypothesizes that Aurelius ordered another servant to impersonate the musician, that the actor who played Valeria doubled in this role, and that the reporter, recognizing Valeria, mistakenly presented him as the musician.¹²⁰ VanDam's thesis was rejected by the majority of scholars. Gray comments, "The Taming of a Shrew is perhaps the farthest of all the bad quartos from a possible explanation on the shorthand hypothesis."¹²¹

¹¹⁹Alexander, p. 614.

¹²⁰VanDam, pp. 102-6.

¹²¹Gray, p. 329.

Alexander, VanDam, and Creizenach believe that the immediate source of A Shrew was the Folio text of The Shrew. Only Hickson suggests, "I think it extremely probable that we have it [The Shrew] only in a revised form."¹²²

In addition to Hickson, Ten Brink also hypothesizes an earlier version which he believes was written by Shakespeare in his youth.¹²³ Capell had hinted at such an idea in 1768. However, it was not until the twentieth century that scholars developed specific arguments for an earlier version.

Henry David Gray has examined the theory which supposes an earlier version of The Shrew. As Gray points out, Alexander's theory that A Shrew derived directly from the Folio text of The Shrew was not wholly accepted by scholars because the consequence of Alexander's theory is that Shakespeare at a very early date was writing verse which orthodox Shakespearean criticism assigns to his maturity. John Dover Wilson points specifically to Kate's closing speech and Petruchio's speech at the end of IV.i. as mature verse that could not have been written as early as 1594.¹²⁴ Gray concludes:

¹²²Hickson, p. 347.

¹²³Tolman, p. 228.

¹²⁴Gray, p. 326.

Yet anybody can see that the speeches Wilson refers to, and others throughout the taming scenes, as well as the masterly ease with which the Induction is handled, are characteristic of Shakespeare about 1597, and are wholly unlike the work he did before 1593 when the Pembroke company, which had acted A Shrew, went to pieces. The answer is both easy and inevitable: The Shrew was an early work; A Shrew was derived from it; and when the play was revised Shakespeare rewrote those portions which clearly are not early.¹²⁵

Therefore, one of Alexander's conditions for introducing a hypothetical X is met because The Shrew, at least in its entirety, cannot have been written before A Shrew.

This theory also offers an explanation of a problem which has puzzled critics. As shown above, scholars who assumed The Shrew was based on A Shrew and written later in Shakespeare's career concluded that the two styles must be the result of collaboration. The theory of revision can explain the two styles.¹²⁶

Gray also believes that the two styles found in A Shrew, which scholars such as H. D. Sykes believed to be evidence of dual authorship, are also the work of one hand. It is the Bianca subplot which is most poorly done both in plot and style. It is also the subplot which deviates from the arrangement in The Shrew. As pointed out above, the taming scenes and the Inductions in both plays are parallel, in some instances the same words and phrases are used. Gray

¹²⁵Gray, p. 326.

¹²⁶Gray, p. 326.

points to Albert Frey's work which marks the parallel passages in both plays and cites Frey's findings which show that 164 lines of the taming plot are parallel, while only twenty-three of the Bianca subplot are parallel.¹²⁷ Gray hypothesizes that this correspondence:

. . . would be the inevitable result if the play was stolen by an actor whose roles brought him into the Induction and the taming scenes, and left him so completely out of the Bianca scenes that he was not even called when those scenes were rehearsed.¹²⁸

As a result, the pirate would be able to recall the passages of the taming plot easily, but his unfamiliarity with the subplot would force him to rely on his own ability, often borrowing lines from Marlowe. Because the closest correspondence occurs in the scenes in Petruchio's house, especially the scene that introduces the Haberdasher and the Tailor, Gray assigns the pirate to the roles of the Tailor and one of Petruchio's servants. He also believes that the actor probably doubled in the Induction.¹²⁹

However, this conclusion presents a problem which Gray recognizes but cannot explain. If the actor did take part in the Induction, the Induction of A Shrew should be more parallel to The Shrew than it is. Although Gray's theory of an

¹²⁷Gray, p. 328.

¹²⁸Gray, p. 328.

¹²⁹Gray, pp. 328-9.

actor-pirate is not without merit, he may have assigned the actor to the wrong roles. If the actor took the role of the Tailor, surely he would have been too familiar with the Tailor's exchange with Grumio to miss the pun as he does. In addition, Gray cites Frey's findings that there are twenty-three parallels in the subplots. However, if the actor were left so completely out of the subplot that he could not even recall its pattern, then surely there would have been no parallel passages between the plays at all.

Raymond A. Houk, in a long and detailed study, proposes that an early Shakespearean version of The Shrew preceded A Shrew. However, he does not believe that the early version followed the outline of The Shrew as it is preserved in the Folio, but rather was similar in some respects to A Shrew. He proposes that this early version followed the main plot of The Shrew, but that its interludes and subplot were more like those of A Shrew.¹³⁰ He argues, first, that the order of scenes in A Shrew appears to be deranged and that this derangement is a corruption of the original pattern of the early version which corresponds to the pattern in the Folio text. He points first to the lute lesson which, on the basis of internal evidence, appears to be misplaced. The lesson occurs immediately after Sly's

¹³⁰ "The Evolution of The Taming of the Shrew," PMLA, LVII (1942), 1037.

first interlude. The opening and closing lines of this interlude read:

Slie. Sim, when wil the foole come againe?

Lord. Heele come againe my Lord anon. . . .

Lord. My Lord, heere comes the plaiers againe.

Slie. O brave, heers two fine gentlewomen.

(sig. Cl^v)

Sly's exclamation is awkward, here, because it neither appropriately closes the last scene nor introduces the next. Sander, the fool whom Sly wishes to see, has already left the stage some fifty lines before, and, thus, the opening lines of the interlude are an awkward transition. The last lines introduce "two fine gentlewomen" although Kate and Valeria, disguised as a musician, appear on stage. Houk contends that the derangement suggested by the interlude is made more plausible by the fact that if the lute episode is lifted from the play at this point, in the next scene, or in the scene that would follow Sly's interlude, Emelia and Philena, Kate's sisters, would enter appropriate to Sly's introduction.¹³¹

If the lute lesson is lifted from its place, it must be retained, and in reconstructing the earlier version Houk believes that it was originally written between the dowry scene, in which the marriage of Kate and the Tamer is arranged, and the betrothal scene, in which the Tamer first

¹³¹Houk, p. 1014.

woos Kate. In addition, the scene in which Polidor and Aurelius arrange for Valeria's disguise as a musician must also be replaced since the first lines of Sly's following interlude do not accurately reflect the preceding action. Therefore, Houk moves it forward to a place immediately preceding the dowry scene. When it is removed, the betrothal scene, which closes with Sander's report of it, will precede the interlude and render Sly's comment appropriate. This pattern of scenes follows that of The Shrew.¹³²

Further support for this argument comes from the fact that the order of scenes as preserved in the Folio is the more logical. Houk contends that Valeria would not have dared to insult an engaged woman who was entitled to the protection of her fiance. In addition, when Hortensio bursts in with his head broken, this incident illustrates the very point Petruchio and Baptista have been discussing and, since it is Petruchio's initial encounter with Kate's temper, gives him an idea of what he may expect. However, in A Shrew Kate's tantrum has no point, for Ferando never hears of it.¹³³

Houk does not believe this rearrangement was a mere mechanical mistake, but contends that an editorial hand was

¹³²Houk, p. 1014.

¹³³Houk, pp. 1016-7.

responsible. However, he assumes that the author was apparently careless in the editing, leaving the interlude untouched and, therefore, inconsistent. Houk, then, concludes that the interlude is the work of an earlier hand.¹³⁴

He also adds:

That this obvious superiority in the order of The Shrew was not effected during its formerly supposed adaptation from A Shrew becomes apparent from the evidence within A Shrew. . .that A Shrew itself is a corruption of an earlier form of the play in which the order was identical, for this part of the play, with that of The Shrew.¹³⁵

There is a second interlude which Houk suspects as corrupt. As Kate's sisters prepare for their marriages Sly again interrupts:

Slie. Sim, must they be marreid now?
Lord. I my Lord.

Enter Ferando and Kate and Sander
Slie. Looke Sim the foole is come againe now.
(sig. E4^r)

In this instance, Houk contends that although Sly calls attention to Sander, he leaves the stage entirely at line four, and, therefore, his appearance "is insignificant and in no way answers to Sly's expectations."¹³⁶ In addition, "the occurrence of two interludes in succession, separated only by a stage direction referring to the main text, would

¹³⁴Houk, pp. 1015-6.

¹³⁵Houk, pp. 1017-8.

¹³⁶Houk, p. 1018.

seem to indicate that the author of A Shrew united two originally distinct interludes."¹³⁷

Houk would drop Kate and Ferando from the stage direction and place this interlude between the scene in which Kate and Ferando depart for Ferando's house and the following scene in which Sander and the other servants discuss the newlyweds' homecoming. As a result of this move, Sander would be referring to Aurelius' upcoming marriage.¹³⁸

Houk has a third example. He also contends that, because Sly is carried out before he can witness the final scene and full proof of Kate's submission, it is illogical for him to be convinced that he has learned how to tame a shrew. Houk would, therefore, remove Sly from the stage after the final scene.¹³⁹

Although Houk's study has become a major work in the development of the theory that an earlier Shrew play once existed, his evidence is not always convincing, and his rearrangements are questionable. Several scholars have questioned points in his argument, and Shroeder, for example, builds a case against Houk's rearrangements, questioning his second example and contending that the interlude is an

¹³⁷Houk, p. 1018.

¹³⁸Houk, p. 1018.

¹³⁹Houk, p. 1019.

excellent transition which functions perfectly well in its original place. He also questions Houk's assertion that the stage direction indicates the fusion of two interludes and also Houk's assertion that the interlude is misplaced because the following scene does not answer Sly's expectations to see the fool.¹⁴⁰ He writes, "The actual dramatic fact is that 'the fool is come again.' Sly cannot be asked to foresee that Sander will not be particularly foolish in the subsequent scene."¹⁴¹ Shroeder's criticism is perceptive, and one would have to agree that Houk's evidence here is weak.

Shroeder also objects to Houk's third example by arguing that:

. . .no matter when we remove Sly from the stage, his removal, since there is nothing whatever corresponding to it in The Shrew and since it has no effect upon the events of the play proper, cannot be used to prove either a dislocation of A Shrew's scenes or the existence of a hypothetical lost Shrew-play.¹⁴²

In regards to the first example that Houk offers, Shroeder believes that the interlude may be misplaced and that it is "the best of the three."¹⁴³ However, he suggests that Houk's rearrangement is not the only possible alternative; the interlude may appropriately be used in other contexts of

¹⁴⁰Shroeder, p. 434.

¹⁴¹Shroeder, p. 434.

¹⁴²Shroeder, p. 433.

¹⁴³Shroeder, p. 435.

the play.¹⁴⁴ Shroeder's criticism of Houk's rearrangements is sound, but, nevertheless, the obvious awkwardness of the first interlude Houk examines suggests that some disorder is present and that there is corruption.

In addition to these derangements of scenes and interludes, Houk also argues "that there are relics or parallels in The Shrew which suggest that interludes similar to those of A Shrew had existed in an earlier form of the play."¹⁴⁵ As a premise, Houk believes that Shakespeare deliberately dropped the Sly interludes from the play during revision. This aspect of the problem has been examined by numerous scholars and will be presented in detail later. In summary, Houk argues that during revision Shakespeare assigned Sly's functions to actors in the play proper. Houk maintains that the interlude in which Sly introduces "two fine gentlewomen," if restored to the position between Kate's betrothal and her sisters' wooing as he suggests, was eliminated during revision and that the scene in which Lucentio and Hortensio woo Bianca as schoolmasters functions as the transition in place of the interlude.¹⁴⁶ Houk's argument is rather weak, here, since he does not clarify the nature of

¹⁴⁴Shroeder, p. 436.

¹⁴⁵Houk, p. 1030.

¹⁴⁶Houk, p. 1031.

the transition, and it is difficult to understand how this scene fulfills the same function as the interlude. The other interlude, in which Sly is delighted at Sander's return to the stage, and which Houk would restore to a position between Ferando's departure from Athens and his return to his own house, was also eliminated. But Houk believes that the plan of The Shrew may at this point contain a remnant of the earlier version, because in both plays the Tamer leaves the stage before the close of the scene. Houk argues that if Ferando doubled as Sly, a hypothesis supported by other scholars, his early departure is necessary, and Petruchio's early departure at the same point is a "relic" of this original plan.¹⁴⁷ This argument seems to be sound because Petruchio's departure is not necessitated by the action. It may be argued that his departure is necessary in order that the actors remaining on stage can comment on the marriage; yet, their comments are repetitious, having already been made. Therefore, there is little reason for the dialogue, except perhaps to make time for the Tamer to prepare for the upcoming interlude.

Houk's strongest argument focuses on the interlude in A Shrew in which Sly interrupts the action to protest against the Duke's sending the supposed father and son to prison.

¹⁴⁷Houk, pp. 1031-2.

Houk suggests that during revision Shakespeare assigned Sly's role as intercessor to Gremio and his role as spectator to Petruchio. Houk believes this change is the result of Shakespeare's plan to drop Sly, combined with his borrowing from I Suppositi during revision. He was able to assign Sly's role to Gremio, who grew out of Ariosto's aged suitor and who also intervenes on behalf of the real father. Kate and Petruchio's roles during the denouement of the subplot also seem to indicate that Shakespeare transferred Sly's functions to these characters. Kate and Petruchio stand aside during the scene and act as spectators, performing the same function of Sly and his "lady" in A Shrew. Further, if Sly and the Tamer were originally doubled roles, Sly's elimination would, then, have left the actor portraying Sly free to remain on stage. This argument is supported by the fact that Ferando is not on stage during the corresponding scene in A Shrew.¹⁴⁸

According to Houk, Shakespeare did not completely drop the epilogue, either. Although the taming is not emphasized as a lesson as it is in A Shrew, nevertheless, Hortensio expresses the desire that he can now tame his widow much as Sly hopes to tame his wife.¹⁴⁹ Houk also believes that the obscure chronology of A Shrew is evidence

¹⁴⁸Houk, pp. 1034-5.

¹⁴⁹Houk, p. 1035.

of corruption. His argument is detailed, but, in essence, it states that in The Shrew five days are indicated in the text, and logically necessary, for the development and resolution of the action. However, the time sequence in A Shrew is distorted and obscure, and, through his own analysis, Houk concludes that no more than two days are involved, certainly not time enough for the action to occur.¹⁵⁰

Further evidence of corruption may lie in the subplot. Houk argues that Shakespeare later revised the subplot, making use of I Suppositi and, as a result, greatly altered the number of characters and their movements by introducing the element of rivalry for only one sister and her elopement. Consequently, the subplot of A Shrew is not a severally mangled corruption of The Shrew, but rather an imperfect preservation of its original form. Houk states that the elopement necessitated by the rivalry shortens the chronology of the latter part of the play, and that this shortening occurred during revision. The elopement does indeed shorten the play, and Houk believes that the inconsistencies and lapses which occur in the latter part of the play are traces of this revision.¹⁵¹

For example, in IV.iii., Petruchio and Kate are preparing to return to Padua when Kate questions Petruchio's

¹⁵⁰Houk, p. 1023.

¹⁵¹Houk, pp. 1023-8.

judgment of the time of day, and he declares, "I will not go to-day." This same action occurs in A Shrew; however, in A Shrew Ferando does apparently delay the trip until the next day, while in The Shrew, according to Houk's time analysis, Petruchio apparently changes his mind and journeys on the same day, probably because his threat has resulted in Kate's submission, although this situation is not indicated in the text.¹⁵²

This example is not conclusive, as Houk admits, but his next one strengthens his case. He writes, "the condensation of events in the latter part of The Shrew is such that it almost exceeds the bounds of probability."¹⁵³ In the same scene in which Petruchio decides that he will not journey until the following day, Kate also declares, "I dare assure you, sir, 'tis almost two; / And 'twill be supertime ere you come there." (IV.iii.191-2) However, as Houk points out, between two o'clock and supper time many other events occur. Kate and Petruchio are delayed by their disagreement and by their jesting with Vincentio. They also witness the resolution of the subplot in which the disguised Tranio, the disguised pedant, and the elopement of Bianca and Lucentio are discovered. All of this action occurs before supper

¹⁵²Houk, p. 1028.

¹⁵³Houk, p. 1029.

time, although Kate has already stated that the journey alone will not be completed until then.¹⁵⁴ Houk believes that the mention of two o'clock is important internal evidence (it is noted in both plays); and, therefore, he concludes:

The hour of two in A Shrew III.v.65, on the contrary, would have given Ferando and Kate ample time in which to journey to Athens on Saturday to attend the Sunday wedding, had they not post-poned the journey. I would suggest, accordingly, that the mention of the hour of two in both versions of the play derives from an earlier form of the play which was similar in chronology, herein, to A Shrew.¹⁵⁵

In addition, Petruchio's knowledge of Bianca's marriage is inconsistent. As Kate, Petruchio, Hortensio, and Vincentio journey towards Padua, Petruchio is delighted to tell Vincentio that his son, Lucentio, has married Kate's sister. Houk points out that this statement would have been perfectly suited to Ferando since he knows that they are late for the wedding, however, coming from Petruchio this statement is inconsistent. The only marriage Petruchio could have knowledge of is Bianca's marriage to Tranio, which could not yet have taken place since it was scheduled for Sunday, and the party is making the journey to attend the wedding. Moreover, Petruchio still believes Tranio is Lucentio and has no idea that an elopement has been planned. Houk

¹⁵⁴Houk, p. 1029.

¹⁵⁵Houk, p. 1029.

concludes that this inconsistency is a relic of the earlier form of the play, corresponding to A Shrew, in which the Tamer, who has delayed the journey, knows that the planned weddings have already taken place.¹⁵⁶

John Shroeder does not question Houk's thesis that the earlier form of the play contained interludes which were later dropped. However, he does question Houk's use of the awkward and obscure chronology as evidence with which to hypothesize that A Shrew is a corruption and that the time sequence of The Shrew was confused during revision.

Believing that it is an obvious fact that Elizabethan drama disregarded temporal probability and was characterized by "chronological waywardness," Shroeder concludes that "temporal distortion and confusion are too prevalent to permit us to draw from them any theories about textual corruption."¹⁵⁷

If one accepts Shroeder's criticisms as sound, and I believe they are, the strength of Houk's case is diminished. Nevertheless, some of his evidence is sound and may be used to build a case for an early Shrew play when combined with other evidence advanced by different scholars. The interlude which Houk uses as his first example does appear to be misplaced and remains suspect. In addition, Petruchio's

¹⁵⁶Houk, p. 1029-30.

¹⁵⁷Shroeder, p. 431.

knowledge of Bianca's marriage remains a crux which may be explained as a remnant of an earlier play in which there was no rivalry and, therefore, no elopement.

I have already referred briefly to the work of Henry Gray, who also supported the theory of an early Shrew play, although he did not believe that its form was different from that in the Folio text. It may be recalled that on the basis of stylistic irregularities in The Shrew, Gray concluded that The Shrew was an early comedy, that A Shrew was pirated from it, and that Shakespeare later revised those passages which are in a later style. Gray advances very little evidence to prove that an earlier Shrew play existed because the focus of his article is to trace the source of A Shrew to an actor-pirate.

Florence Huber Ashton develops the proposition in greater detail. Ashton states that "the irregularities which undoubtedly do exist throughout the play, as we have it, is the result of the revision or re-working of an old play."¹⁵⁸ Ashton does not explicitly state that this old play was Shakespeare's, nor does she deal with The Shrew's relationship to A Shrew. However, it is important to include her findings because they show that the revisions were made in the subplot, and this data supplements Houk's conclusions.

¹⁵⁸"The Revision of the Folio Text of The Taming of the Shrew," Philological Quarterly, VI (1927), 151.

Ashton finds that the peculiarities in The Shrew can be classified into three groups: "(1) marginal or paginal insertion of new material, (2) confused speech headings, and (3) the deletion of old material."¹⁵⁹ She concludes that the purpose of these apparent revisions was to introduce new elements into the subplot, especially into the rivalry of Gremio, Hortensio, and Lucentio. She argues that, during revision, Shakespeare added Baptista's plan to acquire schoolmasters for Bianca, Tranio's wooing of Bianca as Lucentio, the introduction of Hortensio and Lucentio as schoolmasters, a foreshadowing of the elopement, and fuller characterization of Petruchio by means of others remarks about him.¹⁶⁰

Ashton's findings do indeed supplement and add support to Houk's claim that, during revision of an old play, Shakespeare greatly altered the subplot. Ashton's finding that the revisions also result in a fuller characterization of Petruchio may account for Ferando's rather flat character in A Shrew. Gray reached a similar conclusion by arguing that many of Kate's speeches, especially her closing one, are characteristic of Shakespeare's later style and were probably altered to give her a fuller, more vigorous

¹⁵⁹Ashton, p. 151.

¹⁶⁰Ashton, p. 151.

character.¹⁶¹ Apparently Shakespeare was concerned during revision not only with altering the subplot, but also with developing the characters of his hero and heroine.

G. I. Duthie has also argued well for an early Shakespearean Shrew play. He points to corresponding passages in both plays which suggest that A Shrew is a corruption, probably a memorial reconstruction, of The Shrew as it appeared in an earlier form. He believes that the passages from A Shrew may be recognized as corrupt because they seem to follow the pattern of other pirated dramatic texts of this period in which the pirate, remembering the thought and a few specific words and phrases of the original, reconstructs the passage inaccurately.¹⁶²

Duthie first cites the two corresponding passages which are the Tamers' soliloquies. I quote only a part of each:

A Shrew reads:

This humor must I hold me to a while,
To bridle and hold backe my headstrong wife. . .
Ile mew her up as men do mew their hawkes,
And make hir gently come unto the lure.

(D3)

The Shrew reads:

My falcon now is sharp and passing empty;
And till she stoop she must not be full-gorged,
For then she never looks upon her lure.

¹⁶¹Gray, p. 327.

¹⁶²Duthie, pp. 338-9.

Another way I have to man my haggard,
 To make her come and know her keeper's call,
 That is, to watch her, as we watch these kites
 That bate and beat and will not be obedient.
 (IV.1.193-9)

Duthie analyzes the soliloquies in detail, but I focus only upon his main points. He argues, first, that the metaphor of falconry, used throughout The Shrew, is consistently developed throughout Petruchio's soliloquy. However, Ferando's speech awkwardly mixes the images of subduing hawks and horses, probably the result of the author's confusion and invention. In addition, the soliloquy in A Shrew is technically inaccurate. Duthie quotes D. H. Madden:

. . . hawks are mewed up for moulting and not to teach them to come to the lure. It is in the manning of the haggard falcon, by watching and by hunger, and not in her mewing or in her training to the lure, that Shakespeare saw a true analogue to the taming of the shrew.¹⁶³

The author of A Shrew has clearly bungled the metaphor by applying it incorrectly. Duthie hypothesizes that the author remembered the nature of the metaphor but apparently confused it with the earlier reference to Bianca which reads, "And therefore has he [Baptista] closely mew'd her up." (I.i.188) Therefore, both the incorrect usage of the metaphor and the transference of the phrase from one part of the play to another suggests that the passage of A Shrew is derived from The Shrew.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³Duthie, p. 341.

¹⁶⁴Duthie, pp. 339-42.

Duthie also cites various other parallel passages; the nature of the passages is similar to those cited by Hickson and Alexander in which the readings of A Shrew are awkward and seem to depend on those from The Shrew. Duthie concludes that, because the passages of A Shrew are more awkward than those of The Shrew, because words and phrases from a unified passage in The Shrew are scattered throughout A Shrew, and because these characteristics usually distinguish bad quartos which are memorial reconstructions, A Shrew is also a memorial reconstruction. However, Duthie points out, as many others have, that nearly all the verbal parallels are found in the taming plot and in the Sly induction and interludes, whereas, there are practically none in the Bianca subplot.¹⁶⁵

Duthie's analysis of the subplot is perceptive and his conclusion that the subplot was revised validates those of Houk and Ashton. The first example Duthie uses to support the theory was examined earlier by P. A. Daniel. In III.ii. of The Shrew, the wedding party is impatiently awaiting the late arrival of Petruchio. Tranio, still disguised as Lucentio, tries to calm the party by telling them that he must have a good reason for being late because, although he may be "blunt" and "merry," yet he is "wise" and "honest."

¹⁶⁵Duthie, pp. 342-6.

When Biondello reports Petruchio's bizarre apparel, Tranio tells them, "Tis some odd humour pricks him to this fashion." (III.ii.74) When Petruchio finally arrives, Tranio tries to persuade him to refrain from being married in such clothes and begs him to go to his own chamber and change into one of his suits. As Duthie points out, Tranio and Petruchio have only just met and do not know each other well; thus, Tranio's familiarity is inconsistent. However, his remarks would be perfectly suited to Hortensio, who is an old friend. In A Shrew, the corresponding passages are assigned to Polidor, Hortensio's counterpart.¹⁶⁶

Duthie offers an explanation for this crux which is quite logical. During revision Shakespeare disguised Hortensio as Lucio, the musician, when he introduced the element of rivalry, Baptista's denial of suitors, and the subsequent courting of Bianca in disguise. The scene in which Lucentio and Hortensio court Bianca as schoolmasters immediately precedes the one in which the wedding party awaits Petruchio and his arrival in mad attire. Therefore, Duthie concludes that Shakespeare was forced to assign Hortensio's remarks to Tranio, because it would have been "theatrically impossible" for Hortensio to change his disguise and reappear as himself at the beginning of the

¹⁶⁶Duthie, pp. 346-7.

next scene. Thus, A Shrew preserves the earlier form of the play.¹⁶⁷

Another inconsistency occurs when Tranio announces that Hortensio has gone to Petruchio's house, "into the taming school." However, as Duthie points out, Hortensio has not told Tranio or anyone else of his plan.¹⁶⁸ In A Shrew, Polidor does tell Aurelius that he is going into the taming school, and Aurelius' later announcement of it is accounted for. The scene in which Polidor announces his plan corresponds to a scene in The Shrew in which Hortensio is disguised and, therefore, obviously cannot speak as himself. Duthie believes this inconsistency is a result of revision. He explains that, during revision, Shakespeare edited the scene in which Hortensio originally announced his plan and substituted a scene in which he appears as the musician. As a result, Hortensio's statement of his intention was deleted, but the following announcement of it by another character was maintained, resulting in an inconsistency.¹⁶⁹ Duthie does not point out that Shakespeare could have corrected this fault. In one scene, Hortensio reveals his identity to Tranio and swears he will never again woo

¹⁶⁷Duthie, p. 348.

¹⁶⁸Duthie, p. 348.

¹⁶⁹Duthie, p. 348.

Bianca. He could have made his intention known to Tranio at this point, but he does not. This oversight may be the result of Shakespeare's haste in revising.

Duthie recognizes that these inconsistencies may be accounted for by arguing that the author of A Shrew corrected them in his model, which was similar to the Folio text. However, he counters:

But the balance of probability seems to me to be decidedly against this, because there are, as we shall see, inconsistencies and structural weaknesses in A Shrew itself, which suggest that the writer of that play was by no means highly skilled in plot-construction, and was hardly the sort of person who could be expected to take the trouble to correct defects in his model.¹⁷⁰

For example, one weakness in A Shrew which Duthie focuses on has already been discussed. It may be recalled that Aurelius' disguise appears to be unmotivated because Kate's sisters have not been denied suitors. Duthie points out that it is motivated by Aurelius' desire to hide his rank which would prevent him from marrying into a lower class; however, the author of A Shrew has failed to make this situation clear.¹⁷¹

Duthie turns to a third example of inconsistency which again involves Hortensio, pointing out that several times in the play Hortensio is completely forgotten as a

¹⁷⁰Duthie, pp. 348-9.

¹⁷¹Duthie, pp. 354-5.

suitor to Bianca. In II.1., Gremio and Tranio compete to win Bianca by offering Baptista the largest dowry. Hortensio cannot be present since he has appeared as Lucio in the preceding scene and must reappear as the musician in the following scene. However, Duthie emphasizes that although Gremio, Tranio, and Baptista know very well that Hortensio is a suitor, "not one of them shows the slightest awareness of the fact here."¹⁷² It may be only natural that Tranio and Gremio would prefer to forget him, but Baptista has no motive for doing so.¹⁷³

In the following scene, as Lucentio and Hortensio (in disguise) woo Bianca, Hortensio is again forgotten as a suitor. Lucentio tells Bianca that Tranio's offer of a large dowry will beguile Gremio, yet there is no mention of Hortensio. During the same scene, Lucentio becomes annoyed at Lucio's attention to Bianca, but, although he has heard Hortensio declare that he will find a tutor for Bianca, he never suspects that Lucio may be pleading Hortensio's case. A similar situation occurs in IV.11. when the disguised Hortensio reveals his identity to Tranio. Tranio casually replies that he has heard of Hortensio's affection for Bianca. This is strange in view of the fact that, in I.11.,

¹⁷²Duthie, p. 349.

¹⁷³Duthie, p. 349.

Gremio and Hortensio reveal their desires to Tranio who proposes that they be friendly rivals.¹⁷⁴

Duthie believes that A Shrew preserves the original subplot in which Hortensio was not disguised, and, by disguising him later, Shakespeare created these inconsistencies. He, then, concludes that apparently Shakespeare's sole motive for disguising Hortensio was to set up the comic situations which arise from his disguise. After disguising him, Shakespeare drops him from the race. Then, "when the comic possibilities of the disguise have been exploited," Shakespeare abruptly drops him as a suitor and marries him to a widow who suddenly appears in the play.¹⁷⁵

There is one difficulty which Duthie does not clarify. The lute lesson is present in both plays; in A Shrew, Valeria (Tranio) is disguised as the musician to teach Kate the lute, and in The Shrew, Hortensio has this role. However, in A Shrew the scene is enacted; in The Shrew it is only reported by Hortensio. Some scholars have hypothesized that the pirate's confusion led him to disguise Valeria as the musician instead of Bianca's suitor. Although he does not explicitly state it, Duthie apparently believes that Tranio was originally disguised and that

¹⁷⁴Duthie, pp. 349-50.

¹⁷⁵Duthie, pp. 349-51.

Shakespeare later disguised Hortensio; therefore, he argues that A Shrew preserves the original form. This hypothesis seems to be correct. In A Shrew, it would have been difficult to disguise Polidor (Hortensio). If the original pattern of scenes followed the pattern preserved in The Shrew and was rearranged by the author of A Shrew, as Houk suggests, then, according to Houk's rearrangement, Hortensio leaves the stage only twelve lines before the lute lesson is presented. This situation would not have given him time to disguise himself and reappear as the musician. However, Tranio could have easily managed the disguise. Therefore, it may be that the pirate did not confuse the disguise, but has preserved its original pattern. Shakespeare did apparently disguise Hortensio during revision, and one suggests that he edited the original enactment of the lesson in order to replace it with the scene in which Hortensio and Lucentio woo Bianca as schoolmasters. When the scene was cut, Shakespeare was able to retain its comic effect by having Hortensio merely report what has taken place.

At this point, Duthie turns to a crux of the play which has already been discussed as part of Raymond Houk's study. It may be recalled that Houk pointed to Petruchio's knowledge of Bianca's marriage as a relic of an earlier form of the play in which there was no elopement. Duthie also calls attention to this scene, but brings up new

considerations. Hortensio is also traveling back to Padua with Kate and Petruchio because he has been attending the taming school. Hortensio assures Vincentio that Petruchio is correct, that his son has indeed married Bianca.¹⁷⁶ Houk does not call attention to Hortensio's confirmation. He believes the inconsistency rests in the fact that Sunday, the appointed wedding day, has not yet arrived, and Petruchio can have no knowledge of the elopement. Duthie believes that the party may well be late for the wedding, but he reaches the same conclusion through a slightly different argument. Duthie points out that, in IV.ii., Hortensio reveals his identity to Tranio and swears that he will have no more to do with Bianca. Tranio replies, "And here I take the like unfeigned oath, / Never to marry with her though she would entreat." (IV.ii.32-3) Since Tranio does not reveal his disguise to Hortensio, Hortensio's belief that Lucentio has married Bianca is a direct contradiction of what he has heard, because he still believes Tranio is Lucentio.¹⁷⁷ Duthie, then, concludes that this difficulty suggests an earlier version of the play in which there was no rivalry:

If there were no rivalry for the hand of the lady wooed by Vincentio's son, then Petruchio and Hortensio would be entitled to assume that on the day appointed for her wedding it is he whom she has married. There is no rivalry in A Shrew: and I

¹⁷⁶Duthie, p. 351.

¹⁷⁷Duthie, p. 352.

believe that here The Shrew implies as anterior to it a version of the story agreeing with A Shrew.¹⁷⁸

From his study, Duthie is able to conclude that A Shrew is a memorially reconstructed text of an earlier Shakespearean play, that The Shrew is a reworking of this play, that Shakespeare maintained the taming plot, dropped Sly after I.ii., and greatly revised the subplot, and that A Shrew preserves the early form of the subplot and the interludes.¹⁷⁹

Both Houk and Duthie believe that, while revising the subplot of The Shrew, Shakespeare turned back to his original source and followed its pattern more closely. Scholars generally recognize Ariosto's I Suppositi, or Gascoigne's English translation, The Supposes, as the major source of The Shrew; it is recognized even among scholars who hold widely differing opinions on the relationship of the two plays. It may be recalled that in The Supposes the hero changes identity with his servant in order to gain access to his beloved and win her from his rival, an aged suitor. His servant, then, presents himself as a suitor and persuades a traveler to pose as his father. The real father soon arrives, and the lovers are discovered. Duthie believes that from The Supposes, Shakespeare originally took the theme

¹⁷⁸Duthie, p. 352.

¹⁷⁹Duthie, p. 356.

of disguise, but during revision turned back to it and introduced the element of rivalry. He postulates that Shakespeare first used the idea of the lover sneaking into his lady's house under the disguise of a menial servant to disguise the rank of Lucentio; this theme is imperfectly preserved in Aurelius' motive for disguise in A Shrew. Upon revising the play, Shakespeare also added the element of rivalry from The Supposes.¹⁸⁰ Houk also contends that the subplot was revised more closely after The Supposes.¹⁸¹

Scholars who believe that A Shrew is a piracy of the Folio text of The Shrew often support their conclusion by pointing to the fact that A Shrew is farther removed from the source than The Shrew. For example, Peter Alexander, for one, maintains this theory.¹⁸² If, however, it is assumed that the original form of The Shrew did not follow the plot of The Supposes closely, then A Shrew is not as corrupt as suspected and preserves Shakespeare's first draft.

Not all scholars who support the theory of an early Shrew play believe it to have been Shakespeare's work. Shroeder, for example, suggests that the theory still has merit that contends that A Shrew and The Shrew derive

¹⁸⁰Duthie, pp. 353-4.

¹⁸¹Houk, p. 1035.

¹⁸²"The Taming of the Shrew," p. 614.

independently from an old play imperfectly preserved in A Shrew and which Shakespeare used as the source of The Shrew.¹⁸³ Hardin Craig supports this view.¹⁸⁴ Cecil Seronsy also contends that Shakespeare may have found his material in an old play.¹⁸⁵ However, in my research I have not found one detailed, thorough argument in support of this theory.

Mincoff suggests a possible motivation behind this theory and adds his own criticism of it:

Apparently the urge to provide a source for Shakespeare is too potent still for the old assumption to be abandoned altogether. . . .But, after all, the complete reworking of old plays was not, as far as our actual documentation goes, so very frequent at this time, probably for the simple reason that there were not as yet many old plays, and theatrical fashions had not altered sufficiently to make it worthwhile.¹⁸⁶

Thomas Parrott points out that, if such a play ever existed, there is no trace of it in the Elizabethan annals of the stage.¹⁸⁷ It is difficult to prove conclusively that the early form of the play was Shakespeare's. But, as Raymond Houk points out, "he would be injudicious indeed who would

¹⁸³Shroeder, p. 425.

¹⁸⁴"The Shrew and A Shrew: Possible Settlement," p. 152.

¹⁸⁵Seronsy, p. 29.

¹⁸⁶Mincoff, p. 554.

¹⁸⁷Shakespearean Comedy, p. 150.

assert that Shakespeare wrote The Shrew without the aid of a first draft or some other early form of the play."¹⁸⁸

If the early play were not Shakespeare's, and if both plays were derived independently from it, then the only way to account for the verbal parallels in A Shrew and The Shrew is to assume that both authors copied the play verbatim in specific passages. It would not be hard to believe that the author of A Shrew, who copied directly from Marlowe, copied the play verbatim, but it is harder to believe that Shakespeare did so. In addition, if both plays derive independently from a common source, we must assume Shakespeare and the anonymous author both copied the same passages independently. This conclusion seems to stretch the bounds of probability too far. The fact that A Shrew and The Shrew contain so many parallel passages seems to be more than coincidental.

If A Shrew preserves the original subplot of an early Shakespearean version, it probably also preserves the original induction, interludes and epilogue. In 1890, Albert Tolman, who, like the majority of scholars in his day, believed A Shrew to be the original play, was quite puzzled by the interludes of A Shrew, and wrote, "It is a remarkable

¹⁸⁸"Strata in The Taming of the Shrew," Studies in Philology, XXXIX (1942), 291.

fact, for which I do not know how to account, that the brief continuations of the Induction which are scattered through TAS. are worthy of Shakespeare himself."¹⁸⁹

Scholars who believe that A Shrew was the original play account for Sly's disappearance from The Shrew by hypothesizing that Shakespeare dropped the character during revision. Scholars who contend that A Shrew is a piracy of The Shrew as it appears in the Folio generally believe that The Shrew did contain an epilogue which has been omitted by accident and imperfectly preserved in A Shrew. According to Peter Alexander, the omission is probably the result of "some error in the printing house, or in the preparation of the copy."¹⁹⁰ Those scholars who stand behind the theory of an earlier Shakespearean Shrew play believe that the earlier play contained an epilogue that was deliberately dropped during revision.

Why did the epilogue disappear? It is impossible, perhaps, to form a conclusive answer, but several alternatives present themselves. For example, it is always a possibility that the epilogue was accidentally dropped from the text during the Folio's printing. However, this suggestion does not satisfactorily explain why interludes in the middle

¹⁸⁹Tolman, p. 223

¹⁹⁰Shakespeare's Life and Art, p. 71.

of the play were omitted. Accidental omission is also less probable in view of the care Heminge and Condell exercised in supervising the Folio's publication. Peter Alexander in a later work suggested that the interludes and epilogue may have been abandoned as the personnel of the company shrank.¹⁹¹ Cecil Seronsy believes that, during revision, Shakespeare's attention shifted from the taming theme to the theme of supposes, or appearance and reality, and, thus, he cut out the material which did not develop this theme.¹⁹²

Richard Hosley examines the problem and concludes that The Shrew probably never had an epilogue. He considers only the Folio text and does not speculate about any earlier version. However, his conclusions merit discussion. Hosley does not become involved in any discussion of the relationship between the two plays because he believes, "Shakespeare, as either originator or reviser of the Sly material, was free to employ a dramatic epilogue or not as he saw fit."¹⁹³ He bases his conclusion on his observations about Elizabethan drama in general and The Shrew in particular. First, he points out that "it was not unusual for an Elizabethan play

¹⁹¹"The Original Ending of The Taming of the Shrew," Shakespeare Quarterly, XX (1969), 116.

¹⁹²Seronsy, p. 26.

¹⁹³"Was There a 'Dramatic Epilogue' to The Taming of the Shrew?" Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, I (1961), 19.

with an induction to lack a dramatic epilogue."¹⁹⁴

Secondly, he notes that actors generally doubled in the induction and the play proper; since few of the principal actors appeared in the first scene, this doubling was not awkward. However, because most of the actors were on stage during the last scene, staging an epilogue would have often been difficult. Lastly, he contends that The Shrew is aesthetically more pleasing without an epilogue. He believes that Shakespeare probably wanted to avoid an anticlimax, to avoid a didactic ending, and to avoid straying from the theme of supposes, which is introduced and illustrated in the induction and culminated in the final scene of the play proper.¹⁹⁵ He believes that Shakespeare originally designed The Shrew without an epilogue because of the theatrical and aesthetic awkwardness it would have produced. However, it seems to be just as probable that Shakespeare dropped the epilogue during a later revision in view of the difficulties it presented. If The Shrew were composed as early as 1592 or 1593, it is quite possible that Shakespeare, as a novice, may have written the epilogue, preserved in A Shrew, which he later abandoned in his maturity when he recognized its clumsiness. A point which Hosley makes, but does not consider in relation to The Shrew, is that by 1600 the epilogue

¹⁹⁴Hosley, p. 21.

¹⁹⁵Hosley, p. 29.

had become an old-fashioned technique and had been generally abandoned.¹⁹⁶ If so, Shakespeare may have also been motivated by his desire to satisfy the changed taste of his audience.

Ernest Kuhl has suggested that, because an induction does not appear in any other of Shakespeare's plays, its appearance in The Shrew may be the result of Shakespeare's experimentation and desire to see the effect of one on the audience.¹⁹⁷ If this hypothesis is extended, it may be that Shakespeare also experimented with an epilogue which he discovered to be clumsy and anticlimactic and, therefore, abandoned. It may be recalled that Raymond Houk argued that, although Shakespeare dropped the later interludes and the epilogue, he assigned Sly's functions to actors in the play proper.

At any rate, it seems quite likely that Shakespeare originally wrote an epilogue. This idea becomes more probable in view of the fact that the author of A Shrew was a bungling poet, unskilled in plot construction, who directly borrowed from Marlowe and, as the majority of evidence indicates, from Shakespeare. Therefore, he probably could not be expected to invent an original epilogue. In addition,

¹⁹⁶Hosley, p. 24.

¹⁹⁷"Shakespeare's Purpose in Dropping Sly," Modern Language Notes, XXXVI (1921), 327.

the interludes and epilogue of A Shrew are, as Tolman points out, "worthy of Shakespeare himself," which concept increases the likelihood that they are, indeed, his. Therefore, I agree with Houk and Duthie that A Shrew preserves the original interludes and epilogue of the first Shakespearean version, as well as the subplot.

Chapter IV

A Conjectural History

After examining the evidence presented here, as well as other material not included, I support the theory that A Shrew is an adaptation or piracy that imperfectly preserves an early Shakespearean Shrew play. This early version was later revised, and the result of this revision was the Folio text of The Shrew. During this revision, Shakespeare altered the subplot and dropped Sly after the first scene of the play proper. Although this theory cannot adequately account for all the difficulties that emerge from a study of the two plays, it accounts for more difficulties than do any of the other theories. At this point, the following conjectural history may be proffered.

One difficulty which formerly complicated resolution of the problem was the dating of The Shrew. One recalls that Samuel Rowlands first alluded to the play in 1609 by the name it now bears in the Folio; all allusions before Rowland's mention of it referred to a play entitled Taming of a Shrew. In addition, although scholars generally recognized The Shrew as an early comedy, they were quite hesitant to date it earlier than May, 1594, when A Shrew first appeared in print.

This assumption influenced their conclusion that A Shrew was the original play.

However, scholars have recently advanced arguments to contend that The Shrew probably was in existence when A Shrew was first published. Raymond Houk suggests that parallels between The Shrew and Orlando Furioso indicate that The Shrew was in existence as early as 1592-93.¹⁹⁸ William Moore, who argues that Anthony Chute's Beawtie Dishonored, published in June, 1593, alludes to The Shrew rather than A Shrew supports the conclusion that The Shrew was composed at least as early as the winter of 1592-3. The spring of 1592 may be a more probable date in view of the fact that the theatres were closed from the summer of 1592 until the Christmas season of 1593.¹⁹⁹ Mincoff hypothesizes that on the basis of style, technical skill, and the treatment of marriage, The Shrew is probably earlier than The Comedy of Errors, traditionally thought to be Shakespeare's earliest comedy. Because Errors was composed sometime in 1592-93, Mincoff concludes that The Shrew was in existence by the close of 1592.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ "Shakespeare's Shrew and Greene's Orlando," p. 664.

¹⁹⁹ Moore, pp. 55-60.

²⁰⁰ Mincoff, pp. 557-61.

These scholars all hypothesize that The Shrew was in existence in 1592, and no later than 1593. If this premise is accepted, The Shrew predates A Shrew, first published in May 1594. This method of dating increases the likelihood that the material in A Shrew is borrowed from The Shrew, rather than vice versa. The conclusion is supported by the arguments of Alexander, Hickson, Duthie, and Gray, all of whom believe that the corresponding passages in A Shrew are awkward and depend upon the readings in The Shrew.

The fact, however, that The Shrew is not alluded to by this title until 1609 presents a difficulty. So, too, does the fact that Henslowe records A Shrew's performance at Newington Butts on June 11, 1594; both of these references give priority to A Shrew. Scholars generally account for these facts by either arguing that the Elizabethans made errors in their records, or that A Shrew predates The Shrew. However, I believe it a fallacy to assume that Shakespeare's play always bore a title identical to the one given in the Folio. The title may have easily been changed during the play's evolution. Although I cannot advance evidence or analogues to support this concept, I believe this conclusion is probable and sound. Therefore, the play referred to by Henslowe and by other contemporaries before 1609 may well have been Shakespeare's, a conclusion supported by the conjectural history of Pembroke's company. Many scholars

believe that Shakespeare was first associated with this company. If so, he probably wrote The Shrew for them. This premise would also account for other Shakespearean titles in Pembroke's repertoire, such as Titus Andronicus, Hamlet, and Richard, Duke of York. When Pembroke's could not survive economically on their provincial tours, they returned to London bankrupt, as Henslowe's letter to Edward Alleyn states. At this point, Joseph Adams believes that Pembroke's sold Titus Andronicus, Hamlet, and A Shrew to Henslowe, who purchased the latter play for Strange's company, later the Lord Chamberlain's.²⁰¹ It was Strange's Men who performed the play at Newington Butts.

If the play were in existence as early as 1592 or 1593, A Shrew is most likely a piracy, but probably not one of the Folio text of The Shrew. If one believes A Shrew to be a piracy of the Folio text, he must accept the conclusion that at a very early date Shakespeare was writing verse which scholars assign to his maturity. It seems more likely that those parts of The Shrew which are not early were written during a later revision.²⁰² This conclusion can also explain, at least in part, the two styles present in The Shrew. Many scholars account for these styles, one inferior to the other,

²⁰¹A Life of William Shakespeare, p. 187.

²⁰²Gray, p. 326.

as the result of collaboration. But it could be the natural result of a later revision during which Shakespeare revised only portions of the play. As a result, those passages written in a more awkward style are probably not a collaborator's, but Shakespeare's early work.

Ernest Kuhl has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of most critics, that The Shrew is authentic. Although Kuhl does not suggest revision, some of his argument supports this conclusion. Kuhl believes that the slips in plot are not evidence of collaboration; he also notes that the run-on lines, or unstopped lines, are not evidence of collaboration, but rather an early sign of a technique that Shakespeare perfected in his maturity.²⁰³ On the other hand, it may just as well be a sign of Shakespeare's revision during his maturity, and the slips in plot a consequence of a revision in the plot.

The problem is that many of the poorly worked passages occur in the subplot. If Shakespeare revised the subplot during his maturity, it seems that many of the lines would be more polished than they are. However, this difficulty may be the result of his haste in revising. This idea has been previously suggested by Thomas Parrott.²⁰⁴

²⁰³"The Evolution of The Taming of the Shrew," pp. 559, 565.

²⁰⁴Shakespearean Comedy, p. 151.

The fact that the taming plot in both plays is parallel leads one to wonder why the subplots, the inductions, and the interludes are so dissimilar, and why the epilogue has disappeared completely from The Shrew. If one assumes that the Folio text of The Shrew was the model used by the author of A Shrew, he must conclude that the playwright completely revised the subplot, eliminated the element of rivalry, completed the series of interludes, and added an epilogue. Yet, in view of the fact that the author of A Shrew was not an original or even skillful playwright, it seems unlikely that he would or could revise the play. He borrowed freely from Marlowe, but the borrowed material was not used appropriately or effectively. He bungled the puns. He could not construct a tight plot. He provided little or no motivation for his characters' actions. He apparently made no revisions in the taming plot. In view of these facts, it becomes extremely unlikely that he would deliberately revise his model. If he did not revise his model, vestiges of it, at least, must be preserved in his play. If his play preserves his model, and if he pirated The Shrew, it is logical to assume that The Shrew once contained the subplot, interludes, and epilogue preserved in A Shrew, or at least ones very similar. This theory accounts for the variations between A Shrew and The Shrew. The fact that the taming plot is almost exactly parallel in both plays and

that almost all the verbal parallels occur in the taming plot supports the theory that Shakespeare did not revise the taming plot, except perhaps to characterize Kate and Petruchio more fully.

Gray believes that an actor pirated the play; however, since he does not support the theory that the subplot was revised, he is forced to account for the variations in the subplots by hypothesizing that the actor was not present on stage during the scenes of the subplot, indeed was not even called when it was rehearsed.²⁰⁵ But it seems clear that even an actor who did not have a role in the subplot would be aware of its basic structure and could reproduce its pattern more closely. In addition, Gray calls attention to the fact that twenty-three lines in the subplot of A Shrew correspond to lines in the subplot of The Shrew.²⁰⁶ If an actor were so completely unfamiliar with the subplot as to be unable to reproduce its structure, it is unlikely that he could reproduce twenty-three lines. It seems more likely that he reproduced the plot faithfully and that the twenty-three lines which parallel lines in The Shrew were in the early form of the play and retained when Shakespeare revised the subplot. Nevertheless, Gray's theory that an actor pirated the play seems, at this time, to be the most probable

²⁰⁵Gray, p. 328.

²⁰⁶Gray, p. 329.

conclusion. Gray and Duthie have both pointed out that passages in A Shrew seem to be mixtures of phrases and words transferred from different parts of The Shrew, a characteristic that distinguishes a bad quarto that is a memorial reconstruction, probably undertaken by one of Pembroke's Men.

When Pembroke's Men returned to London in August, 1593, Henslowe explains that they "were fain to pawn their apparel for their charge."²⁰⁷ Apparently they tried to recover some of their losses by selling a number of plays to Henslowe. In such desperate straits, what would have prevented them, or at least one of them, from reconstructing a play, either for acting, for sale to the publishers, or for both purposes? Pembroke's may have attempted another tour, or they may have tried to recover a part of their losses by performing during the Christmas season of 1593-94 when the theatres were briefly reopened. However, it is doubtful that they possessed enough resources to attempt another tour, and, since their last one was so unsuccessful, another one may well have appeared to be a foolish business venture. They may have performed at Christmas, and A Shrew may have been acted at this time. The title pages of the 1594 and 1596 quartos state that the play was performed by Pembroke's.

²⁰⁷ Adams, p. 187.

However, these words may refer to the Shakespearean version and not necessarily to the play which appears in the quarto. It is, indeed, only conjecture whether or not Pembroke's ever performed the quarto version. It may have been reconstructed simply for sale to the publishers in order to recover part of Pembroke's financial losses.

It does seem most probable that an actor, or actors, reconstructed A Shrew. Not only does the internal evidence in the text indicate memorial reconstruction, but, considering their financial state of affairs, Pembroke's probably could not have afforded to hire a playwright. In addition, only an actor would have been familiar enough with the play to remember so many specific words and phrases, even though he was unable to reconstruct their original context accurately.

It may have been the publication of A Shrew which led Shakespeare to revise the subplot. Scholars have suggested that he revised it to emphasize the theme of "supposes," or appearance and reality, a sound conclusion that cannot be overlooked. On the other hand, he may also have revised it in order to distinguish it from the quarto then in circulation. For this same reason, he may have revised the title. Finally, aesthetic and theatrical considerations probably led him to drop Sly after the first scene.

Admittedly, this is conjectural history based, however, on a thorough examination of the relevant material. On the

basis of my research I conclude that A Shrew imperfectly preserves an early version of The Shrew which Shakespeare later revised, creating the play now preserved in the Folio.

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