

‘THE NEW (OLD) PLAY’:
Q1 *HAMLET* AND THE TEXTS AROUND PERFORMANCE,
1980-2015

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PhD Thesis

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DECLARATION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own.

Scott Shepherd

ABSTRACT

This thesis argues that from 1980 to 2015 the First Quarto of *Hamlet* had an increasingly significant influence on the texts prepared for and associated with performance. Directors, I argue, approach Q1 the text in a variety of ways, from complete rejection, through the seemingly accidental inclusion of lines and words which echo Q1, all the way to the adoption of large sections of the text and performance of the text in its own right. As the period develops, there is a perceptible increase in the frequency and variety of the ways directors use the First Quarto in text for performance.

Since its rediscovery in 1823, scholars have debated the origins of the text, arguing variously that it is a first draft, a memorial reconstruction, a 'noted' text, a garbled version, and a pirated copy. Few academics have investigated how Q1 influences the texts prepared for and associated with performance, however; such texts as promptbooks, programmes and reviews. Using a body of primary evidence gathered from extensive archival investigation, as well as interviews and secondary research, this thesis explores in detail the ways Q1 influenced such texts in London and Stratford between 1980 and 2015. During the 1980s, Q1's impact was limited mainly to a small selection of theatrical tropes, and the use of lines was almost non-existent. As the twentieth century drew to a close, numerous academics questioned the critical foundations on which Q1's rejection was based. This academic revisionism led to an increased public profile for Q1, culminating in 2006 with the Arden3's publication of the three-text *Hamlet* edition which put Q1 on a par – or nearly so – with the other two texts. In parallel with the text's increased profile, texts for performance started taking on more and more aspects derived from Q1, so that by 2015, Q1 played a far more significant role than it had in 1980. The First Quarto was by no means 'reformed' by the end

of the period, to use Kathleen Irace's terminology, but it becomes clear that Q1 takes a more significant role informing and influencing the texts around performance of *Hamlet*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Over the past four years I have received so much care and support from so many people. My first thanks must go of course to my supervisor Dr Deana Rankin for the patience and wisdom with which she has guided me through this quest. Her brilliant insights and challenges have spurred me on to create a work far better than I could have hoped to achieve without her, and her advice on my thesis has been second to none. My advisor Dr Christie Carson has likewise provided thought-provoking and challenging feedback, for which I am grateful. Thanks also to my examiners Professor Emma Smith and Professor Elizabeth Schafer for the stimulating and insightful questions and feedback.

Immense thanks must go to those theatre professionals who have been so generous with their time and knowledge. Directors Imogen Bond, John Caird, Jonathan Holloway, Lyndsey Turner and Sam Walters were all kind enough to give me interviews lasting over an hour, asking for nothing in return. Similarly, actor Beruce Khan of the Globe Theatre spent an hour in the beautiful surroundings of Bangalore, India sharing his thoughts on the world tour upon which he was then embarked. I can only apologise to him that the file holding this interview was corrupted. The information these interviews provided me with was invaluable for my research and if I seem to criticise any of the interviewees, I wish to make clear that my high regard for and gratitude to all of them far outweighs any disagreements.

Thanks also to Phil Oh and Joy Park of the Alpha Study Centre, who have provided great support along the way, and without whom I would have struggled to fund my studies. There have also been countless librarians, archivists and theatre workers who have provided me with help over the course of my research, particularly in my search for lost or old records and texts; my thanks to all of them.

Lastly, special thanks to my (very big) close family, to whom this thesis is dedicated: my parents Jeff and Paula; my siblings (and sibling-in-law) Joel, Isobel, Jess, Carrie, Joshua and Amanda; and lastly my nephew Samuel and of course my nieces Eden and Joy, both of whom were born during the time it took me to research and write this thesis. Without the love and support of all my family, there is no way this work would have been completed. Extra thanks go to all those members of the family old enough to read for proofreading my work, especially to my mum, who, incredibly, read the whole thesis. Now that is true love.

A NOTE ON TEXTS AND ABBREVIATIONS

All quotations from *Hamlet* are taken from Arden3 unless otherwise stated. When citing the text itself, I provide the citation in the body of my writing, either in prose or parenthetically. Citations of editorial matter from editions of *Hamlet* will be provided in footnotes. In all footnotes referring to editions of *Hamlet*, I provide the first reference in full and thereafter include only the name of the editor, title and, if relevant, volume. I retain the layout and capitalisation of promptbooks.

In the body of my thesis I use the terms ‘Q1’ and ‘First Quarto’ interchangeably to refer to the text contained in the 1603 quarto. When I refer without further qualification to ‘Q1’ or ‘First Quarto’, I am referring to *Hamlet*; other editions of Shakespeare plays are referred to in full. I similarly use the terms ‘Second Quarto’ and ‘Q2’ to refer to the text contained in the 1604-5 volume; and ‘Folio’ or ‘F’ to refer to the *Hamlet* text contained in the 1623 folio edited by Hemmings and Condell. This is different in citations: as per the abbreviation list below, I use the terms Q1, Q2 and F *in references* to refer to the Arden3 edition of the three texts.

In common with many scholars writing on the First Quarto of *Hamlet*, I tend to avoid the term ‘bad quarto’ or even “‘bad” quarto’, though I do use the term when discussing its history or referring to the perceptions of others.

Abbreviations

Arden2 Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet*, ed. by Harold Jenkins (London: Arden Shakespeare, 1982)

- Arden3 Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet*, ed. by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, 2 vols (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006)
- Cambridge Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet*, ed. by Philip Edwards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985)
- F Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet* (Folio text), ed. by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, 2 vols (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006), vol 2, pp. 173-360
- NT National Theatre
- Oxford Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet*, ed. by George Hibbard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987)
- Penguin Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet*, ed. by T. J. B. Spencer (London: Penguin Books, 1980)
- RSC Royal Shakespeare Company
- Q1 Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet* (First Quarto text), ed. by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, 2 vols (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006), vol 2, pp. 41-172
- Q2 Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet* (Second Quarto text), ed. by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, 2 vols (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006), vol 1

CHAPTER ONE

WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT *HAMLET*

No literary subject in recent years has aroused more interest and speculation than the origin and purpose of the First Quarto of *Hamlet*.

—Gertrude Southwick Kingsland, 1923¹

‘Stand! Who is that?’ said John Hudson one March evening in 1985, in a room above a pub in Richmond-upon-Thames. He was speaking the opening lines of the First Quarto *Hamlet* as the ‘1st Sentinel’ in Sam Walters’s production at the Orange Tree Theatre; this was the first professional performance of Q1 *Hamlet* in London since 1933, though, as will be explored, it was questioned whether the production was in fact ‘a perfect test’ of the First Quarto.² The newspaper reviews were overwhelmingly positive, and indeed the Orange Tree production has become something of a seminal historical event, a checklist production for those writing about Q1 in performance.³ Perhaps part of the impact of Walters’s production is attributable to its timing: it coincided with the beginnings of what became serious challenges to the academic supremacy of the New Bibliography. The production certainly contributed to the trend towards a greater interest in Q1, sparking a number of debates about authenticity and performance, and featuring in a book dedicated to the First Quarto.⁴

While the Orange Tree *Hamlet* fuelled contemporary editorial considerations of Q1’s textual origins, the production itself derives from a different tradition. The 1985 production

¹ Gertrude Southwick Kingsland, *The first quarto of ‘Hamlet’ in the light of the stage* (Oshkosh: Castle-Pierce, 1923), p. v.

² Nicholas Shrimpton, ‘Shakespeare Performances in London and Stratford-Upon-Avon 1984-5’, *Shakespeare Survey* 39 (1986), 191-206, p. 195.

³ While there have been other productions of Q1 in the UK both before and since, the Orange Tree *Hamlet* is probably the best-known, at least as far as academic response is concerned.

⁴ Thomas Clayton, *The Hamlet First Published (Q1, 1603): Origins, Form, Intertextualities* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992).

was actually Walters's second. Inspired by his reading of Robert Speaight's 1954 biography of the Victorian William Poel, Walters had directed Q1 while still a student at the Webber-Douglas drama school in the 1960s, presumably a formative production both for Walters and also for the other aspiring performers and directors in the audience.⁵ Speaight writes of Poel's career and his long campaign to bring contemporary theatrical practice closer to Shakespeare's original stagecraft. Poel censured what he saw as the infidelity of his Victorian contemporaries who, with their 'endless experiments, mutilations, and profitless discussions', were 'so opposed to any belief in the superiority of past methods of acting Shakespeare over modern ones, as to effectually bar any serious inquiry' into Shakespeare's original staging practices.⁶ As part of his campaign Poel arranged the first ever known performance of the *Hamlet* First Quarto in 1881. With amateur actors and a bare stage, this landmark production was by all accounts a singularly bad job.⁷ Even Poel's usually sympathetic biographer Speaight states euphemistically that '[w]e have no reason to suppose that the performance was even a tolerably good one'.⁸ While this is in sharp contrast to the critical reception of Walters's production, and notwithstanding the numerous differences between Walters and Poel, both directors share the desire to perform *Hamlet* in a way they deemed to be 'authentic'.⁹

Indeed, throughout the stage history of Q1, directors of the text have had a propensity to search for some kind of authenticity, for what Shakespeare 'really meant' for the play. The Ben Greet Players were the most prolific performers of Q1 in the early twentieth century,

⁵ Sam Walters, Interview with the author (London, 10 November 2014). See Robert Speaight, *William Poel and the Elizabethan Revival* (London: William Heinemann, 1954).

⁶ William Poel, *Shakespeare in the Theatre* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1913), pp. 18, 4.

⁷ For a summary of Poel's reviews, see William Shakespeare, *The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmark*, ed. by Graham Holderness and Bryan Loughrey (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), pp. 17-18 and Marvin Rosenberg, 'The First Modern English Staging of *Hamlet* Q1', in *The Hamlet First Published (Q1, 1603): Origins, Form, Intertextualities*, ed. by Thomas Clayton (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992), pp. 241-248.

⁸ Speaight, *William Poel*, p. 50.

⁹ Walters, Interview with the author.

staging the text in both the UK and the USA. Like Poel and Walters, Greet was preoccupied with presenting ‘Shakespeare’s plays as Shakespeare wrote them.’¹⁰ The idea of ‘authentic’ Shakespeare encompasses a series of notions which are at least potentially in conflict with each other, but the search for authenticity is ultimately a striving for the performance of Shakespeare’s plays in a way that somehow recreates the conditions of his time. For some this means creating an approximation of the physical location or conditions, most famously embodied by the modern Globe Theatre in London. This tendency towards some form of ‘Original Practices’ may go some way towards explaining why a large proportion of performances of Q1 have been, as Thompson and Taylor note, ‘academic’ in nature.¹¹ Others see authenticity as the use of the exact words that were spoken on stage during Shakespeare’s lifetime, or the exact words that he wrote. In these cases, complicating factors such as textual multiplicity are not necessarily taken into account – rather, the authentic is largely an editorial construction based on a combination of historical fact and educated speculation. At its best, the search for authenticity accepts its limitations; the Globe for example describes its building as a ‘best guess’ based on what records are available.¹² At its worst, authenticity can simply be a guise for imputing one’s own preferences onto a notional Shakespeare.

Though the 1823 rediscovery of the First Quarto is the usual starting point for discussions of Q1, Poel’s own production did not come about as a direct result of this rediscovery. Rather it was made possible by the second copy to be found, a volume which resurfaced in Dublin in 1856 and contained the final leaf that the text found in the 1820s lacked.¹³ The Dublin copy inspired a series of reprints, including William Griggs’s 1880

¹⁰ ‘The Ben Greet Players’, *The Daily Illini*, 14 March 1906, p. 1 <<http://idnc.library.illinois.edu/cgi-bin/illinois?a=d&d=DIL19060314.2.8#>> [accessed 3 May 2016].

¹¹ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, 2 vols (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006), pp. 14-16.

¹² ‘Rebuilding the Globe’, <<http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/about-us/history-of-the-globe/rebuilding-the-globe>> [accessed 21 July 2017].

¹³ The Griggs facsimile was in fact based on the Devonshire copy – i.e. the text rediscovered in 1823 – but only came about because the copy found in 1856 allowed editors to combine the two texts and recreate a full Q1. This period is dealt with in more detail below.

facsimile, which in turn inspired Poel's production. The trajectory from the Dublin rediscovery of Q1 to the Orange Tree production, then, went from the physical 1603 quarto through a facsimile edition to a performance, then via a biography to another performance, in a complex intertwining of literary and theatrical production which continues to this day. The First Quarto and the questions surrounding it clearly provide a productive nexus both for scholars studying the history of the book and for those studying performance history. The trajectory that started in a Dublin bookseller's shop and went through Poel's experiments and Speaight's biography did not end at the Orange Tree: the direct influence of Walters's production can be traced in two of the first three London stagings of Q1 in the twenty-first century. Jonathan Holloway had seen the Orange Tree production in 1985 and later put on the First Quarto in 1999-2000 as Artistic Director of the Red Shift theatre company. Imogen Bond had been a trainee director under Walters at the Orange Tree in 2006. During that time Walters mentioned to Bond the existence of Q1, in a conversation that would lead to Bond eventually directing the text in 2011.¹⁴

Sam Walters's production, then, was a key catalyst in a larger network of textual and performative events which fed into each other and often involved simple fortuitous encounters with books or performances that in turn led to new productions. Of course, performance of the First Quarto is not limited to straightforward productions such as Walters's or Holloway's or Poel's, whereby the director, actors and audience are all aware that they have come to see Q1, that is to say an alternative version, discrete from the iconic Shakespearean play known as *Hamlet*. Just as the protagonists in Raymond Carver's celebrated short story 'What We Talk About When We Talk About Love' find as they discuss love, what we mean by *Hamlet* is not straightforward: the text as printed or performed is usually a conflation of the versions published in the 1604/5 Second Quarto (Q2) and the

¹⁴ Imogen Bond, Interview with the author (London, 10 October 2014).

1623 Folio (F), with varied emphasis on one text or the other.¹⁵ The combination has led to a notional, perceptual ‘*Hamlet*’ which is by its very nature plastic.

The performance history of the iconographic *Hamlet* (or rather *Hamlets*) has been the subject of numerous studies, and it has been noted that on occasion these performances include elements or inflections of the First Quarto; Robert Hapgood, for example, notes a number of ways Q1’s unique structure and characterisation has had an impact on performance.¹⁶ Yet while the First Quarto’s origins have been extensively debated, and there have been numerous studies on the performance history of *Hamlet*, there has been little work centred specifically on Q1’s role within that history. Indeed, Zachary Lesser’s recent study is the only book-length investigation of the topic.¹⁷ Performance is a live, moveable, changing spectacle, dependent on physical spaces, bodies and voices, any element of which can change from day to day. Yet surrounding modern production there is also a plethora of textual traces: promptbooks, theatre programmes, reviews. Indeed, much of what survives from historical performances is passed down through these texts – the opening sentence of this thesis makes a claim about a specific historical performance based solely on textual evidence. This thesis does not directly study performance itself; rather it examines the texts that inform and surround performance of *Hamlet*. Bringing history of the book and textual studies into conversation with questions of performance practice, it asks how the First Quarto shapes the way a director prepares a promptbook or a note in the theatre programme, and how professional reviewers respond to such textual interventions.

¹⁵ Raymond Carver, *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love: Stories* (New York: Knopf, 1981).

¹⁶ *Shakespeare in Production: Hamlet*, ed. by Robert Hapgood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). See also, for example, Terri Bourus, ‘The First Quarto of *Hamlet* in Film: The Revenge Tragedies of Tony Richardson and Franco Zeffirelli’, *EnterText*, 1, 2 (2001), 180-191 <<http://www.brunel.ac.uk/arts/research/entertext/issues/entertext-14.3>> [accessed 11 November 2013].

¹⁷ Zachary Lesser, *Hamlet After Q1: An Uncanny History of the Shakespearean Text* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015).

Approaching the Archive

In this thesis, then, I examine the impact of this most vexed Shakespeare text, Q1 *Hamlet*, on the texts which trace the journey to and reception of performance. To do so I take a series of seventeen case studies of productions from John Barton's 1980 RSC production to Lyndsey Turner's 2015 Barbican *Hamlet*, including performances both of Q1 *Hamlet* and of the notional, iconographic '*Hamlet*'.¹⁸ This thesis focuses on theatre texts; screenplays, while obviously sharing a number of similarities with prompt copy, follow separate conventions and belong to a distinct tradition. The disadvantages of undertaking this separate strand of study would outweigh the benefits: numerous distracting questions about the differences between a text for stage and one for film would inevitably arise and threaten to shift the focus of the thesis away from the question of the First Quarto's influence. Indeed, within this timeframe, the quantity of solely theatrical performances of *Hamlet* is still far too large to seek to provide a comprehensive study; the thesis therefore focuses on the two locations of Stratford and London. Though more limited in its audience reach than film, theatrical Shakespeare performance in London and Stratford is nonetheless globally prominent: productions in these two locations often involve the UK's most acclaimed theatre-makers and are in turn watched by numerous other members of the larger community of those studying, staging and enjoying Shakespeare. They thus exert a disproportionately large influence on the theatre culture of the country.

The thesis draws primarily on a selection of productions by the RSC, the National Theatre and the Globe. It further draws on a number of smaller-scale and main house productions in other London theatres. The RSC and the National Theatre receive significant government funding and are known globally as leading Shakespeare-producers; they present

¹⁸ An index of the case studies with date, location, director and lead actor is provided in Appendix A.

Shakespeare primarily to and for his own nation. Despite not receiving government subsidy, the Globe Theatre has also achieved national and international prominence on a par with the RSC and NT in the decades since its opening. Of course, the history and tradition of each theatre has a significant impact on the approach a director will take, so the thesis also seeks to examine in-house evolution over the period. I study every NT mainstage *Hamlet* production since the 1980s and both of the Globe's mainstage in-house productions.¹⁹ The thesis examines four RSC *Hamlets* in total, two each in Chapter Two and Chapter Four.²⁰ In selecting these RSC productions I sought to focus on main house productions by the Artistic Director which further traded on celebrity actors, first because such productions aim to make a significant national and international statement about the cultural aspirations of the RSC, and secondly because they indicate how the RSC seeks to be in conversation, perhaps competition, with a number of commercial celebrity-led West End productions.

Other commercial London theatres, of course, also regularly put on influential productions of *Hamlet*, usually with star actors, drawing large audiences and influencing public perceptions and critical debates about the play: I consider two such productions in the thesis. While performances of *Hamlet* in the big theatres of London and Stratford carry significant cultural weight, fringe theatres, of course, often present innovative productions; the thesis therefore also includes fringe productions, several of which use texts based wholly on the First Quarto. The claim on Q1's title-page to represent the text as performed at 'the two universities of Cambridge and Oxford', along with its status as an academic curiosity, means that the text seems particularly suited to university and student productions. The inclusion of such work in this thesis would certainly be informative; particularly useful would

¹⁹ I exclude special events or *Hamlet* productions staged by other companies. One such example is the Lithuanian *Hamlet*, which came as part of the Globe to Globe 2012 series within London's cultural Olympiad, whereby Shakespeare's 37 plays were performed in 37 different languages. See *Shakespeare Beyond English: A Global Experiment*, ed. by Susan Bennett and Christie Carson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

²⁰ Within the period the RSC produced substantially more *Hamlet* performances, seven compared to two at the Globe and three at the National.

be Sam Walters's student staging of Q1 that preceded his professional Orange Tree production. Unfortunately, as with many amateur productions, insufficient primary records survive of university performance to allow for the kind of in-depth study of the text that this thesis conducts, and so I have excluded student and amateur productions from the scope of my study.

While of course any theatrical production is by its nature a collaboration, the director is, at least theoretically, the recognised artistic authority – particularly with regards to textual issues. There is inevitably a variety of approaches taken by the different companies and teams studied, and I do not seek to ascribe every textual change in a given production to the direct choice of the director; other members of a production team obviously have input, particularly key actors and in some cases dramaturgs. Yet there is very rarely promptbook evidence of any given individual's role other than the director. Indeed, it emerges that is the director's prerogative, responsibility even, to edit the text. Individual actors and team-members may contribute, but whether fairly or not, the responsibility for the text – as with the success or failure of a production – is ultimately the director's. I therefore focus in this thesis on the director at the exclusion of others in the creative team – not because they do not contribute, but because the director as head of the team holds the ultimate responsibility for establishing many of the texts prepared for a production.

The period under consideration, 1980-2015, saw substantial shifts in both critical and theatrical approaches to the First Quarto, but given that I approach the topic from a textual angle, I prioritise textual concerns, rather than attempting to situate my work within the longer performance history of *Hamlet*. In 1980, New Bibliography was at its height, and acquiring a copy of Q1 *Hamlet* in the UK was difficult, but by 2015 the text was, as Sam Walters puts it, 'all over the bloody place'.²¹ Indeed, by 2015 the foundational precepts of

²¹ Walters, Interview with author.

editing laid down by Greg, Pollard and their followers had been fiercely challenged, though by no means universally rejected. In 2006 Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor's three-text Arden³ edition of *Hamlet* was published, heralding a new phase in the 'unediting' movement, or perhaps its end; Zachary Lesser defines it as 'the simultaneous culmination and exhaustion of the New Textualism'.²² This scholarly movement was only in its very earliest stages in the 1980s. Indeed, it might well be argued that the 'simultaneous culmination and exhaustion' of New Bibliography came in the form of the four seminal editions of *Hamlet* that were published in that decade, editions which continued to shape promptbooks throughout the period considered in this thesis.

In fact, nine of the seventeen productions studied in this thesis started with one of these four editions as a base text, which was then edited by the director.²³ The editing process varied from director to director. Some, particularly at the beginning of the period, simply used annotated photocopies of a published edition. Two attempted to use the text as printed and made few textual emendations of any kind; on the other end of the spectrum, some directors consciously thought of themselves as editors, creating texts far removed from the editions with which they started. In each case study I followed the same method of textual analysis as far as possible, though occasionally an unusual form of promptbook required a different approach. For each production I first examined the promptbook to establish the edition on which the text was based. This was in some cases immediately obvious, as in the 1989 RSC production, which used a photocopy of the Penguin text with emendations written on in pen. In other instances it was much harder to establish which edition was the base: Greg Doran's 2008 RSC text in particular was extensively edited and therefore much harder to identify. Features such as stage directions were often good mechanisms for identifying the

²² Lesser, *Hamlet After Q1*, p. 213. 'New Textualism' is the term Lesser and others use for the school of that which revisits and revises the work of the New Bibliographers.

²³ Of the remaining eight, four were First Quarto productions so could not start with one of these texts; the other four used online editions as their base texts. See Appendix A.

base editions, and all promptbooks except Doran's provided enough evidence for a positive identification.²⁴

After establishing the base edition, I collated the promptbook with its source and noted each divergence. This process was designed to reveal moments where the director or someone else in the production team made a conscious decision to employ the words or structure of the First Quarto. Though the majority of promptbooks were printed texts, the situation was sometimes complicated by the use by some theatre companies of online texts. In one instance the Factory Theatre used an exclusively online text, posting it on a forum for actors to access and rehearse alone.²⁵ The company highlighted cuts in bright yellow on the digital document, thereby making it by far the easiest text in which to identify emendations. Out of the thirteen non-Q1 productions, nine involved the comparison of a promptbook with a printed edition. The inclusion of some Q1-derived performance tropes is not necessarily recorded in the promptbook; a production's use of stage directions or costumes – such as Hamlet's leap into the grave or the ghost's nightgown – can indicate the influence of the First Quarto, but most promptbooks would give little or no indication of these aspects.²⁶ Access to a recording of the performance can therefore add valuable insights so where possible, recordings of performances were also taken into account.

Directors often use theatre programmes to defend their decisions for a production; and when a radical interpretation of the play is presented, a director often provides or commissions a particularly robust defence. The theatre programme is often a key indicator of how a director seeks to present textual decisions: in some programmes the text is foregrounded; elsewhere it is not mentioned at all. While programmes may only be read by a

²⁴ I was unable to locate a copy of the Red Shift Q1 promptbook. Imogen Bond of the White Bear simply used an unedited Arden3 volume for her production, which I was able to examine but which contained no amendments. Lyndsey Turner explained her process for creating the text for her 2015 Barbican production.

²⁵ See Chapter Four.

²⁶ Though promptbooks do often contain stage directions, these are not always followed, and are certainly never exhaustive.

small proportion of the audience, they provide directors with an opportunity to justify their work, and are often used to do so. Programmes demonstrate not only how a director seeks to position the production, but also what information about the early texts of *Hamlet* is provided or withheld; additionally, the kind of language a programme uses when discussing the early texts is in many cases an indicator of the wider approach of the production. Wherever possible, therefore, I consider as primary evidence the programme's presentation of a production's text.

Reviews also offer a valuable body of evidence for reception of the productions discussed. For all of the major productions there were numerous professional reviews in local, national and international papers. As Paul Prescott demonstrates, the form and role of a newspaper review has been evolving since at least the eighteenth century.²⁷ Clearly, the role continues to develop; indeed, Prescott identifies the twenty years leading to the new millennium as a period in which 'theatre criticism had suffered a loss of prestige within newspaper culture.'²⁸ The practicalities and requirements of a reviewer's job – a negotiation of various political, demographic, financial and space pressures within a limited timeframe – often necessitate the exclusion of textual matters. Yet, given these myriad competing requirements, references to the text of *Hamlet* appear with surprising frequency. These references often serve to demonstrate a wider point that a particular critic is making; but underlying any claim there is a series of critical assumptions regarding a director's role in editing the text of *Hamlet*. It is noteworthy that, from the mid-2000s onwards, the number of amateur, online reviews grew exponentially, clustering in particular around such recent high-profile celebrity productions as the RSC 2008 *Hamlet* with David Tennant and Patrick Stewart directed by Greg Doran, and of course Benedict Cumberbatch's 2015 Barbican

²⁷ Paul Prescott, *Reviewing Shakespeare: Journalism and Performance from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

performance directed by Lyndsey Turner. I have included scholarly reviews when they are pertinent to the production, but I focus on newspaper reviews in order to highlight the kinds of response to Q1 that are suitable to a broader general readership. While, therefore, I draw in limited cases on reviews in *Shakespeare Survey*, my analysis focuses primarily on professional reviews which appeared in national and local newspapers, usually held in the (*London*) *Theatre Record* or in the production files of theatre archives. These provide both informed and immediate opinion which, unlike select academic journals, are disseminated to a broad general readership.

The thesis aims to explore how approaches to Q1 change over the period, rather than looking in detail at the specific trajectories of individual directors' careers. My work therefore prioritises a director's approach to *Hamlet* in each specific case study, avoiding potentially distracting attempts to contrast the work with the rest of that particular director's oeuvre. Initially, it was my intention to interview all seventeen directors of the case studies discussed in the thesis. In the end this proved impossible but I was fortunate enough to interview five key figures: John Caird, Jonathan Holloway, Imogen Bond, Sam Walters and Lyndsey Turner.²⁹ These interviews were conducted at very different points relative to each director's production. Walters, for example, was speaking almost thirty years after his 1985 Orange Tree *Hamlet*, whereas Lyndsey Turner was gracious enough to speak to me nearly a year before her 2015 production opened, before most of the parts were even cast. Though the interviews attempted to elicit similar kinds of information from the subjects, they were conducted as free-form conversations, not questionnaires. The evidence they provide thus offers a supplement to the core body of primary evidence discussed in this thesis.³⁰ Clearly this has a potential methodological impact. Indeed, there are other methodological

²⁹ I also interviewed Beruce Khan of the Globe Theatre's touring company, but unfortunately the file was corrupted before I was able to back it up, resulting in the loss of the interview.

³⁰ See Appendix B for extracts from these interviews.

implications to the availability of primary material. I was able to watch live or recorded performances of all the case studies from 2000 onwards, with the exceptions of the Q1 staged reading at the Globe and the White Bear Q1 production; the Globe archives do, however, contain an audio recording of the staged reading. I was unable to locate recordings of any of the case studies from the 1980s. There is inevitably less primary material to draw on for this period than for the more recent sections. Yet negating this issue is that fact that the promptbook is my primary subject of examination for each case study. The thesis examines the texts around productions, so while an interview or access to a performance is useful and informative, it is not vital for my study.

The First Quarto from 1825 to 1980: A Pre-History

Perceptions of the First Quarto underwent a series of changes from the announcement of its rediscovery in 1825 up to the beginning of the period studied, 1980. Much of Q1's early history emerged through a series of footnotes, a fact which literalises the notion of Q1 as a relegated text. Indeed, the man who rediscovered the text, Henry Bunbury, relegates the account of the rediscovery to a footnote to his 1838 edited collection of Thomas Hanmer's letters.³¹ In his much-quoted digression from a discussion of Hanmer's life and work, Bunbury tells his readers of the 'edition of 1603, the only copy of which, known to be in existence, was found by me in a closet at Barton, 1823', and proceeds to describe, for 'the satisfaction of bibliographers,' the contents of the 'small quarto, barbarously cropped, and very ill bound'.³² Thus Q1's re-emergence into the nineteenth century was narrated fifteen years after the event, and revealed only to those dedicated readers who reached page eighty of

³¹ The library in which the copy of Q1 was found had belonged to Hanmer and was inherited by Bunbury.

³² Henry Bunbury, *The Correspondence of Sir Thomas Hanmer* (London: Edward Moxon, 1838), p. 80.

Thomas Hanmer's memoirs. From the moment of the text's rediscovery, the critical reception of the First Quarto has been concerned mostly with questions of origins, authority and authenticity. Kathleen Irace, Laurie Maguire, Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, Terri Bourus, Gabriel Egan and Zachary Lesser all discuss aspects of the First Quarto's history, but in what follows I present a wider survey of the whole period, exploring how changing critical beliefs about the text's origins informed wider perceptions throughout the period.³³

The fact of the First Quarto's existence was first announced in January 1825 in the pages of *The Literary Gazette*, where the editors famously refer to 'the new (old) Play'.³⁴ The article details a number of bibliographical aspects of the 'very singular' edition, but is more concerned with 'various new readings, of infinite interest; sentiments expressed, which greatly alter several of the characters; and many minor points which are extremely curious.'³⁵ These differences give rise to uncertainty ('we hardly know what to infer') and questions about the text's origins.³⁶ Possibly, the editors suggest, 'some piratical bookseller obtained a garbled copy of *Hamlet*, and published it'; the omissions, moreover, 'lead strongly to confirm the suspicion, that the play was picked out by hearing it performed, and getting speeches and parts from some of the actors'.³⁷ Notably absent from the article is the possibility that Q1 is an early draft. The editors, however, declare that they 'will leave the discussion of [the text's origins] to others', and indeed many 'others' did – and continue to – discuss exactly that.³⁸

³³ See Gabriel Egan, *The Struggle for Shakespeare's Text: Twentieth-Century Editorial Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Kathleen O. Irace, *Reforming the 'Bad' Quartos: Performance and Provenance of Six Shakespearean First Editions* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1994); Laurie Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); William Shakespeare, *Hamlet: Shakespeare in Performance*, ed. by Terri Bourus (London: Methuen Drama, 2007); Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet*; and Lesser, *Hamlet After Q1*.

³⁴ 'Hamlet: Edition of 1603', *The London Literary Gazette and Journal of Belles Lettres*, 415-467 (1825), 58-59, p. 58.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

A few months after this announcement, Payne and Foss published a facsimile of the copy, which had by then been acquired by the Duke of Devonshire.³⁹ This volume was the first presentation of Q1 to the world since its rediscovery, and its brief preface is worth quoting in full:

The present Edition of Hamlet is an accurate reprint from the only known copy of this Tragedy as originally written by Shakespeare, which he afterwards altered and enlarged. It is given to the world under the impression of rendering an acceptable service to literature. Some variations in the plot, as compared with the received Text will be perceived; but its chief value consists in bringing to light several lines of great beauty subsequently omitted, and in many new readings of passages which have been the subject of much controversy among the critics. The typographical errors and even negligent omissions in the Text are common to all the Editions published during the life time of Shakespeare, who, it is believed, never superintended the publication of any of his works, excepting the Poems of Venus and Adonis, and Tarquin and Lucrece.

The last leaf is wanting; but as the Play is perfect to the death of Hamlet, the loss is of comparatively small importance.⁴⁰

The introduction therefore makes two important claims about the value of Q1 which were largely ignored by many of the subsequent critics and commentators. The first is that the text brings ‘to light several lines of great beauty subsequently omitted,’ and secondly that ‘many new readings’ will help illuminate ‘passages which have been the subject of much controversy among the critics.’⁴¹ During the nineteenth century some critics did indeed write

³⁹ William Shakespeare, *The First Edition of the Tragedy of Hamlet* (London: Payne and Foss, 1825). The facsimile itself was reprinted the same year in Leipzig: William Shakespeare, *The First Edition of the Tragedy of Hamlet* (Leipsic: Ernst Fleischer, 1825).

⁴⁰ *The First Edition of the Tragedy of Hamlet*, n.p.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

about the ways Q1 informed readings of the other texts of *Hamlet*. As Zacchary Lesser demonstrates over a century later, the First Quarto informed interpretations of *Hamlet* from the moment of its discovery; many of these Q1-inflected readings, unconscious or at least unaccredited, survive to the present day.⁴²

This first encounter with the newly rediscovered Q1, then, mediates the reader's expectations. The text, we are to understand, is a first draft which enriches the understanding of *Hamlet*; it may contain 'typographical errors' but this is in common with other Shakespearean texts. The edition humbly offered itself in the hope that it rendered 'an acceptable service to literature'.⁴³ In fact, as will be explored below, all three of these notions (that the text is a first draft, that it is only averagely textually corrupt, that it is in some way valuable) were fiercely challenged during the nineteenth century; indeed, during much of the twentieth it was generally accepted that these assertions were wrong. The questions of origin and authenticity which frame much modern debate about Q1 can be traced to the critical reaction to the first republication: since 1825 critics have sought to understand what the First Quarto is. Charles Simmons, in one of the earliest reactions to Q1's reprinting, accepts and repeats Foss and Payne's statement: it is 'far more remote from perfection' than Q2, and 'obviously appears to have been printed from the rude draught of the drama, as it was sketched by the Poet from the first suggestions of his mind.'⁴⁴ Simmons's comment, of course, once again, comes in the form of a footnote, as does Thomas Caldecott's more famous phrasing of the same notion, where he claims that the 'Publication' is 'a valuable literary curiosity' 'exhibiting, in that which was afterwards wrought into a splendid drama,

⁴² Lesser, *Hamlet After Q1*.

⁴³ *The First Edition of the Tragedy of Hamlet*, n.p.

⁴⁴ Charles Simmons, 'Life of the Poet', in *The Dramatic Works of William Shakspeare* [sic], ed. by Samuel Weller Singer (Chiswick: Charles Whittingham, 1826), 1-91, p. 51. As Lesser notes, Singer's edition is the first to adopt Q1's reading of 'contrary' rather than 'country' in the play scene. Lesser, *Hamlet After Q1*, p. 106.

the first conception, and comparatively feeble expression, of a great mind.⁴⁵ Though some dissenters such as John P. Collier argued that the text was taken by shorthand, the most popular explanation of Q1 in the first half of the nineteenth century was that the text represented an early draft of the play.⁴⁶

Then in 1856 the Dublin bookseller C. W. W. Rooney bought a second copy of the First Quarto from an English student and travelled to London to sell it. As critics frequently remark, this second copy perfectly complements the first: the *Hamlet* Bunbury found contained the title page and was missing its last leaf while the Dublin copy had its last leaf intact and was missing the title page. The discovery of this second copy occasioned a new flurry of debate. For several weeks *The Athenaeum*'s 'Our Weekly Gossip' column was filled with accusations and counter-accusations, much of it based around the question of why the British Museum had failed to purchase the volume from Rooney.⁴⁷ Noticeable, however, was the shift in language regarding the text. For a while at least, the discourse shifted from the treatment of the text as an inferior version of Q2/F *Hamlet* towards hyperbolic praise of it as an artefact. The 20 September article which started much of the debate opens by stating that 'A literary treasure has turned up – no less than a second copy of the first edition of Hamlet – the quarto of 1603!'⁴⁸ The following week the Irish bookseller cried foul over 'this literary gem'; he, 'merely an Irish bookseller', had not been paid well for 'now much-prized dramatic treasure'.⁴⁹ The discussion continued when I. Winter Jones, the man who failed to buy the text for the British Museum, responded to Rooney's complaints simply by blaming Rooney himself.⁵⁰ John Collier also contributed to the debate with the mention of a (very likely

⁴⁵ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet, and As you like it: a specimen of an edition of Shakespeare*, ed. by Thomas Caldecott (London: William Nicol, 1832), p. vi.

⁴⁶ See 'The History of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark', in *Shakespeare's Library*, ed. by John Payne Collier, 2 vols (London: Thomas Rodd, 1843), I, p. v.

⁴⁷ 'Our Weekly Gossip', *The Athenaeum*, 1508 (1856), 1168-1169; C. W. W. Rooney, 'Our Weekly Gossip', *The Athenaeum*, 1509 (1856), 1191-1192.

⁴⁸ 'Our Weekly Gossip', *The Athenaeum*, 1508, p. 1168.

⁴⁹ Rooney, 'Our Weekly Gossip', *Athenaeum*, 1509, p. 1191. Emphasis in the original.

⁵⁰ I. Winter Jones, 'Our Weekly Gossip', *The Athenaeum*, 1510 (1856), 1221-1222.

fictitious) fragmentary copy of Q1 he had been offered for £10 in the mid-1840s.⁵¹ His piece reiterates his previous assertion that Q1 was taken down by stenography and concludes with a teasing reference to ‘the most irrefragable evidence’ of an earlier version of *The Taming of the Shrew* than was previously known to exist.⁵² The mild scandal over the British Museum’s failure to purchase Q1, along with Collier’s tantalising hints of other rediscovered Shakespeare texts aroused a feeling of excitement around the text and elicited a renewed interest in it.

A good example of this interest is Tycho Mommsen’s brief response in *The Athenaeum* early the next year.⁵³ In what is arguably the most significant contribution of the century, he puts forward fifteen pieces of evidence which he claims suggest that the first quartos of *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* are ‘no first sketches, as some have imagined, but mere misrepresentations of the genuine text.’⁵⁴ His fifth point proved most potent in the long term:

I apprehend that I discern two employed, one after the other, upon this ‘Hamlet,’— the one being probably that of an actor, who put down, from memory, a sketch of the original play, as it was acted, and who wrote very illegibly; the other that of a bad poet, most probably ‘a book-seller’s hack,’ who, without any personal intercourse with the writer of the notes, availed himself of them to make up this early copy of ‘Hamlet.’ Numerous mistakes of the ear fall to the share of the former contributor, whereas much more numerous misconceptions of the eye, and wrong out-piecings, are to be attributed to the latter. The compositor may have added to these blunderings.⁵⁵

⁵¹ J. Payne Collier, ‘The Edition of “Hamlet” in 1603’, *The Athenaeum*, 1510 (1856), 1220-1221.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 1221. Again, Collier’s ‘newly discovered’ text turned out to be nothing of the sort. For a full account of Collier’s likely fabrications see Arthur Freeman and Janet Ing Freeman, *John Payne Collier: Scholarship and Forgery in the Nineteenth Century*, 2 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

⁵³ Tycho Mommsen, “‘Hamlet,’ 1603; and ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ 1597”, *The Athenaeum*, 1528 (1857), 182.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Mommsen's suggestion caused no overnight sensation – it was over fifty years before Pollard and Greg took it up – but this brief, modest letter laid the foundations for the theory of memorial reconstruction which so dominated discourse about Q1 *Hamlet* in the twentieth century.

Now that the final sheet of Q1 had been found, it was for the first time possible to reproduce the text in its entirety. Accordingly, a number of editions followed: the first full reproduction of Q1 was a French translation which came in 1859, shortly before Josiah Allen printed an English edition with Q1 on the left-hand pages and Q2 on the right.⁵⁶ Thereafter it became common to print Q1 as an appendix of or supplement to Q2/F, as is notably the case in such landmark editions as William George Clark and William Aldis Wright's Cambridge edition, and Horace Howard Furness's *New Variorum*.⁵⁷ In the years following the 1856 rediscovery, critics debated the origin of the text in commentaries, prefaces and articles, without reaching any clear consensus. J. A. Furnivall's introduction to William Grigg's 1880 edition (which, as mentioned above, inspired William Poel's 1881 production) is one example of this state of flux. For Furnivall Q1 is, as his subheadings put it, 'a piracy, not revised by an Editor', but it is also 'a first cast, not a muddled Q2'.⁵⁸ Furnivall moreover dismisses claims that allusions to a play called *Hamlet* prior to 1602 were to Shakespeare's play: 'These jokes', he states, 'amuse their authors, and don't hurt anyone else'.⁵⁹ Yet in April of the same year, two essays were published together, providing a contrast to Furnivall's views. In the first, W. H. Widgery suggests that Q1 is an early draft dated

⁵⁶ 'Les Deux Hamlet', in *Oeuvres Complètes de W. Shakespeare*, ed. by François-Victor Hugo, 15 vols (Paris: Pangerre, Libraire-Éditeur, 1859), I; *Hamlet, by William Shakespeare, 1603; Hamlet, by William Shakespeare, 1604*, ed. by Samuel Timmins (London: Samson Low, Son and Co, 1860).

⁵⁷ *The works of William Shakespeare*, ed. by William George Clark and William Aldis Wright, 8 vols (London and Cambridge: Macmillan, 1866); William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by Horace Howard Furness, 2 vols (London: J. B. Lippincott, 1877).

⁵⁸ *Shakespeare's Hamlet: The First Quarto. 1603*, ed. by Frederick J. A. Furnivall (London: William Griggs, 1880), iii-xii, p. iii.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

‘between 1596 and 1598’; it is, according to Widgery, only because of ‘reading Q1 too much with the aid of Q2’ that anyone holds the “‘mutilation” theory’.⁶⁰ Rather:

if the Saga, Hystorie, Fratricide, Q1 and Q2 be read separately at one sitting, with an interval of a few days between each, [...] a delightful and overwhelming feeling that we are viewing a continuous growth and evolution will be borne in upon us[.]⁶¹

C. H. Herford argues along similar lines, but combines a number of theories together: his opening explanation is that Q1 is ‘a version of [*Hamlet*], taken from notes of the performance’ that was filled out ‘afterwards from memory’, before Shakespeare thoroughly revised the text into Q2. Herford thus combines aspects of the theories of stenography, memorial reconstruction (by a reporter, not actor) and an early draft into yet another possible answer to what he calls the ‘somewhat complicated literary questions’.⁶²

Perhaps as a result of the attention critics were giving the text, in the 1870s and 1880s Q1 even gained some popular recognition. In the second and all subsequent editions of W. S. Gilbert’s absurdist parody ‘Rosencrantz and Guildenstern’, Hamlet ‘stalks to chair, throws himself in it’ and says ‘To be – or not to be!’ but is interrupted by Rosencrantz: ‘Yes – that is the question!’⁶³ In the first published version in the *Fun* magazine, however, Rosencrantz instead says ‘Yes – that’s the point!’⁶⁴ In something of a long-winded joke typical of him, Gilbert thus creates a ‘First Quarto’ version of his own play. Moreover, following Poel’s production, the popular magazine *Punch* mocked the First Quarto’s famously different soliloquy:

To be, or not to be? There you are, don’tcherknow!

⁶⁰ W. H. Widgery, ‘An essay on the First Quarto edition of Hamlet’, in *The First Quarto Edition of Hamlet, 1603: Two Essays to which The Harness Prize was awarded, 1880* (London: Smith, Elder and Co, 1880), 87-204, pp. 175-6.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

⁶² C. H. Herford, ‘The First Quarto of Hamlet’, in *The First Quarto Edition of Hamlet, 1603: Two Essays to which The Harness Prize was awarded, 1880* (London: Smith, Elder and Co, 1880), 5-86, p. 10.

⁶³ W. S. Gilbert, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern: A Tragic Episode in Three Tableaux, Founded on an Old Danish Legend* (London: Samuel French, [1912]), p. 13. Date of edition from British Library records.

⁶⁴ W. S. Gilbert, ‘Rosencrantz and Guildenstern’, *Fun*, 19 December 1874, p. 256.

To die, to sleep! Is that all? Forty winks?

To sleep, to dream! Ah, that's about the size of it!⁶⁵

The academic and editorial debates around the text were clearly starting to leak into the public sphere in the form of gentlemanly jokes: the references to Q1 in popular culture, though rare and – in Gilbert's case – coded, indicate a rising lay interest in the text as the nineteenth century drew towards an end.

In 1890 The Shakespeare Society of New York published an edition of *Hamlet*, which again included two texts: 'The Players' Text of 1603' and 'the Heminges and Condell Text of 1623'.⁶⁶ The editor Edward P. Vining views the First Quarto as an early draft of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, though not his first. Notably, Vining reiterates Foss and Payne's opinion that some of Q1's lines demonstrate 'beauty'; in fact, Vining goes further and explicitly claims that 'no meaner hand than Shakespeare's wrote the verses from which they were copied'.⁶⁷ Significantly, the same volume contains a reprint of Richard Grant White's essay, the very essay which Vining quotes and disagrees with. White's essay argues that in Q1:

the remnants of the old play [i.e. the *Ur-Hamlet*], upon whose outlines and foundation and with whose ruins he built, have been preserved to us by accident, through the greed – or, to use a more fashionable phrase, the enterprise – of a London bookseller of his day, and by the treachery of an actor in his company. The latter undertook to furnish the former, surreptitiously, with Shakespeare's version of the tragedy; but not being able to get a copy of the whole, he attempted to give some parts of it from memory, and in other passages which he could not recollect at all he used the old

⁶⁵ Cited in Speaight, *William Poel*, p. 51.

⁶⁶ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, ed. by Edward P. Vining (New York: The Shakespeare Society of New York, 1890). The Bankside edition prints Q1 and F side by side, but *Hamlet* is not the only text treated thus. See other Bankside volumes, e.g. *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Merchant of Venice*.

⁶⁷ Vining, *Hamlet*, p. xi. See also p. xiii.

play, which had been made worthless by the success of Shakespeare's, if indeed he did not find this patching done to his hand in the stage copy.⁶⁸

White expresses his 'surprise' that his theory has 'not been adopted without question.'⁶⁹ The contradictory views presented within a single volume reflect the enduring Late-Victorian uncertainty and fascination with the text.

Early in the next century, however, both the uncertainty and the fascination were curtailed with the 1909 publication of a text that set the course of interpretations of Q1 for at least the next seven decades. Alfred Pollard's *Shakespeare's Quartos and Folios* – an early contribution to the academic school later known as the New Bibliography – is not primarily concerned with *Hamlet*. Rather, Pollard offers a solution to the longstanding tricky problem of the 'stolne and surreptitious quartos' described by Hemming and Condell in their preface to the First Folio. Prior to Pollard's work, all the quartos published during Shakespeare's lifetime were considered to be encompassed by the Folio's condemnation.⁷⁰ But, as Pollard argues, if all the Shakespearean quartos published prior to the 1623 collection really are corrupt, then so too must be the Folio, given that a number of the texts in the Folio are based on quarto editions, 'often with no very substantial modification'.⁷¹ Pollard suggests that Hemming and Condell were denouncing only five texts: Q1 *Romeo and Juliet*, Q1 *Henry V*, Q1 *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Pericles*, and Q1 *Hamlet*. These five quartos he labels 'bad' in contrast to the fourteen other, 'good' quartos, which are thus freed from any taint of theft or other kind of maleficence. The five 'bad' texts, according to Pollard, were all pirated, but not in the same way: reporters had written down part or all of *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Merry*

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. cxviii.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ See any of the numerous editions published during the nineteenth century, for example Caldecott, *Hamlet*, pp. v-vi; or Simmons, 'Life of the Poet', p. 51.

⁷¹ Alfred W. Pollard, *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos: A Study in the Bibliography of Shakespeare's Plays 1594-1685* (London: Methuen and Company, 1909), p. 80.

Wives of Windsor and *Pericles*; no explanation is given for the provenance of *Henry V*.

Hamlet, however, is deemed to be the most complex case:

That the quarto of 1603 is a bad piracy is generally admitted, as also that it represents the play in an intermediate stage between the lost *Hamlet* (of Kyd?) and the fully Shakespearian *Hamlet* of the Folio and the second and subsequent quartos. There being no authentic text of the play in this transitional stage, it is difficult to form any very clear idea as to how the pirated text was got into such shape as it possesses.

Some passages appear to have been written down from memory, while blunders seem also to have been introduced in the course of putting together the different reports.⁷²

Pollard concludes that the ‘family’ of good texts ‘has no single black sheep in it, but [...] every member of it is of good morals and utility.’⁷³ We can therefore ‘read our First Folio’, Pollard announces, ‘with all the more confidence because we need no longer believe that its editors in their preface were publicly casting stones at earlier editions which they were privately using’.⁷⁴

The next year, the most influential of the New Bibliographers, W. W. Greg, furthered Pollard’s work in an edition of Q1 *Merry Wives*.⁷⁵ Greg argues that the 1602 text of *Merry Wives* had been remembered badly by the actor playing the Host. This theory became known as memorial reconstruction. It was – and remains to this day – a popular explanation for the existence of many features of the five quartos Pollard identifies as ‘bad’. Pollard’s explanation of Q1 *Hamlet*’s origin does entertain the possibility that ‘some passages’ had been taken written from memory, but his explanation is not primarily linked with the theory

⁷² Ibid, p. 74

⁷³ Ibid, p. 80

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ *Shakespeare’s Merry Wives of Windsor 1602*, ed. by W. W. Greg (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910). Greg does not solely base his work on Pollard’s – he also relies heavily on P. A. Daniel’s theory – but he uses Pollard as a foundation; indeed, on the very first page Greg recommends that those interested in bibliography read ‘the admirable pages of my friend Mr. A. W. Pollard’s study of *Shakespeare’s Folios and Quartos*.’ (p. vii).

of memorial reconstruction. Similarly, Q1 *Hamlet* is only one of the five texts Pollard identifies, but because of *Hamlet*'s unique status in the canon, and because of the curious history of Q1, the First Quarto of *Hamlet* has by now become the text that represents the now-intertwined theories of memorial reconstruction and 'bad' quartos. It is often the textual battleground where competing theorists present their cases, the text which governs theories of origin for all five of Pollard's 'bad' texts.

There were, of course, disputes among the New Bibliographers, and its members were as diverse and varied as any critical school spanning 90 years.⁷⁶ Significantly, however, the school was united by a common acceptance of many of Pollard's and Greg's principles set out early in the century. The examination of the early quartos was a foundational moment in the definition of New Bibliographic principles. The scholarly reprinting of early texts was another. Thus Frank G. Hubbard edited Q1 in 1920, and in 1923 G. B. Harrison included the text in his facsimile series of early quartos.⁷⁷ Indeed, with the advent of the photocopier, early printed texts became more accessible and easier to reproduce than ever, and throughout the twentieth century the First Quarto was printed a number of times. Unlike the reprints of the nineteenth century, however, those of the twentieth century were academic rather than popular in nature, targeted at scholars in the university rather than lay readers in the study, much less actors and producers of Shakespeare. By the early 1970s, when Sam Walters wanted to direct Q1 at the Webber-Douglas Academy, he was unable to find an edition in the UK and had to send to America for a copy of Weiner's edition.⁷⁸ Thus the First Quarto

⁷⁶ The question of when New Bibliography 'ended' is hardly straightforward. Egan in *The Struggle for Shakespeare's Text* sees 1978 as the start of the "'new' New Bibliography' and 1980 as the beginning of the decade in which the school is 'critiqued and revised'. Paul Werstine in 1999 attempts to proclaim the end of bad quartos, indicating that New Bibliographical thinking still existed in some form.

⁷⁷ *The First Quarto Edition of Shakespeare's Hamlet*, ed. by Frank G. Hubbard (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1920); William Shakespeare, *The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke*, ed. by G. B. Harrison (London: The Bodley Head, 1923). That is not to say that Harrison and Hubbard necessarily considered themselves to be New Bibliographers, but they did share the desire to 'make it easily possible for the scholar and the reader of Shakespeare' to access Q1, as Hubbard put it (p. 3).

⁷⁸ Walters, Interview with the author.

slowly slipped from public view, preserved in facsimiles on the shelves of academic libraries but no longer the subject of popular parody or news. From its peak of popularity in the late nineteenth century, the text had become primarily the subject of academic contemplation, condemnation and outright rejection. Yet, as will be discussed in Chapter Three, even as this was seemingly becoming more and more firmly entrenched, by the end of the 1970s a new generation of scholars was growing up who would challenge the foundations of New Bibliography and bring the First Quarto back into prominence.

The Origins of Q1: A Survey of Scholarship

As mentioned above, I begin Chapter Three by charting the shift in the academic perception of the First Quarto that begins in the 1980s and gets going in earnest during the 1990s. I claim that *The Division of the Kingdoms*, Michael Warren and Gary Taylor's collection on the two texts of *King Lear*, quickly worked to overturn the orthodoxy about the *Lear* texts; this shift in the debate on *Lear* acted as a catalyst for a revision of the view of *Hamlet*.⁷⁹ I detail the revisionist work of a number of academics who during the 1990s challenge in various ways the rejection of Q1, primarily Thomas Clayton, Brian Loughrey, Graham Holderness, Stephen Urkowitz, Kathleen O. Irace, Laurie Maguire, Leah S. Marcus, and Paul Werstine.⁸⁰ Of course, these critics take divergent approaches to Q1: Irace, Maguire, Werstine, and Urkowitz all examine evidence of the text's origins from different angles; Irace also publishes an edition of Q1, as do Loughrey and Holderness together. These critics have

⁷⁹ *The Division of the Kingdoms*, ed. by Gary Taylor and Michael Warren (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

⁸⁰ *The Hamlet First Published*, ed. by Clayton; Holderness and Loughrey, *Hamlet*; Stephen Urkowitz, 'Back to Basics: Thinking about the *Hamlet* First Quarto', in *The Hamlet First Published (Q1, 1603): Origins, Form, Intertextualities*, ed. by Thomas Clayton (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992), pp. 257-291; Irace, *Reforming the 'Bad' Quartos*; Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*; Leah Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton* (London: Routledge, 1996); Paul Werstine, 'A Century of "Bad" Shakespeare Quartos', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 50, 3 (1999), 310-333.

in common their attempt to reassess the scholarly rejection of the text, to ‘reform’ it, in the words of Irace. By the turn of the century, these scholars proved largely successful in reversing the academic perception of Q1; this change, as I will seek to demonstrate, later served to influence performance practice. Chapter Three surveys only those texts published up to the turn of the millennium. Since then, of course, there have been a number of significant contributions to the field of Q1 studies. As previously, most studies are dedicated to the examination of Q1’s provenance. Some, however, move away from this issue, and instead take novel approaches to the text, marking a new shift in the study of Q1 as the new millennium develops. In the rest of this survey, I will therefore focus on criticism published after 2000.

William Davis examines the origins of the First Quarto in his 2006 article ‘Now Gods, Stand Up For Bastards’.⁸¹ After conducting a comparative analysis of the chiasmic structures of the three *Hamlet* texts, he concludes that the difference between the use of chiasmus in Q1 and in the other texts indicates that Q1 is an early authorial draft which was revised into Q2/F. He further suggests that the First Quarto is therefore likely to date from around 1589. Though his conclusions seem possible, or probable even, some of his claims about what his evidence proves seem at times to be based more on speculation and logical leaps than on solid evidence, and his work has not been taken up by many scholars. While many simply ignore Davis, Gabriel Egan dismisses the work as ‘inconclusive’.⁸² Also in 2006, Paul Menzer shifts away from questions of bibliography as he examines the early performance history of the First Quarto. In his article ‘The Tragedians of the City? Q1 *Hamlet* and the Settlements of the 1590s’, he argues that the claim on Q1’s title page to have been performed in the ‘Cittie of London’ should be taken both seriously and literally to mean

⁸¹ William Davis, ‘Now, Gods, Stand up for Bastards: The 1603 “Good Quarto” *Hamlet*’, *Textual Cultures*, 1, 2 (2006), 60-89.

⁸² Egan, *The Struggle for Shakespeare’s Text*, p. 127.

within the specific geographical location of the City. The term, he states, was ‘not a vague phrase in London, circa 1603’; it referred then, as it does today, ‘to the 677 acres (just over one square mile) ruled by the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London’.⁸³ Menzer examines contemporary title pages which claim performance in the City of London and argues that there is no reason to doubt any of the other claims, nor indeed to doubt the claim on Q1’s title page. Menzer also produces a book-length study two years later, in which he approaches the question of Q1’s origins by an examination of the cues in all three *Hamlet* texts. Menzer argues that the First Quarto as printed would be impossible for Shakespeare’s company to perform, because of its numerous repeated cues. He concludes that Q1 ‘does seem to be a version by a writer other than Shakespeare and recalls that individual’s memory of performances’; it is ‘a text unto itself, written by the most proficient of all early modern authors, “Anonymous”’.⁸⁴

In his influential 2010 work *The Struggle for Shakespeare’s Text*, Gabriel Egan charts in great detail the history of twentieth-century Shakespeare editing. He surveys a century of editorial theory from the rise of New Bibliography in the early twentieth century through its fall at the end of the century, to the rise of ‘unediting’ and ‘version editing’ in the 1990s. He also includes an ‘intermezzo’ examining the development of the theory of memorial reconstruction. Egan’s work provides a detailed history of the way Q1 *Hamlet* was approached by editors over the course of a century, both theoretically and practically.

In another move away from the exclusive focus on the text’s origins, Emma Smith edits Q1 *Hamlet* alongside *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Antonio’s Revenge*, *The Tragedy of Hoffman* and *The Revenger’s Tragedy* in her 2012 collection *Five Revenge Tragedies*.⁸⁵

⁸³ Paul Menzer, ‘The Tragedians of the City? Q1 *Hamlet* and the Settlements of the 1590s’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 57, 2 (2006), 162-182, p. 169.

⁸⁴ Paul Menzer, *The Hamlets: Cues, Qs and Remembered Texts* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), p. 176.

⁸⁵ Smith, *Five Revenge Tragedies*.

Implicitly acknowledging the potential confusion that could arise from the publication of Q1 in such a collection, Smith includes an appendix exclusively for *Hamlet* in which she outlines the key questions around the text. Smith provides brief summaries of the main arguments about the text's provenance, without expressing support for one or the other of them. By publishing Q1 in the context of contemporary revenge tragedies, rather than in relation to Q2 and F, Smith actively seeks to steer the debate in new directions:

So far, the textual discussion of the *Hamlets* has been trapped in comparisons: looking at how characters, speeches and stage business are differently enacted across two or three versions, largely to the detriment of the earliest text. In printing Q1 alongside the revenge plays with which it is clearly akin, this edition tries to break out of that Shakespeare-centric comparative model.⁸⁶

As with Egan, Smith approaches Q1 from a new contextual angle; academics are increasingly assessing the text in ways that are not solely preoccupied with the text's Shakespearean authenticity and origins. Smith's edition, published as it is by Penguin Classics, marks a return towards the cheaper popularised editions seen in the late-Victorian period.

The interest in Q1 seems to reach a fever pitch in 2014, with the publication of three book-length studies and one article all examining the First Quarto. Tiffany Stern's 2014 article returns to the question of Q1's origins.⁸⁷ The notion that an 'actor-pirate' is behind the Q1 text is, Stern argues, 'inherently problematic'.⁸⁸ Rather, she cites the copious evidence of Shakespeare's contemporaries taking notes in the various public forums of school, church, Parliament and, of course, the theatre. Stern examines the corrections made by preachers to unauthorised publications of their sermons taken by note-takers. She compares these to the differences between Q1 *Hamlet* and Q2/F and argues that Q1 is a noted text, taken down in

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 418.

⁸⁷ Stern, Tiffany, 'Sermons, Plays and Note-Takers: Hamlet Q1 as a "Noted" Text', *Shakespeare Survey*, 66 (2013), 1-23.

⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 2.

performance rather than pirated by an actor. In so doing she revives Collier's claim from the early nineteenth century. Like Menzer, Stern analyses First Quarto cues, concluding that the text's reporter could not be an actor-pirate because this would involve the actor misremembering his own cues. Stern's article adds yet another attractive possibility to a field full of conflicting attractive possibilities: rather than definitively settling the issue, her work indicates the new questions which arise following the academic reversal that took place in the 1990s.

Zachary Lesser's 2014 *'Hamlet' After Q1* assesses the timing and situation of the rediscovery of the text and the impact these have had on interpretations of *Hamlet* from the early nineteenth century through to the early twenty-first century. Lesser studies the way the First Quarto subtly, and often unconsciously, informs literary readings of the Q2 and F texts. In order to do so, Lesser 'bracket[s]' questions of Q1's origins; he nonetheless recognises that:

For some of the questions we want to ask, it simply does matter whether the text of Q1 was created before or after the text of Q2, whether it was a rough draft, a stenographic or memorial report of Shakespeare's version attested by Q2, or something else that we have not considered.⁸⁹

In what he calls the 'final paradox' in his book, he stops short of putting forward even a tentative suggestion as to where the text comes from.⁹⁰ Rather, he suggests that 'Barring the miraculous discovery of yet another text of *Hamlet* in a closet or library somewhere, and even perhaps then, these origins seem destined to remain obscure'.⁹¹ He thus embraces exactly the same textual agnosticism for which he implicitly criticises Thompson and Taylor, though of

⁸⁹ Lesser, *Hamlet After Q1*, p. 218.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 218.

⁹¹ *Ibid*.

course there is a clear distinction in purpose between Lesser's monograph and Thompson and Taylor's edition.

Building on an earlier article, Margrethe Jolly's 2014 *The First Two Quartos of 'Hamlet'* contains three parts.⁹² Part One examines the texts of Q1 and Q2 alongside the French text *Les Histoires Tragiques*. Based on this examination, she concludes that Q1 is an earlier version, 'with (major) revision taking place some years later to create Q2'.⁹³ Though some of her comparative arguments in Part One are less convincing, she is on much firmer ground in Parts Two and Three, which she dedicates to taking apart the arguments for memorial reconstruction and the existence of an *Ur-Hamlet* respectively. While she is not the first to criticise memorial reconstruction, she contributes to the already vast body of evidence that supports a rejection of the theory. Her most compelling section is the final one, in which she marshals convincing evidence to disprove the existence of a pre-Shakespearean *Ur-Hamlet*. She concludes that Q1 represents Shakespeare's appropriation of the French *Les Histoires Tragiques* into Shakespeare's 'early *Hamlet* [...] written and performed in the second half of the 1580s.'⁹⁴

Coming out the same year as Jolly's work, and in many ways mirroring it, Terri Bourus's *Young Shakespeare's Young 'Hamlet'* also builds on an earlier article.⁹⁵ Bourus investigates the printing history of Nicholas Ling, whose initials are on the title pages of both Q1 and Q2 *Hamlet*, to establish that the First Quarto is unlikely to be an illicit publication. She demonstrates that 'from the perspective of the English book trade [...] there is nothing

⁹² Margrethe Jolly, 'Hamlet and the French Connection: The Relationship of Q1 and Q2 Hamlet and the Evidence of Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*', *Parergon*, 29, 1 (2012), 83-105; Margrethe Jolly, *The First Two Quartos of 'Hamlet'* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2014).

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

⁹⁵ Terri Bourus, 'The First Quarto of *Hamlet* in Film: The Revenge Tragedies of Tony Richardson and Franco Zeffirelli', *EnterText*, 1, 2 (2001), 180-191 <<http://www.brunel.ac.uk/arts/research/entertext/issues/entertext-14.3>> [accessed 11 November 2013]; Terri Bourus, *Young Shakespeare's Young Hamlet: Print, Piracy and Performance* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

irregular, suspicious, or piratical about Ling's edition [i.e. Q1] of *Hamlet*'.⁹⁶ Bourus takes similar historical approaches to challenge the concepts of 'piratical actors' and 'piratical reporters'. Like Jolly, Bourus concludes that Shakespeare wrote a version of *Hamlet* around 1589, and that this text was eventually printed in the form of the First Quarto. While I remain unconvinced by a number of the arguments Margrethe Jolly puts forward in the first section of her work, Terri Bourus presents in *Young Shakespeare's Young 'Hamlet'* a series of compelling, well-founded and nuanced arguments based firmly on historical research.

Most recently, in what might be read as the start of a backlash, or as the dying throes of a New Bibliographical belief in single-text Shakespeare, Brian Vickers seeks in 2016 to undo the work of *Division of the Kingdoms*, the collection that had inspired much of the work in textual multiplicity in the first place. *The One King Lear* argues that the work of the 1980s and 1990s on *King Lear* was flawed, that, as his title suggests, there is only one version of *King Lear*.⁹⁷ *The One King Lear* received significant and often fierce criticism, with John Jowett writing that Vickers 'now aims to turn the clock back' and suggesting Vickers's argument is 'deeply flawed'.⁹⁸ Eric Rasmussen and Jonathan Bate go much further. Rasmussen draws parallels between Vickers and American President Donald Trump, writing that Vickers is working in 'hopes of making *King Lear* great again'; he further claims that there is 'surprisingly poor scholarship on display here' and 'so much wrong with the book that a string-cite of its errors could well exceed the limits of a scholarly review'.⁹⁹ Bate, however, is by far the most vehement and personal:

The polemical monograph, like the unremittingly barbed review, ought to be a young man's game. It's a sign of male insecurity, like revving a car at the lights. Few women

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 33.

⁹⁷ Brian Vickers, *The One King Lear* (London: Harvard University Press, 2016).

⁹⁸ John Jowett, 'The One King Lear, Brian Vickers', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 70, 1 (2017), 423-424 (p. 423).

⁹⁹ Eric Rasmussen, 'The One King Lear, Brian Vickers', *Modern Philology*, 114, 4 (2017), 245-248 (pp. 246, 248).

feel the need to write such things. And when men approaching the age of King Lear do so, there is usually some sadness or bitterness or, to use the proper Shakespearean phrase, ‘ancient grudge’ lurking in the background. I have no idea what that may be in Vickers’s case, but there can be no doubting his insecurity.¹⁰⁰

The appearance of three such ‘unremittingly barbed review[s]’ signifies much more than just a fierce response to Vickers’s perceived aggression. Vickers’s work attempts to bring back the old New Bibliographical orthodoxy that existed before *Division of the Kingdoms*; the apparent failure of this effort indicates the strength of New Textual heterodoxy and the apparent impossibility, at least for the moment, of reverting to 1980s approaches.

The changes in academic thinking about the First Quarto were not limited to the texts of *Hamlet*. While many of the same arguments put forward about the origins, purpose and stage-worthiness of Q1 *Hamlet* focused on the texts and history of *Hamlet* in particular, it is possible to chart the same developments in academic trends regarding to the other early texts through the 1980s, 90s and 2000s. Indeed, in addition to *Hamlet*, the Cambridge Early Quartos series and Holderness and Loughrey’s Shakespeare Original series both separately published Q1 *Henry V* and *The Taming of A Shrew*. Of course, other early Shakespearean texts have been – and continue to be – subject to similar work.¹⁰¹ As with *Hamlet*, arguments for the value of these other texts were put forth and contested; and, as with *Hamlet*, other early quartos influenced performance texts during the period. Clearly, the changes described in this section are emblematic of a wider shift in the academic debate around the provenance and value of early texts. Yet they are also specific to *Hamlet*. While the histories of other early texts are certainly worth exploring, *Hamlet* takes a distinctive place among Shakespeare’s works: not only does it occupy a central role in the literary canon, it also,

¹⁰⁰ Jonathan Bate, ‘Sneers and jeers over Lears’, *The Spectator*, 28 May 2016.

¹⁰¹ See, for example, William Shakespeare, *Shakespeare in Production: The Taming of the Shrew*, ed. by Elizabeth Schafer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

uniquely, has three distinct texts. Despite the rich textual and performance history of other early texts, the focus of this thesis is therefore firmly on *Hamlet*.

As I suggest above, the history of academic enquiry into Q1 has until recently almost exclusively been concerned with its origins and relationship to the other *Hamlet* texts. Even now it has become something of a convention for most of those writing on the text to set out their position on the text's origins – even if that position is one of agnosticism. Rather than remaining silent, it seems inevitable that I should briefly address the issue. My position has changed at several points throughout the period of researching and writing this thesis, from memorial reconstruction to stenographic reconstruction to early draft. I am not entirely convinced by any single theory, least of all memorial reconstruction: the same internal evidence presented by one scholar to defend one point of view is presented by another equally conscientious academic arguing an opposing view. Stylistic analysis of the Q1 text and the comparison of the three texts yields such varying results that it seems unlikely to lead to any firm conclusions. More convincing, however, are the arguments based on detailed historical records provided in Bourus's book and in the last two sections of Jolly's. The idea that *Hamlet* dates from over a decade earlier than previously thought is an unpopular one and unlikely to catch on, not least because of established tradition and how much disruption redating *Hamlet* would cause, but the arguments presented by Bourus and Jolly do provide a series of convincing arguments based on solid historical research. This is clearly a controversial and contended view, and it is important to stress that my position on the text's origins makes little difference to the analysis presented in this thesis. Nonetheless, as it stands I would argue that the most convincing explanation of the First Quarto's origins is the one Bourus presents in *Young Shakespeare's Young Hamlet*, a position also supported by Margrethe Jolly and William Davis.

This thesis, then, seeks to adopt and adapt the methodologies of Zachary Lesser and Gabriel Egan to address the question of Q1 and its impact on the texts around performance. Egan charts the history of editorial practice; I seek to record the First Quarto's impact on the texts around performance in a similar manner, though over a shorter period and in a more restricted geographical location. Lesser's book is, however, in many ways the primary model for this thesis. Just as he 'bracket[s]' away the questions of Q1's origins, so too do I in order to ask other questions of the text. Lesser's adoption of a New Textualist approach even as he situates himself outside of the school yields fruitful results: he demonstrates the vital role the First Quarto has had on understanding key moments of *Hamlet* from the moment of its rediscovery to the present day. I aim to develop and expand this method of enquiry to consider the impact of Q1 on promptbook practice for performance of *Hamlet*. This is the first sustained study to address the question.

Summary of the Argument and Outline of the Thesis

This thesis explores the influence of Q1 on the texts around performances of *Hamlet* in London and Stratford: it demonstrates, through detailed case studies, that its influence on and presence in such texts across the period grew exponentially. It contends that two independent but closely inter-linked strands of Shakespeare knowledge are behind this growth: rehearsal and performance tradition on the one hand, and textual academic scholarship on the other. The Q1 performance tradition might be said to start with Poel in 1881 and resurfaces a century later in 1985 with the Orange Tree performance of Q1. Largely separate from this performance tradition is the academic movement known as New Textualism, which rose at the end of the twentieth century and overturned many of the New Bibliographical assumptions regarding the origins and value of the First Quarto. At its most simple, the

performance tradition leads to productions of the First Quarto as a text in its own right, while the scholarly academic trajectory leads to an increased presence of Q1 lines and dramatic tropes within mainstream performances that are firmly based on Q2/F and presented in the main houses. However, the picture of Q1 influence is of course much more complex.

Through its close examination of the seventeen case studies as outlined above, the thesis pays close attention to how directors use Q1. The use of Q1 across the period, I contend, ranges from a complete avoidance of the text all the way through to full performance of the text. From the evidence presented in the thesis, I deduce nine directorial approaches to the use of the First Quarto in text for performance, as follows:

1. Using a Q2/F derived base edition and making no changes that can be traced to the First Quarto.
2. Using visual or performance tropes from the text which derive from the First Quarto's stage directions, explicitly or implicitly.
3. Using structural aspects of the text, specifically (and most commonly) the relocation of the 'To be' soliloquy to its Q1 location before the 'fishmonger' exchange.
4. Using echoes of lines or making apparently coincidental echoes of the text.
5. Using lines or phrases from Q1 to facilitate the relocation of 'to be'.
6. Using lines or phrases from Q1 to clarify the meaning of confusing moments in Q2/F.
7. Using lines or phrases from Q1 which allow for the abbreviation of the performance.
8. Using Q1 to 'authenticate' a production.
9. Full performance of the Q1 text.

Often, of course, several of the different uses of Q1 are seen in a single production. As the period studied progresses, in response to the growing textual scholarship and performance interests outlined above, the uses of the First Quarto in the texts around any single production become more varied and more complex. The thesis contends that, given that the First Quarto

is shown to exert an increasing influence on the texts around *Hamlet* performance across this period, it looks likely that, in the future, this will continue to develop as Q1 receives more attention both on and off stage.

The thesis is in six chapters. Following this introductory chapter, the second chapter covers the period 1980-1989, focusing on four productions: the 1980 RSC production directed by John Barton; Sam Walters's 1985 Q1 *Hamlet* at the Orange Tree; the 1989 RSC production directed by Ron Daniels; and Richard Eyre's 1989 National Theatre production. The chapter begins with a consideration of the four seminal editions of *Hamlet* (Penguin, Arden2, Oxford, Cambridge) published during the 1980s, editions which would be used by directors again and again throughout the period, and remain even now foundational, authoritative editions. I examine how each one presents the First Quarto, arguing that the Penguin edition presents Q1 in the least unfavourable light, while Harold Jenkins's Arden2 leaves its readers with a firm conviction of the First Quarto's 'badness'. The Cambridge and Oxford editions both provide less polemical explanations than the Arden2, but still more or less reject the First Quarto. The chapter goes on to consider three case studies which take as their base text one of the four editions of the 1980s. I use these examples to demonstrate the immediate impact the editions had on the preparation of *Hamlet* texts for performance, particularly how the textual introductions influenced theatre-makers. In each case, I argue, the explanation of Q1 in an edition's textual introduction translates into a director's corresponding understanding of Q1, which in turn manifests itself in the textual decisions that director makes for performance. Because of the respective editions' textual commentaries, a director using Jenkins's Arden2 text is unlikely to go to the First Quarto for readings, whereas one using the Penguin will be more disposed to do so. The chapter also explores Sam Walters's 1985 staging of the First Quarto at the Orange Tree in the first professional

London production for decades. The production, I argue, was a significant development in the performance of Q1 that would inspire later productions of the text.

Chapter Three considers the year 2000 and examines Jonathan Holloway's Red Shift Q1 tour, John Caird's National Theatre production, Giles Block's mainstage Globe *Hamlet* and the staged reading of Q1 at the Globe, all of which were performed that year. The chapter narrates the academic shifts in relation to the First Quarto that occurred during the 1980s and especially the 1990s; the Globe opened during this period, embodying the movement towards 'authentic' playing conditions. The year 2000 marks an important milestone, as academic debates about the First Quarto were matched by creative practice: a production of Q1 toured the UK at the same time that the Globe included the text as part of its *Read not Dead* series. The reactions to Jonathan Holloway's touring production indicate that while Q1 may slowly have been becoming more acceptable academically, there was still a negative response to the performed text, with many comments suggesting that Q1 is an uncanny double of the more familiar *Hamlet*. At the same time, the Globe and the National Theatre were putting on their star *Hamlet* productions of the decade, starring Mark Rylance and Simon Russell Beale respectively. The issue of textual editions, of course, resurfaced: throughout the period studied, directors at the National put on productions of *Hamlet* which do take a number of liberties with the text, but within limits, avoiding textual interventions inspired by the First Quarto.

Chapter Four looks at the period immediately before and after the publication of Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor's seminal Arden³ edition in 2006. Spanning the period 2004-2008, the chapter considers Michael Boyd's 2004 *Hamlet* at the RSC, Trevor Nunn's production of the same year at the Old Vic, Tim Carroll's fringe Factory *Hamlet* of 2006-2012 and Greg Doran's 2008 RSC production. Notably, there is no production of Q1 available for study in Chapter Four to match the Orange Tree and Red Shift productions of

previous chapters. Instead, the main house productions show a marked tendency at least to acknowledge Q1, if not to employ it in promptbooks. The Penguin's influence continued at the RSC, as the 2004 production there demonstrates. Along with the Penguin edition comes the familiar acceptance of the First Quarto – in fact, the RSC production drew heavily on Q1, using more lines and stage directions than any case study so far in the thesis. On the other hand, Trevor Nunn's *Hamlet* at the Old Vic followed Jenkins's Arden2 edition. The picture is complicated, however, by the fact that Nunn did not uniformly reject the First Quarto in the way that Eyre and Caird had. Though he only rarely made use of Q1 in his text, he foregrounded these moments in his programme notes. His Q1 interventions were, moreover, silently accepted by reviewers. Gregory Doran's 2008 RSC production is an example of a director taking on the role of editor more readily than most others. He modified the text extensively and freely inserted lines he had written himself, incorporating few Q1 lines despite using the Arden3 edition. The Factory *Hamlet* approach contrasts to Doran's: this fringe production also points to the rise of the internet text – the so-called Moby text – which would soon become prevalent. This case study in particular suggests ways in which the rise of the internet begins to assert a compelling impact on the process of editing texts for performance.

Chapter Five examines productions from 2010 and 2011, a period when the internet's rise becomes more pronounced. The chapter investigates the web's impact on the dissemination of the text of – and knowledge about – the First Quarto. I examine Nicholas Hytner's 2010 production at the National; Dominic Dromgoole's Globe production, first performed in 2011 but continued up to 2016 in various forms; Imogen Bond's 2011 Q1 production, *Hamlet: 1603*; and Ian Rickson's 2011 Young Vic *Hamlet*. The influence of Q1 becomes more widespread in performance texts, yet an aversion to use of the text still persists, partly because of the endurance of the editions from the 1980s. I argue that the

internet on the one hand makes the texts accessible but on the other bypasses some of the authority of established commentators and arbitrators of the text. The First Quarto's Wikipedia page is woefully incomplete, written by two non-experts, and yet there is a remarkable correlation between the information presented on the Wikipedia page and that presented in theatre programmes. The internet's prevalence leads to a prominent theatre, the Globe, using an online edition of *Hamlet* which was originally edited in 1866, meaning that more than a century of textual criticism and development was occluded for the sake of ease and finance.

The concluding chapter opens with an exploration of Lyndsey Turner's 2015 production at the Barbican, the final case study of the thesis. Turner's textually innovative production was met with fury from some reviewers. I argue that Turner's choices and the critical responses to them encapsulate many of the opposing views and approaches to Q1, a microcosm of the wider arguments surveyed across the period covered by this thesis. I conclude by considering some of the possibilities for the First Quarto's impact both on future performance and on academic study. The critical trend towards textual plurality has encouraged theatrical interest in the early texts of Shakespeare's plays; but that this will translate into regular full-scale performances of Q1 on the main stages of the major UK Shakespeare-producing theatres is, I suggest, unlikely. The influence of Q1 on *Hamlet* production in the past thirty-five years is nonetheless incontrovertible: it seems likely to remain confidently in the wings of future productions, quietly informing performances and guiding future theatre-makers.

CHAPTER TWO: 1980-1989

THE MOST VALUABLE OF ALL SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

Harold [Jenkins] believed ‘that editing was the most valuable of all scholarly activities, for the edition of a text will stand for future ages long after the fogs of critical and uncritical opinion have dispersed’.

—E. A. Honigmann, 2000¹⁰²

Writing in 1997, Andrew Murphy charts the history of Shakespearean editing through an analysis of the metaphors used by editors to describe their work. At various points in the history of Shakespearean scholarship, an editor has been a ‘benign foster parent’, a ‘doctor, healer, surgeon’, ‘priest’, a ‘scientist’, and even, in Fredson Bowers’s ‘extravagant formulation, the editor is the guarantor of our very civilisation, the guardian angel who keeps us from perdition.’¹⁰³ The rapid developments in technology and a disillusionment with the precepts of New Bibliography, Murphy argues, mean that ‘editing has necessarily reached a point where it must needs reinvent itself once more’.¹⁰⁴ He concludes:

However the editorial project is conceived in the future, we may expect, perhaps, an end to the high claims of those editorial ancestors from the eighteenth century through the twentieth century, who imagined themselves to be guardians who rectified the text and protected us from its corruptions, presenting us with a single, ideal version of the text.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² E. A. J. Honigmann, ‘Harold Jenkins, 1909-2000’, *Proceedings of the British Academy 111: 2000 Lectures and Memoirs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 552-572, p. 565.

¹⁰³ Andrew Murphy, ‘“To Ferret Out Any Hidden Corruption”: Shakespearean Editorial Metaphors’, *Text* (1997), 202-219, pp. 206-208, 212, 216.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

In the wake of the publication of 2006 Arden³, this prediction shows some signs of being fulfilled: just as Murphy expected, Thompson and Taylor took a less firm stance on textual matters than their predecessors.¹⁰⁶

Perhaps the last generation of *Hamlet* editors in Britain to exhibit such confidence, then, was the group of academics whose editions, broadly following New Bibliographical principles, were published in the 1980s. T. J. B. Spencer's Penguin text appeared in 1980, followed in 1982 by Harold Jenkins's Arden², then in 1985 the Cambridge edited by Philip Edwards, and finally in 1987 G. R. Hibbard's Oxford edition was published. Each was a monumental work of academic effort and achievement – Jenkins spent 28 years working on his edition; since publication one or other of them has been the starting point for most high-profile British *Hamlet* productions. Each edition adopts a different stance towards Q1, from active antipathy to benign neglect; this, I argue, affects a director's approach to creating a text for production. The production in turn acts to mould public and critical responses and to shape future academic preoccupations. It is worthwhile therefore briefly to examine the way each editor approaches and presents the First Quarto.

The first of the 1980s editions, the Penguin, was 'almost complete' by the time of Spencer's death in 1978, so his 'typescript [was] edited and seen through the press by Dr. Stanley Wells, with the help of [T. J. B. Spencer's widow,] Mrs Katherine Spencer'.¹⁰⁷ Though Spencer had completed his textual notes, he had not yet written the introduction, so literary critic Anne Barton was commissioned to provide one. The specific choice of Barton to write the introduction, I shall argue, had a significant long-term impact on the performance of *Hamlet* at the RSC. Early in the 'Account of the Text' Spencer explains that Q1 is

¹⁰⁶ See Chapter 4.

¹⁰⁷ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by T. J. B. Spencer (London: Penguin Books, 1980), p. 6.

an unauthorized text which appears not to derive from Shakespeare's manuscript, or even from a good copy of it, but from a manuscript reconstructed from memory by one or more of the actors of Shakespeare's company.¹⁰⁸

Moreover, the text is, for Spencer, 'seriously corrupt': to demonstrate his point – and the reporter's 'imperfect' memory – Spencer prints the First Quarto 'To be' speech and a section from the closet scene.¹⁰⁹ Nonetheless, he claims, '[f]or all its faults, Q1 is occasionally useful to the editor.'¹¹⁰ He identifies three points where it is 'the only source of what seems an authentic reading', which he proceeds to adopt.¹¹¹ Two are matters of very localised significance: Q1's 'Whereas' opposed to Q2/F's 'Where, as' (Penguin, 1.2.209) and 'must take' for Q2/F's 'mistake' (Penguin, 3.2.261). The third is more substantial: a matter of some thirteen lines in which the Q1 Hamlet gives more extended advice to the players than his Q2/F counterparts:

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

FIRST PLAYER: We will, my lord.

HAMLET: Well, (Penguin, 3.2.43-55)

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 362.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 364.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

This section, according to Spencer, ‘may well derive from Shakespeare’s own theatre, and perhaps from his pen’.¹¹² He offers no evidence to support this claim; clearly the apparently dramatic nature of the lines is enough to suggest to Spencer a kind of theatrical authenticity. On the strength of this judgement he includes it in his edition, proudly announcing that the Penguin *Hamlet* ‘is the first to include this passage in the text’.¹¹³ While Spencer is wary of the First Quarto’s corruptions, therefore, he is nevertheless willing to rely on it at the point where he judges it to be a reliable witness of an ‘authentic’ moment of performance.

The Arden2 text published two years later provides a rather different account of Q1. In his discussion of the three texts of *Hamlet*, Jenkins is famously abrupt: he acknowledges that the relationship between the texts has been ‘the subject of ingenious speculation’ and a number of times he dismisses the ‘[s]uppositions’ of those with whom he disagrees as ‘baseless’.¹¹⁴ Yet he himself proceeds in the space of three pages to make six speculations of his own about the text: ‘we must infer’, ‘it must have been’, ‘We may infer’, ‘it will not be a wild conjecture that’, ‘it is to be supposed that’, ‘it is likely enough’.¹¹⁵ E. A. Honigmann recognised the vehemence of the introduction in a speech in honour of Jenkins after his death. Honigmann agreed that Jenkins’s ‘combativeness [...] will jar some readers’ but linked it to Jenkins’s ‘flair for getting at the truth and the high value he attached to it.’¹¹⁶

Jenkins’s view of the truth is certainly made clear in his edition of *Hamlet*. He states that:

During the present century it has been conclusively demonstrated [...] that [...] Q1 is not a prior but a posterior version, not an original of Shakespeare’s play but a

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by Harold Jenkins (London: Arden Shakespeare, 1982), p. 15.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, pp. 15-17.

¹¹⁶ Honigmann, ‘Harold Jenkins, 1909-2000’, pp. 563-564.

reconstruction of it; and its great difference from the later-published texts is due not to their expansion but to its abridgement, not to their revision but to its corruption.¹¹⁷

Even within the framework of New Bibliographical certainty, Jenkins's rhetoric is particularly dismissive of those who might view Q1 as an earlier text. Of those who persist in believing that the First Quarto may have been a Shakespearean original, Jenkins rather condescendingly writes: 'The human mind clings to beliefs long after the foundations for them have disintegrated [...] It is as well to state that all those theories [...] are quite without evidence or plausibility.'¹¹⁸ He further censures the 'Objectors to "memorial reconstruction"' who:

have sometimes complained that there is no contemporary 'testimony' to such a practice; but if you come upon a mutilated corpse you don't deny a murder because nobody has reported one.¹¹⁹

And so Jenkins goes on, in a textual introduction fifty-six pages long. The force of his argument is such that a reader is likely to come away just as certain as Jenkins himself about the quality of Q1 and its place in relation to the canon – that is to say, outside of it.

The reader of Philip Edwards's 1984 Cambridge edition, on the other hand, finds a less dogmatic but more complex and at times downright confusing explanation. Edwards hypothesises an intricate relationship between Q1, Q2 and F, which he describes at length. Throughout his discussion he keeps it clear that his hypothesis is theoretical rather than definitive, and having established that caveat, he suggests that Q1 is:

an abbreviated and adapted version in language which severely corrupts the original, inherits the cuts and changes made in the early playhouse transcript and demonstrates that the transcript was in progress towards the Globe's official promptbook. It is not

¹¹⁷ Jenkins, *Hamlet*, p. 19.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

inconceivable that in spite of all its corruption it reflects the shortened acting version of Shakespeare's own theatre. The first quarto was used by the composers of the second quarto, especially during the first act.¹²⁰

Crucially, Edwards sets himself in contrast to the 'Earlier editors of *Hamlet*' who 'may have thought that "a complete and final version" of the play was the object of their search':

In searching for a solution to the play's textual problems, we should not imagine that we are likely ever to find ourselves with a single definitive text. The study of the early texts of *Hamlet* is the study of a play in motion. [...] We must be prepared for the possibility that the variations in the text of *Hamlet* are not alternative versions of a single original text but representations of different stages in the play's development. Then our task becomes to choose the moment at which we would try to arrest the movement of the play and say 'This is the *Hamlet* we want'; or even, if we dare, 'This is the *Hamlet* that Shakespeare most wanted.'¹²¹

The Cambridge edition thus rejects any pretensions to the 'science' of New Bibliography, instead acknowledging that the 'important decisions about the text of *Hamlet* are in the end literary decisions: not a matter of technical demonstration but of literary and linguistic judgement.'¹²² Edwards thereby allows for the possibility of, even encourages, his readers to mix and match their own versions of *Hamlet*. His readers are invited to become, in essence, their own editors.

Oxford editor G.R. Hibbard's approach to Q1 in 1987 is closer to that of the Arden2 editor Jenkins. Hibbard informs his readers that 'passages of sheer nonsense abound' in the First Quarto; he linguistically distances himself from 'that text' and employs superlatives to demonstrate how utterly he rejects any notion of its reliability: 'As for that text itself, it is a

¹²⁰ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by Philip Edwards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 30-31.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 9.

completely illegitimate and unreliable one, having no direct contact with any Shakespearean manuscript, or with any transcript of such a manuscript.’¹²³ Yet Hibbard stops short of Jenkins’s outright critical dismissal of the text. He includes a detailed description of Q1 as well as a brief summary of the key critical and textual debates without resorting to over-aggressive rhetoric. Hibbard briefly rehearses the critical debate of the late-nineteenth and early- and mid-twentieth centuries surrounding the provenance of the First Quarto, concluding that G. I. Duthie’s *The Bad Quarto of Hamlet*:

showed, beyond all reasonable doubt, that the quarto of 1603 is a reported text put together by a process of memorial reconstruction to provide a prompt copy for, in all probability, a band of actors playing outside London.¹²⁴

Hibbard occasionally even concedes that other opinions might be valid (‘It could well be argued’), but not always (‘By no stretch of the imagination can the Q1 version be regarded as a first draft’).¹²⁵ He castigates the imagined reporter who, ‘to his shame, in attempting to reproduce [the ‘To be or not to be’ soliloquy,] reduces it to gibberish.’¹²⁶

Nonetheless, as Hibbard nears the end of his discussion of Q1 he asks his readers to ‘[s]uppose’ that one ‘restores the misplaced scenes and passages’ and performs further patchwork on the First Quarto.¹²⁷ ‘What then emerges from the mess of Q1’, Hibbard claims, ‘is a fast-moving, coherent drama that is not without some, at any rate, of the overtones and resonances of the good text.’¹²⁸ Hibbard’s thought-exercise recalls John Dryden’s editorial policy in his 1670 version of Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*:

¹²³ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by George Hibbard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 69.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 87-88.

there appeared in some places of [*Troilus*] the admirable Genius of the Author; [therefore] I undertook to remove that heap of Rubbish under which many excellent thoughts lay wholly buried.¹²⁹

Both Hibbard and Dryden of course take care to redeem Shakespeare himself from any blame. Just like Dryden's 'heap of Rubbish', Hibbard's Q1 is a text generally unreliable with a few redeeming features hidden among its 'bad'ness. Hibbard's metaphor of choice is less earthy; indeed it invokes the ghostly quality of *Hamlet* itself:

Q1 is, as it stands, a sorry thing, and, from the editor's point of view, an extremely unreliable one. [...] Its main value, however, lies in this: that through the fog [...] one catches glimpses of an acting version of the tragedy current in the early seventeenth century.¹³⁰

The First Quarto may be of historical interest, but for Hibbard, that is the end of the issue; he does not adopt any of its readings in his edition.

The four editions of the 1980s thus present varying views of Q1, from Jenkins's textual crime scene, through Edwards's complex model of interrelated texts and Hibbard's suggestion that somewhere deep under the corruption lies some kind of 'authentic' text, to Spencer's incorporation of a few authentic-sounding lines from the 'occasionally useful' quarto. As with any edition, these texts are products of a very particular moment in time. All four testify – with some variation of emphasis and differing degrees of certainty – to the dominance of New Bibliography in the 1980s. Three of these editions exerted extraordinary influence on performance immediately; several continue to do so to this day. They became editions of choice for the study of *Hamlet* in schools and universities; furthermore, the current Oxford, Cambridge and Penguin *Hamlets* all use the texts established in the 80s as

¹²⁹ John Dryden, *Troilus and Cressida or Truth Found Too Late* (1670) [facsimile] (London: Cornmarket Press, 1969), sig. A4^v.

¹³⁰ Hibbard, *Hamlet*, p. 89.

their base text, supplementing them with updated introductions and other textual apparatus. Perhaps surprisingly, the Oxford edition does not act as the base text for any of the productions examined in this thesis. This seems to be an accident of history: as will be explored, the RSC and National Theatre both established links with particular editions in the 1980s which then continued into the twenty-first century.

If the 1980s was a particularly significant decade in terms of publishing *Hamlet*, it also saw a number of landmark productions, many of which based their texts on the recently-published editions. During the decade, *Hamlet* was performed a number of times both in London and Stratford; notably, Sam Walters's 1985 production was the first professional performance of the First Quarto in London for half a century. This chapter will examine the RSC *Hamlets* at the beginning and end of the decade, as well as Richard Eyre's famous 1989 production at the National Theatre, and Walters's Q1 experiment in Richmond-upon-Thames.¹³¹ The various directors, I contend, engage with the First Quarto in ways that correlate with the approach of the editor of their chosen base edition, encapsulating the interplay between textual criticism and creative practice. Directors using the Arden2 or Oxford editions will be less receptive to Q1-informed textual editing, while those relying on the Penguin or Cambridge will be more open to it.

RSC 1980: Reviewing Authenticity

The base text of John Barton's 1980 RSC *Hamlet* is an annotated and amended photocopy of Spencer's then-unpublished Penguin text. Several reviewers have commented on the relationship between the edition and production, a relationship stemming from more than a

¹³¹ Eyre famously took a more liberal approach to the play when directing it at the Royal Court in 1980, but unfortunately sufficient archival resources have not been preserved for a thorough analysis of his textual approach.

simple desire to use the most modern text available.¹³² For director John Barton was married to literary critic Anne Barton, author of the Penguin's introduction, providing what Anthony Dawson calls 'a fruitful example of academic and theatre worlds meeting not only in the seminar room or rehearsal hall but over the breakfast table.'¹³³ This close link between critic and director had a demonstrable influence on the RSC 1980 production. The programme introduces the play by juxtaposing facsimiles of Q1 and Q2's 'To be' soliloquies, an opening image which seems to owe its inspiration to Spencer's inclusion of the Q1 soliloquy in his 'Account of the Text'; indeed, the subsequent pages of the programme contain a lengthy extract from Barton's introduction to the text.

Crucially, underneath the programme's opening image of the Q1 soliloquy are two paragraphs describing the textual provenance of *Hamlet*. These draw heavily on the Penguin edition: the programme states that '*Hamlet* was written in 1600/1, the first of Shakespeare's mature tragedies.'¹³⁴ This appears to derive in part from Anne Barton's introduction: 'Chronologically the first of what it has become customary to refer to as Shakespeare's "great tragedies", *Hamlet* must have been written shortly after *Julius Caesar* (1599)'.¹³⁵ The RSC programme note again seems to draw on the Penguin in its explanation of the quarto's origins:

There were three different texts of *Hamlet* published in Shakespeare's time. The first, entered in the Stationer's [sic] Register in 1603 was called *The Revenge of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, and became known as the First Quarto.¹³⁶

¹³² See, for example, Michael L. Greenwald, *Directions by Indirections* (London: Associated University Presses, 1985); and John Barber, 'No punk, this Hamlet', *Daily Telegraph*, 3 July 1980.

¹³³ Anthony B. Dawson, *Shakespeare in Performance: Hamlet* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 149.

¹³⁴ 'Hamlet 1980 Programme', Stratford-Upon-Avon, Royal Shakespeare Company Archive, Uncatalogued, p. 3.

¹³⁵ Spencer, *Hamlet*, p. 18.

¹³⁶ 'Hamlet 1980 Programme', RSC Archive, p. 3.

There are, however, pitfalls in the programme's engagement with the Penguin edition. The anonymous programme writer here misplaces the apostrophe, misdates *Hamlet*'s entry in the Stationers' Register, gets the First Quarto's full title wrong and implies that it was specifically the Q1 text that was entered into the Register. These confusions appear to derive from a conflationary misreading of the Penguin's account:

Hamlet was entered in the Register of the Stationers' Company on 26 July 1602 to James Roberts as 'A booke called the Revenge of Hamlett Prince Denmarke as yt was latalie Acted by the Lo: Chamberleyn his servantes.' But it first appeared in print from the press of Valentine Simmes, in 1603. It was then described on the title-page as *The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke By William Shakespeare*[.]¹³⁷

It seems clear that at the very least, the compiler of the programme for the RSC relies heavily on access to the forthcoming Penguin edition, despite the occasional misunderstanding.

Numerous reviewers and critics have noted that Barton's production placed a major emphasis on the theatricality of *Hamlet*.¹³⁸ Michael Greenwald states that:

The 1980 *Hamlet* is perhaps the most thorough exploration in stage terms of an 'art-life' interpretation of the play's meaning. [...] Nearly all elements of the RSC staging were geared toward illustrating this Pirandellian view of the play.¹³⁹

Greenwald notably links this idea to the influence of Anne Barton's scholarship published in the Penguin edition. The Q1 advice to the players that Spencer had included in his edition seems wholly appropriate for inclusion in John Barton's metatheatrical production. It may come as a surprise, then, that he cuts these lines. In fact, this is the second-largest single cut to the Penguin text of the whole production.

¹³⁷ Spencer, *Hamlet*, p. 362.

¹³⁸ Reviewers do so in the following local and national papers, all of which are found in a book of press cuttings held on open shelves at the RSC's archive in Stratford: *Oxford Mail*; *Wolverhampton Express*; *Stratford-Upon-Avon Herald*; *The Guardian*; *The Yorkshire Post*; *The Times*; *The Financial Times*; *The Sunday Times*; *The Times Literary Supplement*. Most articles are missing the names of the reviewers and the page numbers.

¹³⁹ Greenwald, *Directions by Indirections*, p. 188.

Why did Barton delete these lines? The easiest conclusion to draw is that the lines are cut simply because they are from the First Quarto: though the Penguin editor had included the lines, Barton took them out again and thus preserved Shakespeare's text from the corruption of a text which the programme, after all, describes as 'very inaccurate'. The Penguin Shakespeare, unlike most editions, does not print its textual apparatus on the same page as the text itself, so in order even to find that these lines are from the First Quarto, the reader has to dig through the pages of bibliographic information at the back of the volume. Barton, of course, was a highly trained and attuned professional reader – himself a former Cambridge lecturer, married to an Oxford professor, more aware of textual minutiae than many theatre directors and thus surely more likely to investigate and make aesthetic decisions based on this kind of information. Yet it is not only the First Quarto lines that are cut at this point, but also a further thirteen lines of the Penguin text deriving from Q2/F from the beginning of the scene, so that of the first forty-five lines of the scene, around twenty-five are deleted in total. It is possible that Barton really did cut the lines because of an aversion to Q1, but the decision seems to reach further: it is a solution based within a wider programme of editing the text to create a performable piece for the stage. Either way, the result is the same: despite the fact that he works with a text that exposes him to current debates about the value of Q1, Barton uses no First Quarto lines, here or anywhere else in his production.

His production does nonetheless employ a stage image firmly associated with Q1. Barton adopts a modified version of the First Quarto's stage direction for 'Ofelia' to enter 'playing on a lute, and her hair down singing' (Q1 13.14SD). The image of Ofelia with the lute occurs during Q1's so-called 'mad scene'; it commonly symbolises the completion of her descent into madness. Carol Royle is, of course, not the first Ophelia to play the lute as she sings her songs: a decade earlier Helen Mirren had done so at the same theatre, in a stage

tradition that goes back to at least William Poel's production the previous century.¹⁴⁰ But Barton also intervenes to draw new attention to the image: he shifts it to a significantly earlier moment in the play. Ophelia arrives carrying the lute in Act 2 Scene 1, prompting Polonius to ask 'What's the matter?' (Penguin 2.1.74). During this scene Ophelia strums the lute and hums the same melody she sings in her later 'mad' scenes.¹⁴¹ The First Quarto, a text known for its lack of psychological depth, provides for Barton a trope to anticipate the later madness of Ophelia. He does not just replicate the Q1 symbol of a lute into his production, he uses it to reinterpret Ophelia, a way to see her as a more realistic character whose development is more thoroughly charted through the play.

The newspaper reviews are silent about the Q1 origins of Ophelia's lute (or her guitar, as many reviewers mistake it for). In fact, the critics' comments on Barton's textual choices demonstrate the contradictory perceptions and expectations a director faces. The reviewer for *Solihull News*, notes approvingly that Barton 'sticks to the text', while the *Oxford Times* critic, alluding to Barton's reputation for editing texts for performance states that:

Although [Barton] has, at times, been criticised for textual tampering, he can scarcely be accused of this where the present production is concerned, for he has used a commendably full text – especially, for instance, where Polonius, the Gravedigger and Osric are concerned.¹⁴²

Both reviews imply that a director should not commit any acts of 'textual tampering' and praise Barton for not doing so. They seem unaware of the approximately 1000 lines which he had cut and edited.¹⁴³ Peter McGarry for *The Coventry Evening Telegraph* holds the opposite

¹⁴⁰ See 'Hamlet: Past Productions', *BBC*

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/hamlet/past_productions/rsc_stage_1970.shtml> [accessed 19 September 2017].

¹⁴¹ Michael Billington, 'Hamlet', *The Guardian*, 3 July 1980; Dawson, *Shakespeare in Performance*, p. 158.

¹⁴² 'Sweet prince rediscovers poetry of Shakespeare', *Solihull News*, 12 July 1980; 'Hamlet: Royal Shakespeare Company Stratford', *The Oxford Times*, 11 July 1980.

¹⁴³ Based on my analysis of the promptbook. 'Hamlet 1980 Promptbook', Stratford-Upon-Avon, Royal Shakespeare Company Archive, RSC/SM/2/1980/30-37.

view: ‘whatever degree of respect it has shown to the text, the production desperately needs a trim. As it stands, it seems a heavily indulgent exercise.’¹⁴⁴ Desmond Pratt for *The Yorkshire Post*, however, notes ‘[t]he cuts having been so deftly planned as to be hardly noticeable’ – perhaps inadvertently explaining why so many of his fellow reviewers failed to pick up on them.¹⁴⁵

The *Sunday Telegraph*’s Francis King provides a more specific comment on Barton’s textual decisions:

Clearly it is [Barton’s] intention to bring out the extent to which the theatre [...] keeps invading the reality of life at Elsinore; and no less clearly it is this intention that has dictated to him the choice of what to retain and what to cut out in an over-long text. Thus he keeps the mention of the ‘little eyases’ (the child actors of Shakespeare’s time), even though it must be incomprehensible to all but a few of his audience, and yet omits the Ghost’s phrase, familiar from every dictionary of quotations, about ‘quills upon the fretful porpentine.’¹⁴⁶

King here acknowledges that Barton has the right, even the responsibility, to cut *Hamlet* to a manageable length. He also anticipates the audience’s studied familiarity with certain obscure words and phrases, acknowledging the pleasure of recognising specific individual lines.

Certainly his criticism touches on questions about what should dictate a director’s textual choices: clear directorial vision? Comprehensibility? The director’s best guess at what the audience will be expecting? King’s suggestion seems to be a combination of the second and third options at the expense of the first. In any modern main house production in London or Stratford, a large proportion of the audience has probably already seen *Hamlet* once or perhaps several times; an even larger proportion is already familiar with the play’s basic plot.

¹⁴⁴ Peter McGarry, ‘Exercise in Tradition...’, *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 3 July 1980.

¹⁴⁵ Desmond Pratt, ‘The Arts: Theatres’, *The Yorkshire Post*, Yorkshire Post, 4 July 1980.

¹⁴⁶ Francis King, ‘Plays are the thing’, *Sunday Telegraph*, 6 July 1980.

And no professional theatre reviewer is ignorant of *Hamlet*. Audiences and critics have expectations of the play which may vary in the detail but agree in the principle, expectations shaped by the collective experience of watching – or reading about – previous performances and consuming all kinds of popular media from cartoons and novels through to newspaper columns and advertisements. Everyone, surely, is waiting to hear ‘To be or not to be’, whether or not King’s specific contention about ‘porpentines’ is as universal as he thinks.

Taken as a group, the reviews suggest contradictory things about when, if ever, it is acceptable for a director to cut *Hamlet*. The views can be divided into four categories:

- 1) A director should not cut the text (*Solihull News, The Oxford Times*).
- 2) A director should cut the text for the sake of concision (McGarry for *The Coventry Evening Telegraph*).
- 3) A director may cut the text as long as the resultant text is smooth and the changes are hard to notice (Pratt for *The Yorkshire Post*).
- 4) A director should cut the text but it must comply with undefined notions of audience or reviewer expectations (King for *The Sunday Telegraph*).

A director who includes lines that are perceptibly derived from the First Quarto is likely to be condemned according to the first, third and probably fourth of these categories, since each depends on adherence to a hazy idea of fidelity to a notional *Hamlet* based on Q2/F. The same applies to those who adopt Q1’s structure, but not, it seems, those who borrow from Q1 for stage directions. The visible as opposed to audible aspects of a production are generally not seen as the prerogative of Shakespeare’s text; it is usually accepted that the set, stage directions and other non-textual features are up to the director, the cast and the rest of the production team. These are judged primarily on whether the reviewer deems them to ‘work’ as a production concept or not, rather than any criteria based around some notion of ‘authenticity’. There are some exceptions, particularly when the text is deemed to provide

‘disguised stage directions’, as in Gareth Lloyd Evans’s review in the *Stratford-Upon-Avon Herald*:

I think this very promising performance could have been even better if Mr Barton had not followed the lead of so many of his predecessors and both cut and ignored one of those marvellously disguised stage directions of Shakespeare’s which directors so often miss. It is spoken by a Gentleman at the beginning of Act IV Scene V and gives detailed directions as to the nature of Ophelia’s madness as it appears to others. So often, when they cut, directors saw the very branch on which they ought to sit. It is uncharacteristic of John Barton not to accept what Shakespeare so generously offers.¹⁴⁷

Evans is unusual in that he voices disappointment about a specifically visual contravention of Shakespeare’s ‘intended’ text. More often, what is seen (as opposed to what is heard) is judged according to artistic merit rather than notions of authenticity or textual fidelity. This might be the reason that Ophelia’s lute is accepted so readily, and indeed praised as a ‘brilliant’: few if any of the reviewers were aware of its origins in the First Quarto but in this case it does not matter – they are making aesthetic judgements, not textual or historical ones.¹⁴⁸

This image of the lute is, then, the only sign in Barton’s production of the First Quarto’s influence. Combined with his rejection of the Q1 ‘suit of jests’ lines, this rather lukewarm approach suggests a reluctance to employ the First Quarto. Yet there is no demonstrable rejection; the programme even opens with an image of the text. Rather than stemming from any particular antipathy towards the text, Barton’s approach is best attributed

¹⁴⁷ Gareth Lloyd Evans, ‘Harmonious and best yet’, *Stratford-Upon-Avon Herald*, 1 July 1980. The ‘detailed instructions’ are presumably contained in the lines ‘She speaks much of her father; says she hears / There’s tricks i’ the world; and hems, and beats her heart; / Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,’ etc. (Q2 4.5.4-6).

¹⁴⁸ Billington, *The Guardian*, 1980.

to his familiarity with the most up-to-date scholarship of the time. If, as the memorial reconstruction argument suggests, the First Quarto is a mangled recollection of a performance from the early seventeenth century, then it provides insight into the performance – but not the text – of the early modern stage, better in fact than Q2/F. Thus Barton rejects the lines of Q1 but inserts a stage trope derived from the text. The relationship between the two Bartons led to John Barton adopting the Penguin text; while the edition may have piqued in Barton a slight interest in Q1 and inspired the programme’s opening image, it does not result in any radical textual choices in the promptbook. The RSC 1980 production makes limited use, therefore, of the First Quarto; this is not a surprise given Barton’s academic links. Apart from a few dissenting voices, after all, the memorial reconstruction theory was in 1980 orthodoxy: the text of the First Quarto at this point had been either actively rejected or quietly ignored by Shakespearean academics for decades, and this is in clear evidence in Barton’s production.

Orange Tree 1985: Absolute Fidelity?

Five years after Barton’s *Hamlet*, Sam Walters directed Q1 at the Orange Tree Theatre in West London. Walters’s production, though it took place in a fringe venue and with a cast of only nine actors, has had a lasting impact on the reception and performance of the First Quarto in the UK and beyond; it can, for example, be directly linked to the first two full productions of Q1 in London in the twenty-first century.¹⁴⁹ If Barton’s RSC production demonstrates the difficulties directors can face with reviewers, Walters’s Orange Tree production shows no sign of this: the critics were unequivocally positive. The issue of textual emendation, however, arises once again.¹⁵⁰ B. A. Young states in the *Financial Times* that

¹⁴⁹ See Chapters Three and Five.

¹⁵⁰ Desmond Christie, *The Guardian*, 3 April 1985.

‘Sam Walters [...] has cut a little extra [i.e. on top of what is already absent in Q1 from Q2/F] to ensure that nine players can take 19 parts on his tiny stage, and do it in 2½ hours.’¹⁵¹

Nicholas Shrimpton, reviewing for *Shakespeare Survey*, goes further, noting the textual emendations in detail:

Walters had, reasonably enough, made absolute fidelity subordinate to the needs of performance and tidied up a few of the more ludicrous or confusing variants. King Hamlet’s sepulchre, accordingly, ‘op’d’ rather than ‘burst’ his ponderous and marble jaws, Hamlet spoke of ‘country’ rather than ‘contrary’ matters to Ophelia, and The Mousetrap took place in familiar Vienna rather than surprising ‘Guyana’. This meant that the production was not a perfect test of the quality and status of the First Quarto.¹⁵²

Shrimpton’s review is in turn quoted in Janette Dillon’s 1994 article, where she agrees with him that these emendations precluded the production from being a fair test of Q1’s performability.¹⁵³ Yet critics Holderness and Loughrey, and indeed Walters himself, all insist that the production was an uncut, unamended rendition of the 1603 text.¹⁵⁴

Interviewed in 2014 as part of my research for this thesis, Walters restated his conviction that he did not edit the text: ‘I’m a bit of textual purist. I think having decided to do a text that was impure I probably stuck to it’.¹⁵⁵ He complained of ‘sentences that don’t work’ in the ‘To be’ soliloquy but when asked whether he therefore changed them, he replied ‘No, no, no. No, I didn’t change anything.’¹⁵⁶ Walters recounted a conversation with the actor playing Hamlet, Peter McGuinness: Walters ‘said, “Well this doesn’t make sense,” and he [McGuinness] said, “Well I’ll make it make sense.” [...] No I wouldn’t have changed

¹⁵¹ B. A. Young, *Financial Times*, 5 March 1985.

¹⁵² Shrimpton, ‘Shakespeare Performances’, p. 195.

¹⁵³ Janette Dillon, ‘Is There a Performance in this Text?’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 45, 1 (1994), 74-86.

¹⁵⁴ Holderness and Loughrey, *Hamlet*, p. 29.

¹⁵⁵ Walters, Interview with the author.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

anything.¹⁵⁷ He insisted that had not altered the text at all, though given that the production had taken place nearly thirty years prior to the interview, he also conceded that he could not be entirely sure. His copy of the script, which I consulted, seems to corroborate his conviction: it reveals that he did not in fact ‘tidy up’ any ‘variants’. Nonetheless, Shrimpton’s identification of three readings that do not derive from the 1603 text is accurate. The confusion arises because Walters took as his base text Albert Weiner’s 1962 edition of the First Quarto. Walters complained during the interview that, when he had first staged Q1 as a student, getting a copy of the text was impossible:

It was in the late sixties. I couldn’t find a copy when I wanted it and I eventually got this [edition] sent from America and that’s the copy that I used. I couldn’t buy one in this country. It just didn’t exist.¹⁵⁸

The three moments that Shrimpton notes as having been altered (‘burst’ to ‘op’d’, ‘contrary’ to ‘country’, ‘Guyana’ to ‘Vienna’) were indeed emended, not by Walters but by Weiner.¹⁵⁹ Weiner defends the first by suggesting that Q1’s ‘burst’ had ‘slipped down from two lines above’ during the printing process, while he simply edits the other two and notes the changes in footnotes.¹⁶⁰ Weiner argues in his textual introduction that Q1 represents a copy of the play abridged and adapted for touring so that ‘four or five shareholders could handle the play, the rest of the cast being composed of younger, less experienced actors.’¹⁶¹ He edits the text according to a slightly adapted version of W. W. Greg’s editorial principles, aiming to reconstruct the ‘printer’s copy, the manuscript Valentine Sims had before him in the print shop’ rather than ‘Shakespeare’s fair copy’, which Weiner argues never existed for Q1.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet: The First Quarto: 1603*, ed. by Albert Weiner (New York: Barton’s Educational Series, 1962), pp. 86, 124, 127.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 58.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p. 58.

¹⁶² Ibid, p. 61.

Taking an approach which contrasts with the editors of the 1980s discussed above, Weiner states that rather than basing his changes on ‘any theory or counter-theory as to the provenance of the text’, he ‘changed or emended readings only when I believed there were “manifest and indubitable errors” [...] dictated by bibliographical evidence.’¹⁶³ Of course, there is little bibliographical evidence that indicates any of these readings really are manifestly ‘errors’. In any case, Walters does not himself make the changes that Shrimpton and Dillon claim he did; rather he inherits them from his edition.

The matter of cuts, however, is slightly different. During the interview, while flicking through his copy of the text, about to conclude a discussion about cutting lines, Walters said: ‘So, I didn’t. No, I tend to be, as a director, boringly – oh look, there’s a cut!’¹⁶⁴ Looking through his text further, he subsequently found another. Both were in Scene 9, and both were reasonably short sections. His first cut begs a comparison with Barton’s 1980 RSC production: like Barton, Walters cuts the Q1 ‘suit of jests’ lines Spencer had included in his Penguin edition. Considering these lines in the 2014 interview, Walters said, ‘I may have just thought, “Oh well he’s said all this.”’¹⁶⁵ Much has been written about the sources of these lines, and yet when it comes to performance, the question of whether these forgotten catchphrases of long-dead actors derive from Shakespeare’s ‘own pen’ or are an actor’s interpolation, or indeed something else is not quite the issue.¹⁶⁶ The lines are more immediately concerned with meta-theatre than with the tragic thrust of the plot; they are overly reflective on performance without offering new insights into, for example, the protagonist’s state of mind. The ‘in-jokes’ refer to long-forgotten performances and actors, and are essentially meaningless to a modern audience.¹⁶⁷ This passage, it is becoming clear,

¹⁶³ Ibid, p. 61.

¹⁶⁴ Walters, Interview with the author.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Spencer, *Hamlet*, p. 364.

¹⁶⁷ The word ‘cullisons’ is a particularly rare word. See Eric Sams, *The Real Shakespeare: Retrieving the Early Years, 1564-1594* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 133.

acts as a useful indicator to the approach a director takes to the First Quarto. A director who includes these lines – whether in a Q1-based text or in one centred on Q2/F – prioritises ‘authenticity’ over dramatic action. The lines are retained as a statement of intent to perform the text ‘as is’.

Walters’s second cut to his text is a small section from Scene 9, which in the Weiner edition reads as follows:

Nay, then there’s some likelihood a gentle-
man’s death may outlive memory. But by my faith, he
must build churches, then, or else he must follow the old
epitaph, ‘With ho, with ho, the hobby-horse is forgot.’ (Weiner 9.146-149)

By 2014 Walters’s reason for cutting the passage was, like the hobby-horse, forgot: ‘I think I just thought, “I don’t understand what that means.”’¹⁶⁸ He is not alone. Though the lines are not quite identical to their Q2/F counterparts, they carry the same obscurities. In fact, the equivalent Q2/F lines are cut from every major production studied in this thesis: the RSC productions of 1980, 1989, 2004 and 2008; the National Theatre productions of 1989, 2000 and 2010; the Globe Theatre’s productions of 2000 and 2012-16; the Old Vic 2004; Young Vic 2011; and the Factory text used from 2006 to 2012. The only productions which did *not* cut those lines were the Red Shift and White Bear productions, both of which were based on Q1.¹⁶⁹ Even editors find these lines difficult to explain and though some textual critics continue to comment on the lines, theatre-makers, reviewers and audiences alike tend to ignore them.¹⁷⁰ Unlike the ‘fretful porpentine’ that Francis King had so missed in the RSC 1980 production, these lines carry no cultural weight; they are only ever retained in

¹⁶⁸ Walters, Interview with the author.

¹⁶⁹ See Chapters 2 and 5. Although I was unable to locate the Red Shift promptbook, the recording held at the Royal Holloway Archive indicates that these lines were retained in performance.

¹⁷⁰ See for example Natália Pikli, ‘The Prince and the Hobby-Horse: Shakespeare and the Ambivalence of Early Modern Popular Culture’, *Journal of Early Modern Studies*, 2 (2013), 119-140.

productions seeking absolute textual fidelity. Shrimpton is, therefore, correct in his assertion that Walters made ‘absolute fidelity subordinate to the needs of performance’, though not exactly in the ways his review indicates.

Similarly, Dillon’s claims that the Orange Tree production does not act as a showcase of Q1’s performability are discredited: it is successful with the critics and Walters makes very few emendations. Dillon even suggests that the production, and any other edited Q1 performance, ‘might, arguably, be used to demonstrate that the First Quarto is *not* performable in its actual material state.’¹⁷¹ Such an argument carries with it the implication that the standard texts of *Hamlet* have themselves been subjected to a similar test. Of course, not one of the Q2/F productions studied in this thesis has gone unedited. Indeed, in the productions studied, the traditional text of *Hamlet* is cut in performance far more than the First Quarto. To take the two productions studied so far in this chapter for example, the 1980 RSC Barton production cut around 1000 lines compared to the grand total of 14 lines cut by Walters. Even allowing for the comparative brevity of Q1, the contrast between the two approaches is evident. Following Dillon’s logic, it is not the First Quarto that is unperformable in an unaltered form, but the Q2/F text. But of course ‘performability’ is not the real issue at stake here. The argument actually concerns the cultural capital of the various forms of *Hamlet*: a text’s ‘authenticity’ is less important than the text’s *perceived* authenticity, so what the reviewers and audience (fail to) notice in performance plays as much of a role as what a director actually does with the text.

Notwithstanding these disagreements over textual issues, the Orange Tree *Hamlet* received high praise from newspaper critics, flying in the face of the received wisdom surrounding Q1. Janette Dillon’s reluctance to see Walters’s production as proof of the text’s performability seems to derive from a desire to maintain the New Bibliographical rejection of

¹⁷¹ Dillon, ‘Is There a Performance in this Text?’, p. 84.

Q1, but the Orange Tree's critical success overrode any such efforts. For a fringe production in a London suburb, the Orange Tree *Hamlet* exercised a quiet but persistent influence; subsequent generations of theatre-makers followed Walters's example, and the success of the production provided evidence for academics to argue that Q1 was not the hopelessly corrupt, unperformable work that it was assumed to be. This is hardly surprising; the text, after all, is so often rejected for the very reason that it is believed to be a record of Elizabethan or early Jacobean performance. Before the Orange Tree production, the text was practically unheard-of outside the academic institution.¹⁷² Following Walters's staging of Q1, the text was often described as highly successful in performance, apparently on the basis of this production.¹⁷³ At a time when the First Quarto was seen as an entirely academic text, Walters brought it back to the London stage and, by doing so, made it harder for both theatre makers and editors to ignore Q1.

RSC 1989: Common Sense, I Suppose

At the end of the 1980s, following the Orange Tree Q1 production and with all four of the seminal editions outlined above now available to the company, the RSC again staged *Hamlet*. Ron Daniels directed Mark Rylance in a production which toured the UK from 1988 before opening officially in Stratford in July 1989 and later transferring to London. Daniels's production proved popular, with mostly positive reviews commenting that it was a 'fascinating production', 'authoritative', 'confidently expressive'; it 'hits the nail on the

¹⁷² Walters had of course staged it first as a student director, which again highlights the text's scholarly associations.

¹⁷³ See, for example, Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance*, p. 145; and the advertising material for the Red Shift Q1 production: Red Shift Ephemera, Egham, Royal Holloway College Archive, RSTC/6/6/12.

head'.¹⁷⁴ Like Barton before him, Daniels uses a photocopy of the 1980 Penguin edition (though at this point it had of course been published) with handwritten alterations, meaning that he too starts with an edition that is not inherently hostile to the notion of Q1 having some textual authority. Daniels's programme also narrates the history of the *Hamlet* texts; unlike its predecessor, however, it offers no value judgement about the *Hamlet* texts:

Shakespeare's own tragedy, which was first acted in 1602, exists in three versions.

The first is found in the first quarto, published in 1603 [...] The second version is the second quarto of 1604 [...] The third version is that of the folio edition and the standard text is invariably made up from the second quarto and the folio versions, each of which contained passages omitted from the other.¹⁷⁵

The programme thus explains that the 'standard text' is usually a conflation of Q2 and F; it makes no comment on the status of Q1. A reader of this programme, then, would have no reason to assume that Q1 was in any way 'bad' or problematic.

Daniels himself seems to espouse a similarly neutral position. The RSC edition of *Hamlet*, published nineteen years after Daniels's production and containing a text based on the Folio, contains an interview with him in which he is asked to explain his textual interventions as follows:

The play exists in three early texts of greatly differing lengths, suggesting that it evolved in performance in Shakespeare's lifetime and that cuts were applied at various times – in cutting your text to a manageable length, did you have a set of principles or was it more a case of following your directorial instincts?¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ Paul Lapworth, 'Daniels' Hamlet a degree off balance?', *Stratford Herald*, 5 May 1989; Rod Dugate, 'Perturbed spirit', *Tribune*, 12 May 1989; Chris Goodacre, 'Hamlet humour fully exploited', *Banbury Guardian*, 4 May 1989; Louise Birt, 'Ovation seals Hamlet's fate', *Evesham Journal*, 4 May 1989.

¹⁷⁵ 'Hamlet 1989 Programme', Stratford-Upon-Avon, Royal Shakespeare Company Archive, RSC/SM/1/1989/HAM1.

¹⁷⁶ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2008), p. 216. See Chapter 4 for an account of the RSC's edition.

His response is short: ‘Common sense, I suppose. A desire to keep the action immediate and exciting, to make sure the text was clear and accessible. And understandable.’¹⁷⁷ Textual authenticity, it seems, is not a priority for Daniels; rather, his stated purpose as a director is to entertain the audience.

Daniels, like Barton and indeed Walters, deletes Hamlet’s Q1 advice to the Players included in the Penguin text. Again, there is no explanation provided for this change, but as with Barton it seems to be part of a wider programme of textual editing. Just as in 1980, the advice scene is heavily edited at this point – so heavily edited, in fact, that this is one of the few points where the promptbook is not simply an enlarged annotated photocopy of the Penguin edition but has instead been completely re-typed. The first fourteen lines of the scene are all deleted or relocated, while the following lines are cut: ‘But let your own discretion be your tutor’ (Penguin 3.2.15-16); ‘virtue her own ... own image, and’ (Penguin 3.2.22-23); ‘Now this overdone ... theatre / of others’ (Penguin 3.2.24-28); ‘not to speak ... pagan, nor man,’ (Penguin 3.2.29-31); and ‘And let those ... my lord. / Well’ (Penguin 3.2.37-55). The first line of ‘The Mousetrap’ (‘Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing’ – the Penguin’s 3.2.264) is inserted here and repeated a number of times, with different parts of Hamlet’s first fourteen lines of advice inserted after each attempt.¹⁷⁸ The result of this extensive textual work is much smoother than this description suggests: Hamlet is, in effect, rehearsing the First Player in preparation for the performance in front of the King. Daniels’s editing here, which includes the deletion of all the Penguin’s Q1 lines, offers a fresh reading to this section, focused on the aesthetics and craft of directing and performance. Rather than reproducing a series of obscure references to seventeenth-century stage tradition, Daniels rewrites the scene to give it the resonance of a modern-day rehearsal room, a theatrical image

¹⁷⁷ Bate and Rasmussen, *Hamlet*, p. 217.

¹⁷⁸ ‘Hamlet 1989 Promptbook’, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Royal Shakespeare Company Archive, RSC/SM/1/1989/HAM1.

much more easily communicated to his late 1980s audience. His approach here is thus akin to though crucially different from Barton's: both directors see the section as requiring radical adjustment for the sake of clarity and entertainment; but while Barton deletes, Daniels reworks both text and context.

If Daniels here shares Barton's tendency to delete Q1 lines, elsewhere he differs from Barton; at a number of points throughout the play he directly employs the First Quarto. He incorporates both the text's structure and individual lines and words into his production. The most prominent Q1-influenced change Daniels makes to his Penguin base text is the relocation of the 'To be' soliloquy to its First Quarto position after Scene 7. His method of doing so involves once again a substantial reworking of the text in a complicated mixture of lines from the Penguin's 2.2 and 3.1, and from Q1. After 3.1.23 ('To see and hear the matter'), Daniels includes a number of Q1 lines to smooth over the gap where 'To be' had been in the Penguin edition: the King asks 'Gertrude you'll see this play?' (Q1 8.21) to which she replies 'I will and it joys me at the soul / He's inclined to any kind of mirth' (Q1 8.22-23). Then after three further lines from the Penguin text (3.1.26-28), Polonius uses Q1 lines as prelude to his suggestion about spying on Hamlet's conversation from behind the arras: 'my good Soveriegn [sic], give me leave to speak, / We cannot yet find out the very ground / Of his distemperance' (Q1 8.25-27).¹⁷⁹ In this case, Daniels approaches the First Quarto in a utilitarian yet aesthetically accomplished way, following its structure and blending and intercutting lines from the text with his base edition to make sense of the transition, and indeed to hide it: the editing is smooth enough that the relocation goes mostly unmentioned.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ The typographical errors are introduced in the promptbook.

¹⁸⁰ Two reviewers do, however, comment on it; see below.

Daniels also incorporates lines and words from the First Quarto into his prompt copy in order to clarify ambiguity. Thus he changes the opening line of Act Two, from ‘Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo’ to ‘Good Reynaldo, give my son this money.’¹⁸¹ His new version echoes the First Quarto line: ‘Montano, here, these letters to my son’ (6.1). Both Daniels’s version and the Q1 reading clarify an ambiguity which is hard for those familiar with the text even to notice: the ‘him’ of 2.1.1 is of course Laertes, but in the traditional Q2/F version this fact is not made explicit until line 10. With Daniels’s rewriting, the meaning is immediately apparent to all, and not just to those familiar with the play. Later Daniels again uses the same technique of drawing on the First Quarto to eliminate another potentially ambiguous moment. Ophelia’s ‘a’ (i.e. ‘he’) of the Penguin’s 3.2.152 (‘Will ’a tell us what this show meant?’) is replaced by ‘this fellow’, again clarifying the text through the adoption of parts of the Q1 text: ‘This fellow will tell all’ (Q1 9.87). Daniels even changes the setting for ‘The Mousetrap’ from Q2/F’s Vienna to Q1’s Guyana, providing significance to Hamlet’s claim that the play is ‘Tropically’ (Penguin 3.2.247) named.¹⁸² Following this, Daniels adopts Q1’s ‘Father’ rather than the Penguin’s ‘Your majesty’ (Penguin, 3.2.251): Hamlet’s more intimate term both serves as a sarcastic form of tenderness and as a reminder of the former king’s murder, thereby making ‘The Mousetrap’ a blunter instrument and providing the King with more obvious cause for the anger that follows. Daniels, then, consistently takes a utilitarian approach to the First Quarto, mining it for ways to enhance or clarify the play without necessarily drawing attention to its use.

Given the relatively extensive use of Q1, it is no surprise that some reviewers comment. Michael Billington for *The Guardian* notes that Daniels’s production ‘is a reading pursued with admirable rigour and consistency: thus Mr Daniels follows the First Quarto

¹⁸¹ ‘Hamlet 1989 Programme’, RSC Archive.

¹⁸² Ironically, Q1 reads ‘Trapically’ rather than ‘Tropically’, so does not carry the pun.

sequence in which “To be or not to be” precedes “O what a rogue” so that suicide anticipates action.’¹⁸³ For Billington, Daniels’s use of Q1’s structure clarifies causal links within the play. Peter Kemp for the *Independent*, on the other hand, feels the opposite: ‘Following the unreliable First Quarto Daniels wrenches scenes out of their customary sequence.’¹⁸⁴ Similarly, John Gross, though not commenting directly on Q1, writes that ‘cuts have been inflicted with a butcher’s knife’.¹⁸⁵ The reviewers can thus be seen to conform to two of the four views on editing identified above in relation to the 1980 RSC production: Billington and Gross each suggest that editing is in principle acceptable provided that it works well, though they disagree as to whether Daniels’s editing really was smooth. Kemp meanwhile complains that Daniels does not fulfil his expectations of *Hamlet*’s structure; he may be the first reviewer considered in this thesis to criticise a director for using the First Quarto to frustrate expectations, but he is certainly not the last.

Rather than a text to avoid because of its perceived impurity, Q1 for Daniels seems to function as an editorial tool that can clarify ambiguity or complement his readings. He uses aspects of Q1’s structure, employs selected lines from the text to smooth over the displaced soliloquy, and draws on elements of the First Quarto to clarify his base edition. Daniels’s willingness to draw on Q1 for his own aesthetic purposes is a step on from Barton’s much more limited usage. Of course, Daniels is not on any kind of crusade to champion the text; just as he claims, his focus is on action and comprehensibility. He does not seem bothered with authenticity and so instead approaches Q1 with an artist’s creative eye, searching for ways the text could enhance his production. The success of his production demonstrates that aspects of the First Quarto could be incorporated into a mainstream *Hamlet* without problem – even without being identified as originating from Q1. The 1989 RSC production was the

¹⁸³ Michael Billington, *The Guardian*, 27 April 1989.

¹⁸⁴ Peter Kemp, *The Independent*, 27 April 1989.

¹⁸⁵ John Gross, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 30 April 1989.

first major British *Hamlet* staged after the Orange Tree performance and it represented a clear shift from the previous, more limited approach to the text. The text had not been embraced by any stretch of the imagination but the change was symptomatic of a slowly increasing critical and creative engagement with Q1 across the decade. This change is brought about in part by Walters's Orange Tree *Hamlet*, but also by the beginnings of a seismic shift in academic thought on Q1, as I will discuss in Chapter Three below.

National Theatre 1989: Neutered by the NT?

Richard Eyre became Artistic Director of the National in 1988, and he soon staged *Hamlet* with Daniel Day-Lewis as Hamlet and Judi Dench as Gertrude in a production which opened in March 1989.¹⁸⁶ Much was expected of this production: featuring two of the most popular Shakespearean actors of the day, it was the National Theatre's first *Hamlet* since Peter Hall's production opened the Lyttleton Theatre in 1976; but it was also Eyre's second *Hamlet* production of the decade, having directed Jonathan Pryce in a famously experimental production at the Royal Court in 1980. Unfortunately, insufficient primary records remain for a full investigation into the 1980 Royal Court production, but in 1989 Eyre's base text at the National was Harold Jenkins's recently published 1986 Arden2 edition. The Arden series might in many ways be thought to be a natural choice for any National Theatre director. The National Theatre was, with the RSC, one of two theatres in England in 1989 competing for the place of the top Shakespeare theatre of his home nation. Indeed, from its earliest nineteenth-century proponents, through Laurence Olivier's opening production of *Hamlet*, to sell-out twenty-first-century performances of *Timon of Athens* and *King Lear*, the National

¹⁸⁶ Despite not officially opening in Stratford until later in 1989, the RSC's production started touring in 1988, and is therefore considered before the National's production in this thesis.

Theatre's history is inextricable from that of Shakespeare in performance. As Daniel Rosenthal, the theatre's historian, put it: 'No Shakespeare, no National Theatre'.¹⁸⁷ Similarly, the Arden strives for position as the leading scholarly edition of Shakespeare. From the outset, both the National and the Arden have involved many of the most influential members of their respective fields, so for Eyre directing at the National Theatre, then, Jenkins's Arden2 edition was an obvious choice of base text.

Having adopted the Arden2, Eyre's editing of the text was considerably lighter than many of the other Q2/F directors considered in this thesis. Though Eyre's 1980 promptbook from the Royal Court does not seem to have survived, other sources indicate that he made at least some striking changes to the text, notably by reassigning the Ghost's lines to Hamlet himself. In 1989, on the other hand, Eyre's approach to the text is more traditionalist, making few changes to the Arden2. He cuts around 550 of the Arden2's approximately 3600 lines, compared to the roughly 840 cut from the same edition by John Caird and Nicholas Hytner's approximately 950.¹⁸⁸ Eyre's cuts are most prominent in the last act, where he cut just over a quarter – 167 of the 640 lines. He makes other emendations and adds a few lines from Q2/F that Jenkins had omitted, but again his textual interventions are much more limited than those of many other directors considered in the thesis. Indeed, reviewers get the impression that the text is entirely unedited: Michael Billington and Michael Coveney both call it a 'full text' production.¹⁸⁹

There is, nonetheless, a single echo of the First Quarto in the promptbook, which actually derives from Jenkins's Arden2. Eyre follows Jenkins in using 'diest' at Arden2's 4.6.56: a reproduction of Q1's 'thus he dies' (15.5) and rejection of Q2's 'didst' (4.7.55) and F's 'diddest' (4.3.56). Jenkins argues that 'diest' 'restores both sense and metre and is

¹⁸⁷ Daniel Rosenthal, *The National Theatre Story* (London: Oberon Books, 2013), p. 3.

¹⁸⁸ See Chapters 3 and 5.

¹⁸⁹ Michael Billington, *The Guardian*, 18 March 1989; Michael Coveney, *The Financial Times*, 18 March 1989.

confirmed beyond question by Q1', though of course this logic can easily be reversed – the Folio's 'diddest' restores metre, confirms Q2's reading and actually does make sufficient (but less satisfying) sense.¹⁹⁰ Key to this discussion, however, is Jenkins's use of the verb 'confirmed', indicating that he would presumably have emended to 'diest' with or without the First Quarto's corroboration. Whether Eyre consciously accepted Jenkins's footnoted argument or simply adopted the reading as a further act of 'confirmation' without investigating its textual provenance, this is Eyre's only inclusion of anything derived from Q1. His choice of the Jenkins edition, therefore, despite its single Q1-inflected line, clearly plays a significant role in Eyre's rejection of the text: other than this, the production bears no echo of the First Quarto. His prompt text could conceivably have looked the same had the 1603 text never been rediscovered and the recent Orange Tree and RSC productions never happened.

As if to emphasise the point, Eyre's programme presents a picture of *Hamlet* as entirely uncomplicated textually, mentioning nothing about the play's text or printing history. It foregrounds – and indeed situates itself within – *Hamlet*'s long performance history, reproducing reviews and other accounts of performances from Burbage up to Eyre's previous production at the Royal Court. In many ways this complements the theatre's reputation for producing Shakespeare 'for the people'; but alongside this performance history, the programme highlights the play's cultural and intellectual significance by quoting academics and artists: Théophile Gautier, Romain Rolland, Robert Bridges, Jan Kott, dramatist John Ford, Phillip Larkin, Ivy Compton-Burnett, C. S. Lewis and John Dover Wilson.¹⁹¹ The selection of such a distinguished group of thinkers and makers signals that this is a production for an educated elite in tune with the historical performance and reception of the

¹⁹⁰ Jenkins, *Hamlet*, p. 367.

¹⁹¹ 'Hamlet 1989 Programme', London, National Theatre Archive, RNT/PP/1/3/139.

cultural icon of ‘Shakespeare’. Eyre, clearly, is catering not for the avant-garde expectations of a Royal Court audience, but for those who expect to see a straightforward, undisruptive performance of *Hamlet*, traditional and comfortable. In so doing he takes a different approach from Daniels; while Daniels seems willing to approach the First Quarto, Eyre rejects the text.

The production is now mostly remembered for Day-Lewis’s sudden and dramatic departure amid rumours that he had seen his father’s ghost in the middle of the performance. Prior to this unscripted drama, however, the production was widely criticised for being too bland and traditional: *The Telegraph*’s Charles Osborne writes that ‘one leaves the theatre feeling disappointed’ and Michael Coveney for *The Financial Times* states that ‘A bland neutrality settles over the evening early on and never lifts.’¹⁹² Michael Radcliffe writes in *The Observer* that ‘it is a performance [...] still in awe of the play and the role.’¹⁹³ While most reviewers agree with Radcliffe that the production is rather plain, *The Independent*’s Peter Kemp is the exception to the rule. He uses numerous extravagant formulations to express his admiration: ‘atmosphercially clouded with freezing fog’, ‘sentries, shuddering with cold and nerves, hiss jittery questions’, ‘conveyed with compulsive – and convulsive power’, ‘exceptionally thrilling’ and so on.¹⁹⁴ In stark contrast to other reviewers, Kemp can hardly find words to express his approval for the production, which suggests that he is judging the production based on completely different criteria. Later that year Kemp condemned Daniels for frustrating his expectations by following the Q1 structure, as described above. Kemp’s view of Hamlet – and *Hamlet* – is firmly traditional, and Eyre’s production fits his taste perfectly. Kemp’s divergent reactions to the two 1989 productions makes clear that conspicuous uses of Q1 are incompatible with the reverential, traditionalist view of *Hamlet* as a cultural icon.

¹⁹² Charles Osborne, *The Telegraph*, 17 March 1989; Coveney, *The Financial Times*.

¹⁹³ Michael Radcliffe, *The Observer*, 19 March 1989.

¹⁹⁴ Peter Kemp, *The Independent*, 18 March 1989.

In the months leading up to the production, Eyre went on the influential *South Bank Show* with Melvin Bragg, publicly to defend radical interpretations. Yet Eyre's words also hint that he now feels a new responsibility as Artistic Director of the National to conform to audience expectations:

You can do a naked *Hamlet*, you can do *Hamlet* on skates, you can do *Hamlet* walking over hot coals as far as I'm concerned. The play is still there. It doesn't profane the play and I never really understand why people get so upset about it, although I can see that if you do a production at the National Theatre or at the Royal Shakespeare Company then it is reasonable for people to say, 'Well if we go there and if we have these great national cultural institutions we should at least there see some approximation to the play that Shakespeare wrote.'¹⁹⁵

This explanation provides an insight into the difference between Eyre's productions at either end of the decade. While radical theatre is the Royal Court's *raison d'être*, at the National Eyre feels the weight of the institution pressuring him into producing a mainstream *Hamlet*. Indeed, his diary, published fourteen years later, shows a recognition that his work was considered too conventional, in a rather distraught response:

I'm trying to understand my feelings after *Hamlet*, reeling from the critical drubbing. [...] I find that my production is 'old-fashioned', 'mainstream', 'has failed to find a visual syntax', etc, etc. Exactly the opposite of what was said the last time I did the play. Have I been neutered by the NT?¹⁹⁶

The pressure to present something fitting with the theatre's status as a national institution pushes Eyre towards a more traditional, less experimental production. He goes against his artistic instincts and instead tries to present a performance which is 'some approximation to

¹⁹⁵ *The South Bank Show*, ITV, 1 April 1989.

¹⁹⁶ Richard Eyre, *National Service: Diary of a Decade* (London: Bloomsbury, 2003), p. 67.

the play that Shakespeare wrote'. In the process his creativity is, he feels, neutered. What this means in practice is the adoption of the Arden2 and the incorporation of few innovations. The First Quarto is thereby obscured in the process of Eyre seeking to produce an acceptably traditional *Hamlet*.

As with the productions at the RSC of the same decade, the 1989 National Theatre *Hamlet* once again highlights the importance of a production's base edition. In Eyre's case, however, his choice of edition is linked to the theatre in which he is working. Eyre's earlier production indicates that he is clearly not opposed to radical interpretations of *Hamlet*. He does not necessarily reject Q1, or even ignore it. Instead he is cowed by the National's history and reputation so he approaches the play conservatively, taking the most prestigious edition available to him. The rejection of the First Quarto is done on his behalf by Jenkins, and Eyre replicates it, consciously or not. There are, however, longer-term implications to Eyre's decisions: this production marks the start of a relationship between the Arden2 *Hamlet* and the National Theatre which continues through both subsequent productions at the theatre. If John Barton forges a link between the RSC and the Penguin in 1980, then in 1989 Eyre forms a similar link between the NT and Arden2. These choices made in the 1980s thus set the tone for each theatre's approach for the coming decades and into the new millennium.

Conclusion

Directors in the 1980s take a variety of approaches to Q1: while Walters on the one hand stages the whole text, Eyre, on the other, rejects it entirely. Barton incorporates a Q1 visual trope but otherwise ignores the text, while Daniels adopts the First Quarto's structure, and uses its lines both to facilitate this restructuring and to clarify a moment of ambiguity. All in all, the promptbooks for main house *Hamlet* performances in the 1980s did not contain many

traces of the First Quarto. The few moments where Q1 plays a direct role are concentrated around the RSC. It is at least partially due to the Penguin's explanation and inclusion of Q1, however limited, that Barton and Daniels present the First Quarto as they do. Eyre's rejection of the text, on the other hand, derives from his use of the Arden2 edition. It is obvious that any staging of *Hamlet* is influenced by a multitude of artistic, financial, social, political and other factors; but less obvious (or at least less consciously so) is the role that a production's base edition plays. In addition to being a production's fundamental starting-point through dictating which words are in the promptbook, an edition also informs the theatre programme's explanation of the texts and, crucially, the director's understanding of and approach to the three early texts. Yet the choice of which edition to use is not always made based on academic considerations: Walters, for example, had to make do with the only text he could find. Indeed, most directors to whom I have spoken take the colour of a volume as the primary means of identifying which edition they used.

The modern trend away from New Bibliographical labels of 'good' and 'bad' seems to confirm Jenkins's claim used in the epigraph to this chapter as reported by Honigmann that scholarly editions 'will stand for future ages long after the fogs of critical and uncritical opinion have dispersed'.¹⁹⁷ Yet it is precisely because of the enduring influence of the editions of the 1980s that New Bibliography continues to inform scholarly debates surrounding *Hamlet*: few people, academics or not, read the Shakespearean textual scholarship of the early- to mid-twentieth century. New Bibliography as a theoretical school climaxes in the 1980s, and the four influential editions of that decade can surely be seen as a culmination of its many achievements. New Bibliography continues to hold a sway over popular discourse on the early quartos precisely because it is encapsulated in and propagated by the very editions Jenkins thought would prove more permanent. Over the coming decades,

¹⁹⁷ Honigmann, 'Harold Jenkins, 1909-2000', p. 565.

the principles would be challenged academically, but the Arden² and Penguin editions had set precedents for the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre respectively. With these textual traditions come associated attitudes towards Q1 which play themselves out in the various degrees of rejection or inclusion of the text on the stages of Britain's two largest state-subsidised theatres.

CHAPTER THREE: 2000

THE END OF THE BAD QUARTOS

Given that ‘To be or not to be’ in its traditional form is itself generally regarded as a touchstone for rarefied, discriminating taste – a pinnacle of literary artistry – any attempt to assert the value of an alternative version is automatically defined as evidence of a tin ear [...] ‘To be or not to be’ in its traditional form is quintessential Shakespeare. Either you grasp its inexpressible excellence or you don’t, and if you don’t, God help you.

—Leah S. Marcus, 1996¹⁹⁸

As several academics have suggested, Gary Taylor and Michael Warren’s 1983 collection *The Division of the Kingdoms* brought about a change in the scholarly consensus about the two texts of *King Lear*.¹⁹⁹ The collection’s obvious influence can be seen in subsequent editorial decisions: the Oxford Complete Works editors famously published both the Quarto and Folio version of *Lear* in 1986, and Arden followed suit in 1997, printing the play in a single volume with superscript ‘F’ or ‘Q’ signalling Folio- or Quarto-only lines. *The Division of the Kingdoms* is only concerned with *Lear*, admittedly a play with textual difficulties, but whose first quarto was never really considered ‘bad’ in the way that the first texts of *Hamlet*, *Henry V*, *Merry Wives* or *Romeo and Juliet* were. Nonetheless, the change brought about by *The Division of the Kingdoms* marks a turning point for future approaches to Shakespeare’s other multiple-text plays. The years following its publication afforded a good opportunity to challenge assumptions about other Shakespearean quartos – assumptions, as I suggest in

¹⁹⁸ Leah S. Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance*, p. 135.

¹⁹⁹ *The Division of the Kingdoms*, ed. by Taylor and Warren. See for example Egan, *The Struggle for Shakespeare’s Text*, pp. 134-135.

Chapter One, often based on mere suggestions put forward by the New Bibliographers in the early 1900s that later hardened into orthodoxy.²⁰⁰ This orthodoxy, particularly with regards to Q1, underwent a series of changes during the 1990s as New Bibliography's influence waned, and this chapter opens by exploring those changes. Of course, during the same period much work was done on the four other quartos dubbed 'bad', not to mention the other Shakespearean texts, but here I focus on Q1 *Hamlet* both because it is the subject of my study and also because it often stands to represent the five texts. Just as Q2/F *Hamlet* is frequently used as synecdoche for Shakespeare and his works, so too does Q1 *Hamlet* often stand at the centre of the debates around the provenance, authority and value of all the 'bad' quartos.

Nine years after the publication of *The Division of the Kingdoms*, Thomas Clayton's introduction to the 1992 edited collection of essays, *The Hamlet First Published (Q1: 1603): Origins, Forms, Intertextualities*, opens by stating that '[t]his is not *The Division of the Kingdoms* nor was it meant to be'.²⁰¹ In the most obvious sense Clayton is right: *Division*, as he states, 'advanced from multiple angles a single argument', while *The Hamlet First Published* 'examines a number of aspects and connections of [Q1 *Hamlet*], making no attempt to suppress or gloss over disagreements between contributors'.²⁰² Yet Clayton's explicit juxtaposition of the two collections inevitably leads readers to draw comparisons between them; we are invited to infer that just as *Division* was an influential collection of essays which changed the perception of the relationship between Q and F *Lear*, so too will this new collection change perceptions of *Hamlet*'s First Quarto. Clayton's book is certainly an important starting point: many of the most significant Q1 studies of the 1990s were written by contributors to *The Hamlet First Published*.

²⁰⁰ For a full examination of the New Bibliographers, see the first chapter of Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*; see also Terri Bourus, 'The First Quarto of *Hamlet* in Film'.

²⁰¹ *The Hamlet First Published*, ed. by Clayton, p. 15.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

A provocative edition of Q1 *Hamlet* was published the same year as Clayton's collection, in what might be seen as a reaction to the New Bibliographical editions of the 1980s. Part of a series of editions of early Shakespeare quartos, the edition was edited by Bryan Loughrey (whose interview with Christopher McCullough, Peter Guinness and Sam Walters forms a chapter of *The Hamlet First Published*), and Graham Holderness.²⁰³ Even as they resist the urge to make a clear statement of their view of the First Quarto's provenance, Holderness and Loughrey advocate the study and use of Q1. Indeed, their introduction attempts to challenge existing assumptions surrounding the First Quarto, provokingly suggesting the term 'Bad Folio'.²⁰⁴ Such polemics invited criticism, which of course duly followed. Yet most attacks directed at the editors were for a perceived simplicity in approach; the act of publishing Q1 *Hamlet* was itself praised, with one reviewer suggesting that 'this new series [...] may well help to revolutionize Shakespeare scholarship in general.'²⁰⁵ In a sense this did happen: their cheap editions of early quartos paved the way for the other scholarly editions that came out at the turn of the century.

Even as Holderness and Loughrey seek to make editions of early quartos readily available without providing categorical judgements on provenance, Stephen Urkowitz's purpose in his chapter in *The Hamlet First Published* is, as he puts it, the 'plodding goal of untangling the web of arguments believed so convincing by others'.²⁰⁶ By criticising many of the foundations on which attitudes towards the First Quarto are based, Urkowitz urges that scholarship, in the words of his title, get 'Back to Basics'. He writes:

²⁰³ Holderness and Loughrey, *Hamlet*.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

²⁰⁵ Eric Sams, 'Review of Holderness-Loughrey', *Notes & Queries*, 41, 1 (1994), 93-4, p. 94; Dillon, 'Is There a Performance in this Text?'. See also the discussion Holderness and Loughrey sparked in the *New Theatre Quarterly*: specifically their article in 1992, Alan Posener's in 1994, and Andrew Spong's in 1994. There was also, as Irace mentions, controversy over advertising material discussed in the TLS; see Kathleen O. Irace, *Reforming the 'Bad' Quartos*, p. 13.

²⁰⁶ Urkowitz, 'Back to Basics', p. 262.

The only reason to labor through the kinds of data such as are here presented is finally to come back to the basic documents with fresh eyes. We may once again choose to look at the First Quarto of *Hamlet* as a theatrical document without solely belabouring its bibliographical faults, knowing that it may be a lesser thing, unpolished, badly transcribed, fundamentally different from Q2 and F in important ways.²⁰⁷

Throughout ‘Back to Basics’ – the longest and last chapter in the collection – Urkowitz acknowledges the difficulties of Q1 but simultaneously argues its merits. He contends, as he did in his 1986 chapter ‘Well-sayd olde mole’, that the First Quarto represents an early draft of *Hamlet*, and concludes with an exhortation that scholarship embrace a multiplicity of *Hamlets*.²⁰⁸

Like Urkowitz, Kathleen O. Irace, another contributor to *The Hamlet First Published*, spent much of the 1990s promoting the study of the early quartos, which she terms ‘short’ in an attempt to move away from the label ‘bad’. She promotes a change in terminology implicitly in her chapter ‘Origins and Agents of Q1 *Hamlet*’ and explicitly in her 1994 book *Reforming the ‘Bad’ Quartos*.²⁰⁹ The ‘unfortunate label’, she argues in her book, ‘has discouraged critical analysis and interpretation, for these texts have received very little attention except in terms of the special needs of editors and other textual scholars.’²¹⁰ Irace holds the view that Q1 is a memorial reconstruction of an abridgement made for touring, and identifies the actors playing Marcellus and Voltemand as the potential reporters; but, unlike her predecessors who also subscribed to the theory of memorial reconstruction, Irace feels that Q1 is therefore a useful witness to early staging practice. In *Reforming The ‘Bad’*

²⁰⁷ Ibid, pp. 287-288.

²⁰⁸ Stephen Urkowitz, “‘Well-sayd olde Mole’: Burying Three *Hamlets* in Modern Editions”, in *Shakespeare Study Today*, ed. by Georgianna Ziegler (New York: AMS Press, 1986), pp. 37-70.

²⁰⁹ Kathleen O. Irace, ‘Origins and Agents of Q1 *Hamlet*’, in *The Hamlet First Published (Q1, 1603): Origins, Form, Intertextualities*, ed. by Thomas Clayton (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992), pp. 90-122; Irace, *Reforming the ‘Bad’ Quartos*.

²¹⁰ Ibid, p. 13.

Quartos she studies not just *Hamlet* but also the other Shakespearean quartos that have been nominated as ‘bad’; by way of conclusion she proposes that ‘a carefully prepared modern edition’ be published ‘that would present these valuable early quartos in a form suited to critics and students alike’.²¹¹ Four years later she fulfilled this desire herself by following in Holderness and Loughrey’s footsteps and publishing an edition of Q1 *Hamlet* for Cambridge University Press.²¹² In 1990 there were no easily-available editions of Q1 in the UK; by the end of the decade readers now had a choice of editions.

Irace’s methodology in *Reforming The ‘Bad’ Quartos* is criticised by Laurie Maguire in her landmark *Shakespearean Suspect Texts* of 1996, to date the most thorough investigation into the theory of memorial reconstruction.²¹³ Essentially, Maguire’s stance on memorial reconstruction is (to use Thompson and Taylor’s later self-description) agnostic. She claims that Irace’s ‘computer-assisted study is a more precise variant of the old methodology, which assumes the text under examination to be a report, identifies the reporter, and thereby confirms that the text is reported.’²¹⁴ Approaching the subject with an attempt at neutrality, Maguire examines forty-one ‘suspect texts’, each of which has been (or has elements which have been) suspected to be a memorial reconstruction ‘even if those suspicions never hardened into conclusions or were vociferously rejected’.²¹⁵ Maguire surveys these texts, as well as a control set of texts from the period which had never been thought to be memorial reconstructions, examining them for ‘symptoms’ of memorial transmission. Like Irace, Maguire rejects the label ‘bad’, opting instead to use the term ‘suspect’, which she acknowledges to be imperfect because it ‘suggests transgression;

²¹¹ Ibid, p. 172.

²¹² William Shakespeare, *The First Quarto of Hamlet (1603)*, ed. by Kathleen O. Irace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

²¹³ Laurie Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*.

²¹⁴ Ibid, pp. 11-12.

²¹⁵ Ibid, p. 154.

however, suspects do at least have the possibility of being acquitted.’²¹⁶ After a quasi-scientific approach to the question of memorial reconstruction, she argues that ‘memorial reconstruction remains what it has always been: a possibility. It is an ingenious possibility and an attractive possibility, but let us not mistake it for fact.’²¹⁷ While not flawless – Maguire’s intentional exclusion of other, ‘good’ versions of the suspect texts is condemned by MacDonald P. Jackson – *Shakespearean Suspect Texts* had a profound influence on the field, particularly when compounded with Irace’s work.²¹⁸

The same year that Maguire’s work is published, Leah S. Marcus dedicates a chapter *Unediting the Renaissance* to attacking the scholarly dismissal of Q1 *Hamlet*. The epigraph of this chapter is taken from her book. ‘*Hamlet* in its high cultural form is “caviary to the general,”’ she argues, ‘and we who have the ability to savor it earn inclusion into a select circle’.²¹⁹ According to Marcus, the perception of Q1 as ‘bad’ stems in part from the ‘differing expectations created by orality and writing as competing forms of communication’.²²⁰ To our ‘profoundly literate assumptions’, ‘Q2 and F [...] will remain a standard against which Q1 is found wanting. But Q1 will remain like a beckoning ghost who does not write but intones’.²²¹ Marcus’s book, as its title suggests, highlights the value of accessing the unedited texts; the conclusion of her chapter on *Hamlet* (‘[w]e don’t have one single *Hamlet*, we have the pleasure of three interrelated *Hamlets*’) is an endorsement of the Shakespearean plurality so successfully prompted by *The Division of the Kingdoms* almost a decade earlier.²²² The near-universal consensus of New Bibliography – that bad quarto equals memorial reconstruction – was by the mid-1990s facing a serious challenge.

²¹⁶ Ibid, p. 16.

²¹⁷ Ibid, pp. 337-338.

²¹⁸ MacDonald P. Jackson, ‘Review of *Shakespearean Suspect Texts: The ‘Bad’ Quartos and Their Contexts*’, *The Modern Language Review*, 93, 1 (1998), 184-185, p. 185.

²¹⁹ Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance*, pp. 135-136.

²²⁰ Ibid, p. 137.

²²¹ Ibid, p. 138.

²²² Ibid, p. 176.

In 1999, three years after the appearance of Maguire's and Marcus's books, Paul Werstine's 'A Century of "Bad" Shakespeare Quartos' builds on both in an attempt to dismiss forever the notion of memorial reconstruction. Tracing back the theory's origins to W. W. Greg and Alfred Pollard, Werstine agrees with Maguire that memorial reconstruction is based on circular and flawed reasoning; he states that Pollard 'invented the "bad" Shakespeare quartos'.²²³ It is indicative of the enduring pervasiveness of the memorial reconstruction/bad quarto theory, however, that Werstine felt the need to attack it so strongly. A survey of articles from two editions of *Shakespeare Survey* published at either end of the decade nonetheless illustrates how much had changed. In the journal's 1990 volume, *Shakespeare and the Elizabethans*, three articles refer to the early quartos, of which all three authors use the phrase 'bad quarto' or similar pejorative terminology.²²⁴ On the other hand, the 1999 volume *Shakespeare and the Globe* contains five articles referring to the quartos. Marion O'Connor's article mentions Q1 *Hamlet* with no reference to its quality, bad or otherwise; all four of the other authors either directly attack the term 'bad' or signify discomfort through quotation marks and/or qualifiers such as 'so-called'.²²⁵ Across the decade, an academic volte face had clearly taken place.

This shift towards Q1's acceptability is further demonstrated by a 1999 review article by Eric Rasmussen of Maguire's *Shakespearean Suspect Texts* and John Jones's *Shakespeare at Work*:

²²³ Werstine, 'A Century of "Bad" Shakespeare Quartos', p. 310. Emphasis added.

²²⁴ See Lois Potter, "'Nobody's Perfect': Actors' Memories and Shakespeare's Plays of the 1590s", *Shakespeare Survey*, 42 (1990), 85-97; Giles E. Dawson, 'Shakespeare's Handwriting', *Shakespeare Survey*, 42 (1990), 119-128; and MacDonald P. Jackson, 'Editions and Textual Studies', *Shakespeare Survey*, 42 (1990), 200-214.

²²⁵ See Marion O'Connor, "'Useful in the year 1999": William Poel and Shakespeare's "Build of Stage"', *Shakespeare Survey*, 52 (1999), 17-32; Andrew Gurr, 'Maximal and Minimal Texts: Shakespeare v. the Globe', *Shakespeare Survey*, 52 (1999), 68-87; Charles Edelman, 'Which is the Jew that Shakespeare Knew?: Shylock on the Elizabethan Stage', *Shakespeare Survey*, 52 (1999), 99-106; Alison Findlay, 'Shakespeare's Life, Times, and Stage', *Shakespeare Survey*, 52 (1999), 283-302; and Eric Rasmussen, 'Editions and Textual Studies', *Shakespeare Survey*, 52 (1999), 302-326.

To turn from *Shakespearean Suspect Texts* to John Jones's *Shakespeare at Work* is to leave the present dynamic scene of textual study and to enter a bygone era. Jones views 'bad quartos' the old-fashioned way [...] Moreover, Jones seems unaware of the recent challenges to the theory of memorial reconstruction [...] An ungenerous reviewer might go so far as to suggest that Jones seems unaware of most recent work in Shakespearean textual studies.²²⁶

Rasmussen's scathing review of Jones's book indicates how far things had changed in the course of the 1990s. *The Division of the Kingdoms* was radical in 1983 for suggesting both texts of *Lear* were viable; by 1999, *Shakespeare at Work* was obsolete for dismissing Q1 *Hamlet* as bad.

It is, then, clear that the 1990s marked the end of the 'bad quarto'. Instead, in came a variety of other terms ('suspect text', 'short'), none of which stuck so well as a conveniently updated form of the old: 'bad quarto' was replaced by "'bad" quarto'. With hindsight it is possible to see this 1990s group of scholars as a critical wave: just as Maguire charted the ascendance of the New Bibliographers in *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*, so we too can see the rise of their replacements, the New Textualists.²²⁷ Like the New Bibliographers, this new movement's members are varied, with differing methodologies and conflicting views, as highlighted by the various beliefs of contributors to *The Hamlet First Published*: Urkowitz argues for Shakespeare's revision, while Irace sees in Q1 a form of memorial reconstruction, and Loughrey views the text as linked to performance. The factor uniting these diverse opinions, though, was a desire to move away from dismissing Q1 as 'bad' towards a more

²²⁶ Eric Rasmussen, 'Review of *Shakespearean Suspect Texts: The "Bad" Quartos and Their Contexts* by Laurie E. Maguire; *Shakespeare at Work* by John Jones', *Modern Philology*, 96, 4 (1999), 519-527, p. 525.

²²⁷ Academics contributing to the reformation of the 'bad' quartos during the 1990s but not discussed here include Paul Bertram and Bernice Kliman, who had published an expensive parallel-text edition of all three texts of *Hamlet* in 1991, Eric Sams and of course Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor. See William Shakespeare, *The three-text Hamlet: parallel texts of the First and Second Quartos and First Folio*, ed. by Paul Bertram and Bernice W. Kliman (New York: AMS Press, 1991); Sams, *The Real Shakespeare*; and, for example, Ann Thompson, and Neil Taylor, "'O That This Too Too XXXXX Flesh Would Melt": *Hamlet* and the Indecisions of Modern Editors and Publishers', *Text*, 10 (1997), 221-236.

nuanced perception of the First Quarto. Thus the scene had shifted from the moment frozen in the editions of the 1980s; the texts scorned in the 1980s were now engaging scholars from different theoretical backgrounds. Neatly ending this decade of increased scholarly interest is the year 2000, a landmark year for the staging of *Hamlet* in London. Theatre-goers in the capital had two opportunities to see performances of Q1: a staged reading put on by Globe Education, and Red Shift's *Hamlet: First Cut* directed by Jonathan Holloway. On the Globe's main stage and in the National Theatre's Lyttleton, audiences could also watch productions based on the more familiar texts of Q2/F. The remainder of this chapter will examine these four productions, arguing that the shift in academia is curiously reflected in theatres: as the First Quarto becomes a more debated and contested text academically, it disappears from mainstream theatre programmes, but appears instead as the prompt copy for performances in fringe venues.

Red Shift 1999-2000: The Hamlet Experience

As this chapter's epigraph suggests, in the 400 years since *Hamlet* was first published the play has evolved to become a cultural icon, far greater than the sum of its parts. In the early 1990s Terence Hawkes also presses the case:

Hamlet has taken on a huge and complex symbolizing function and, as a part of the institution called 'English literature', has become far more than a mere play by a mere playwright. [It issues] from one of the key components of that institution, not Shakespeare, but the creature 'Shakespeare' [.]²²⁸

Hamlet is not only a part of this 'institution'; it is at its very centre. It is no longer a 'mere play', but rather a signifier of class, education and culture. At the close of the twentieth

²²⁸ Terence Hawkes, *Meaning by Shakespeare* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 4.

century, director Jonathan Holloway explores these ideas as he explained his decision to direct Q1 *Hamlet* – *Hamlet: First Cut*, as it was titled and marketed – for touring the UK in 1999 and again in 2000. He simultaneously castigates both the highbrow theatre establishment for elitism and members of the ‘working class’ who hold ‘the banal idea that if Shakespeare is “difficult” then he is not “relevant”’:

The history of the ‘use’ of Shakespeare goes beyond his role as the author of dramas for the theatre. Shakespeare’s work has been assimilated into the rarified domain of High Culture. Not only has the theatre become a middle-class art form, but one’s personal relationship to Shakespeare – friend or foe – has become a badge of social class. There is guilt on both sides. [...] English is the most complicated language in the developed world, and Shakespeare is its greatest gymnast. Throughout the population, people are entitled to have their artist made available.²²⁹

Holloway sees his company as the vehicle for ‘enfranchising an audience, taking a piece of work that many people may consider to be too difficult and making it more available to them’.²³⁰ He also sees it as culturally valuable: ‘organisations like Red Shift Theatre Company are responsible for sustaining, and carrying forward the culture of this nation’.²³¹ For Holloway, though, the problem is that watching an uncut or lightly-cut performance of the conflated Q2/F *Hamlet* (‘the full 4 ½ hour *Hamlet* experience’) is, frankly, boring: ‘I’ve always felt that I’d had to make allowances for it. In a sense I was pretending that I wasn’t bored when I really was’.²³²

Of course, if *Hamlet* is taken to symbolise Shakespeare and by extension the ‘institution’ of English Literature, then an encounter with the First Quarto risks disrupting the whole process, raising questions about the stability of a text at the very centre of the literary

²²⁹ Interview with Jonathan Holloway, Royal Holloway, University of London Archives, Egham, RSTC/6/6/12.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Ibid.

and dramatic canon. In 1999 Holloway denies that the text is disruptive, arguing that the variations in Q1 – particularly in its soliloquies – are not problematic but rather enlightening:

A lot of the famous speeches of Hamlet are shorter and have some significant syntactical changes and that will, I hope, have the affect [sic] of prompting even those members of the audience who are very familiar with the play to see it in a different light. It's like when you're very familiar with the songs of Frank Sinatra or Bob Dylan or something, what becomes actually interesting is to listen to a live recording where they reorganise the verse or add some lines that aren't in the original. It makes you notice it[.]²³³

Holloway's suggestion that the Q1 text's value lies in reflecting or illuminating Q2/F is telling: it relies on a knowledgeable audience and contains an implicit appeal to students and teachers of the canonical *Hamlet* – a group which the production's pre-publicity ephemera identifies numerous times as a key target audience.²³⁴ This appeal is reinforced by the programme:

It is generally believed that the First Quarto was pirated – probably dictated from memory, possibly by one of the actors who performed in it – and published without permission of the author or his company. [...] It is generally accepted that the First Quarto, called *The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke* (1603) is an acting version of the play. It is reasonable to assume this text comes closer than the longer versions do to actual Jacobean stage practice.²³⁵

Through the careful use of the passive voice, *Hamlet: First Cut* makes bold claims, presenting itself as the performance of an inoffensive, educational text, pirated but authentic. A separate promotional leaflet uses equally cautious language to further assert the text's

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ See Ephemera, Royal Holloway Archive, RSTC/6/6/12.

²³⁵ 'Hamlet: First Cut Programme', Royal Holloway College Archive, RSTC/6/1/16.

proximity to performance: ‘some believe this is the closest we can come to the play as seen by Shakespeare’s public’.²³⁶ In a sense, Holloway’s approach echoes Poel’s pursuit of authentic Shakespeare over a century beforehand; Holloway’s quest, however, is for a very different kind of performance authenticity. Poel’s bare stage, for example, is a far cry from Holloway’s ‘steel obelisks and jagged metal sheeting’.²³⁷ Moreover Holloway had never heard of Poel when he directed Q1.²³⁸ Nonetheless, in suggesting that *Hamlet: First Cut* would be an ‘authentic’ *Hamlet*, Holloway is following in Poel’s footsteps.

Leading up to the production, Holloway downplays the notion that the text might be a challenge or disturbance to the canon. In 2014, a decade and a half after the production, I interviewed Holloway and asked his reasons for staging Q1. His response differs somewhat from that of 2000. The more recent explanation includes a wide variety of factors:

what you need is a show that will support you under any circumstances. [...] You need something that’s robust. [...] Also there’s just a time factor. [...] The First Quarto appealed to me because it’s short. It also has novelty value because it doesn’t get done that frequently and also because some of the characters have funny names. And because there’s something also quite thrilling about sitting in an audience and Hamlet says ‘To be or not to be – aye there’s the point’ and people in the audience tut because they think the actor’s got the line wrong. That’s quite sort of entertaining. [Laughs] There’s a certain amount of mythology about the fact that it’s the text as was remembered by a couple of the actors who were in it and consequently, although there’s vast chunks missing from it probably, at the same time it has the energy of performance about it, so it’s kind of quite close to actually what it was like to go and see the play. [...] The reasons were legion. It’s an easy play to sell to venues. It’s even

²³⁶ Red Shift Ephemera, Royal Holloway Archive.

²³⁷ Michaels, *The Times*, 20 January 2000.

²³⁸ Jonathan Holloway, Interview with the author (London, 19 August 2014).

easier when you tell them how long it lasts and the fact that it's this peculiar version which is variously referred to as the 'bastard text' and so on. That in itself is an incentive to do it.²³⁹

The reasons, as Holloway notes, are 'legion'; but in 2014, presumably because he no longer needs to sell tickets, he suggests what he implicitly denies in 1999: the production would be a challenge for the audiences. When Holloway thrills at watching disconcerted audience members during the 'To be' soliloquy and when he sees the text's peculiarity and apparent 'bastard'y as an 'incentive' to produce the play, he is expressing a pleasure and appreciation for the text's ability to disturb. Zachary Lesser defines Q1 as uncanny in the temporal sense – being both older than Q2/F but also newer, as famously expressed in that first report of the 'new (old) play'.²⁴⁰ It is also possible to see Q1 as uncanny in the way it doubles the notional, cultural text of *Hamlet*, the text at the centre of the canon: just as an experience of the uncanny is both *Heimlich* and *Unheimlich*, so too Q1 is both *Hamlet* and not-*Hamlet*. For members of a culture so fully immersed in the 'cultural memory' of *Hamlet* to be confronted with a familiar but strange version of this play is surely to experience Freud's *Unheimlich*.²⁴¹ Holloway, in directing the First Quarto, embraces the text's familiar-but-strange nature, and literally laughs as he watches its disconcerting effects.

Back in 2000, numerous reviewers also note this dissonance, though with rather less enjoyment than Holloway. Paul Taylor for *The Independent* suggests the unprepared audience member might 'well surmise that a subversive gremlin had infiltrated Shakespeare's classic text and wrought some peculiar random changes. Or that it was really high time you saw a doctor.'²⁴² He continues, stating that the play 'is at once familiar and oddly alien' and that the

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ See Lesser, *Hamlet After Q1*, pp. 10-11.

²⁴¹ See Sigmund Freud, 'The Uncanny', in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, ed. by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), pp. 418-30.

²⁴² Paul Taylor, *Independent*, 20 January 2000.

‘[s]tructure and characterisation are weirdly different, too’.²⁴³ Ian Michaels provides the antithesis to Holloway’s musical comparison of Q1 to the joys of live Sinatra and Dylan by claiming that the First Quarto ‘is often regarded as having the same effect as a bad Elvis impersonator. It makes you want to rush back to the original.’²⁴⁴ He does however also note that ‘this “bad quarto” text renders the familiar slightly strange’.²⁴⁵ Maeve Walsh suggests that while the text may pique a certain amount of curiosity, it ultimately offers an unfulfilling performance experience:

There’s interest and intrigue provided by the jolting double takes – ‘To be or not to be? Ay, there’s the point’ – but constant in that it’s all, well, wrong. As ‘Hamlet Lite’, it’s hip and fun. But, like all weight-loss alternatives, it’s not half as satisfying.²⁴⁶

Not all the critics, however, disapprove of the production. Charles Godfrey-Faussett for *Time Out* calls it ‘refreshingly vigorous, inventive and up-to-the-minute’ while Keith Bruce deems it ‘very fine’; Mark Brown claims that ‘[e]verything about it [...] is truly impressive’ and Lyn Gardner informs her readers that what they ‘are getting is theatre, not literature’ in a ‘thrillingly urgent’ production.²⁴⁷

Is the division that comes about here the same difference between Holloway and the ‘tut’ting audience? Do some critics embrace Q1’s strangeness with a kind of thrill, approving as Holloway does of the text’s pace and indeed its difference, while others react with horror at the uncanny *doppelgänger* of the text at the heart of their English Literature degree? The reaction of the several critics who scorn Holloway’s decision to stage the First Quarto can certainly be seen as a rejection of the uncanny: they seek the comfortingly familiar lines that they can follow, the homely/*Heimlich* song from childhood. Dismissing the play as ‘wrong’,

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Ian Michaels, *The Times*, 20 January 2000.

²⁴⁵ Ibid; Taylor, 2000.

²⁴⁶ Maeve Walsh, *The Independent on Sunday*, 23 January 2000.

²⁴⁷ Charles Godfrey-Faussett, *Time Out*, 26 January 2000; Keith Bruce, *Herald*, 18 September 1999; Mark Brown, *Scotsman*, 20 September 1999; Lyn Gardner, *The Guardian*, 13 September 1999.

as Maeve Walsh does, allows them to sidestep the difficult questions surrounding Shakespeare's textual instability by rejecting the challenge that Q1 presents to the canonical *Hamlet*.²⁴⁸ By extension, those reviewers who praise Holloway's production, such as Mark Brown and Joe McCallum, are embracing that same innate attraction towards discomfort or the uncanny which allowed *Hamlet*, a play revolving around death and displacement, to become so popular in the first place.²⁴⁹

The problem with this interpretation, however, is that the reaction to Holloway's production does not mirror the way critics receive Sam Walters's Orange Tree Q1 *Hamlet* of 1985. While Walters's reviewers may refer to the text and its strangeness, it is only in passing; their preoccupation is with issues of staging and performance. Conversely, the reviewers at the turn of the century refer to the quality of the performance, but their focus now is on the First Quarto's proximity to Shakespeare's original production.²⁵⁰ Whether criticising or defending Holloway's production, critics at the turn of the century no longer concentrate so much on staging; they are instead searching for 'authentic' Shakespeare. This preoccupation is encouraged by Holloway's own comments in the publicity surrounding *Hamlet: First Cut*. It also reflects the renewed academic interest and debate around the First Quarto's provenance and value: theatre critics echo academics as they debate the same issues in the pages of theatre reviews that had so recently been fought out in the pages of academic journals.

Given *Hamlet*'s status as a canonical work of English literature – *the* canonical work – an encounter with its familiar-but-strange double in the form of Q1 disturbs certainties about what Shakespeare is and by extension disrupts all kinds of other assumptions. But if the First Quarto is an uncanny *Hamlet*, it becomes disturbing only when it seems to challenge the

²⁴⁸ Walsh, 2000.

²⁴⁹ Brown, 1999; Joe McCallum, *What's On in London*, 26 January 2000.

²⁵⁰ See Brown, 2000; and McCallum, 2000.

status quo. With the publication of numerous books and articles in the 1990s proposing a reconsideration of Q1's value, the text looks at points like it might be asserting an authority to rival the traditional *Hamlet*. Holloway's production comes at the end of a decade and a half of fierce scholarly debate and by virtue of this timing it becomes itself a nexus for yet more debate around canonicity and performance. In 1985 the Walters production comes at a time when Q1 was mostly rejected, so the performance is accepted at face value; *Hamlet: First Cut*, on the other hand, is performed at a point when the text is more contentious, and is therefore subject to much more criticism. Following the academic debates of the preceding decade, more people seem better equipped to take up the questions of the First Quarto.

Two Hamlets at the Globe, 2000: Our Beginning and End

At the same time that the academic debates around Q1 were ongoing in the 1990s, architects on the South Bank of the Thames were shaping a physical manifestation of the changing approaches to Shakespeare in performance. In 1997 Shakespeare's Globe opened with *Henry V*'s invocation for a 'Muse of fire'. The Globe quickly took its place both as one of the prime tourist attractions in London and as challenger to the RSC for the title of Britain's primary full-time Shakespeare theatre. Though the Globe's physical existence is of course attributed to the work of Sam Wanamaker, many of its theoretical principles find their origins in the theory and practice of William Poel: the Globe's early experiments with 'Original Practices' clearly take the same conceptual approach that Poel had a century before. The Globe is particularly conscientious in its phrasing, making it clear that from the building to the stage practices, the company uses the 'best guess' approach based on the available historical

records.²⁵¹ The Globe's 'brand' was (and is) associated with the pursuit of authenticity; this, together with its striking building on the newly rejuvenated South Bank, quickly led to a high public profile and large audiences, and of course all the attendant professional criticism and praise.

Giles Block joined the Globe in 1999 as the 'Master of the Words', although now his role is the more prosaic 'Globe Associate in charge of text'.²⁵² As his job titles indicate, his interests lie particularly in the performance of Shakespeare's text – to the extent that he is affectionately known as the Globe's 'text guru'.²⁵³ In 2000 he directed Artistic Director Mark Rylance in the Globe's first *Hamlet*, but Rylance's second after starring in Ron Daniels's 1989 production at the RSC.²⁵⁴ Block writes in the theatre programme that 'The text is our beginning and our end; we shall not add layers of meaning of our own invention but, like the Gravediggers, aim to be deep delvers into the roots of the story.'²⁵⁵ This elevation of Shakespeare's words to a near-sacred level presents the production as pure; it stands apart from the director-driven *Hamlets* of other theatres. It is, however, a little difficult to take Block's words at face value, particularly given his awareness of the textual issues surrounding *Hamlet* – which text, we might wonder, did he mean?

Block's base edition in 2000 is Edwards's Cambridge text.²⁵⁶ Early in the production process he sent a copy of his edited script to Rylance. With the script Block attached a brief letter explaining and justifying his decisions:

My aim was to cut 20% of the text (nearly 800 lines) [...] I have tried to cut evenly, scene by scene. [...] With one exception I have cut the 200 or so lines that are in Q2

²⁵¹ 'Rebuilding the Globe', <<http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/about-us/history-of-the-globe/rebuilding-the-globe>> [accessed 26 July 2017].

²⁵² 'Playing My Part: Giles Block, Globe Associate, Text' <<http://blog.shakespearesglobe.com/playing-my-part-giles-block-globe-associate-in-charge-of-text/>> [accessed 5 November 2013].

²⁵³ Giles Block, *Speaking the Speech* (London: Nick Hern Books, 2013), blurb.

²⁵⁴ See Chapter 2.

²⁵⁵ 'Hamlet 2000 Programme', London, Globe Theatre Archive, uncatalogued.

²⁵⁶ See Chapter 2.

and not in the Folio. I think these were probably the company's own cuts, made before they even went into rehearsal. None of them appear in any form in Q1.²⁵⁷

Block's implication is that the F text is the most authoritative, given that Shakespeare was a part of 'the company' that made the cuts and so presumably approved of them: the King's Men as a group thus takes precedence over Shakespeare as an individual. In his foreword to Block's 2013 book, Rylance writes that Block 'revealed to me the additions to the text he thought Burbage had made when playing Hamlet, and which had been considered so good that the creators of the First Folio had included them in that edition of the play.'²⁵⁸ It seems from the context that Rylance is referring to this letter, and simply confused additions with cuts – if nothing else, all sides of the memorial reconstruction debate agree that memory is not always very reliable. More pertinent to the present study, however, is the fact that Block takes Q1 into consideration at all at this early stage of the production.

It is possible to infer two significant things about Block's understanding of Q1 from his note to Rylance. The first is that Block does not consider the First Quarto to be equal to either of the other two texts: he sees F as closest to *Hamlet* as originally seen on stage, while Q2 is nearer to the script Shakespeare wrote before presenting it to the theatre company. Block does not make explicit his views about the provenance of Q1, but it is clearly worth less to him than the other two texts – there is no mention of Q1 in the programme or any of the other production notes for the play. The second inference to be made is that Q1 is not entirely useless as a theatrical tool: Block uses it to justify his cuts, and ultimately it supports his decision to prioritise F over Q2. While Q1 may be a 'bad' text, it omits the same passages from Q2 which he deems untheatrical. For Block then, Q1 and F together provide better readings than Q2. The First Quarto does not, however, hold much independent authority for

²⁵⁷ Note from Giles Block to Mark Rylance, London, Globe Theatre Archive, uncatalogued.

²⁵⁸ Block, *Speaking the Speech*, p. xi.

Block. It might have been expected that the new Globe would make use of the text to emphasise a ‘performance authenticity’, so this limited usage may come as a surprise, particularly given the frequency of the arguments that Q1 represents some kind of performance text.

There are nonetheless occasional moments in Block’s *Hamlet* production which may indicate the influence of Q1. At the end of the play-within-a-play scene, for example, the Cambridge text reads as follows:

Hamlet	A poisons him i’ th’ Garden for’s estate. His name’s Gonzago. The story is extant and writ in very choice Italian. You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago’s wife.
Ophelia	The king rises.
Hamlet	What, frightened with false fire?
Gertrude	How fares my lord?
Polonius	Give o’er the play.
Claudius	Give me some light. Away! [Cambridge 3.2.237-244]

The First Quarto text, on the other hand, contains a speedier transition:

Hamlet:	He poisons him for his estate.
King:	Lights! I will to bed. [Q1 171-172]

Here the First Quarto portrays a quicker and more straightforward reaction from the King; he steps in with directorial authority as soon as the poison is mentioned, whereas in the Folio his response is more tentative. He rises only four lines after Hamlet starts speaking and does not himself speak until a further four lines have passed. In Block’s promptbook Hamlet is instructed to speak his lines ‘Over Lucianus’ speech’; the King’s reaction therefore occurs much sooner after the act of poisoning and so appears to be a more immediate response to the action of the play. Block thereby brings his production closer to the speedier pace of the First

Quarto, not adopting the text's lines so much as taking a Q1-inflected approach.²⁵⁹ Q1 enables him to speed up the scene and increase the sense of chaos and outrage that Hamlet's actions bring about.

If this is a tentative claim of Q1's influence, a clearer example occurs during the graveyard scene, when Hamlet jumps into Ophelia's grave. This stage direction, printed only in the First Quarto, is followed by the Block production, though with some variation. While Q1 has Hamlet jump in to join Leartes/Laertes at 16.146, Rylance's Hamlet spends time in the grave even before the arrival of Ophelia's body; he jumps in at the Cambridge's 5.1.160, gets out when he sees the funeral procession arriving, and finally jumps back in to grapple with Laertes at 5.1.254, the equivalent of Q1's 16.146. This is the only explicit use of the First Quarto in the production; yet it could also be claimed that the action of jumping into the grave is just as likely to have been derived from theatrical tradition as from a reading of Q1. It is a stage direction that, as Thompson and Taylor put it, 'has frequently been followed in productions based on Q2 and/or F'.²⁶⁰ Before Rylance, numerous Hamlets jumped into the grave. It has almost evolved into the modern equivalent of the nineteenth century's 'points' where certain conventions were followed in most major productions, such as, for example, Hamlet crawling across the stage to Ophelia during the Mousetrap/Murder of Gonzago performance.²⁶¹ Whether Block and Rylance derive this moment directly from Q1 or through performance tradition, it is the clearest indication of the First Quarto's influence on the Globe's first production of *Hamlet*.

Though less frequently performed than Hamlet's jump into the grave, the Ghost does in some performances enter during the closet scene 'in his night-gown' (Q1 11.57), following another of Q1's stage directions. At this point during the Globe production, the Ghost dons an

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet*, vol. 1, p. 14.

²⁶¹ See Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet*, vol. 2, pp. 95-109.

outfit no different from the living characters. As a change from the clanking suit of armour worn earlier on, it does domesticate the closet scene somewhat, bringing it closer to the Q1 text, but the First Quarto stage direction is clearly not involved at this point in Block's production.²⁶² Yet, though the stage direction is not followed by the Ghost here, it does have an intriguing resonance in Rylance's attire during Act 2 Scene 2. Rylance had worn pyjamas during the RSC modern-dress production in 1989, and expressed the desire to do so again in 2000. He achieves this at the Globe by using 'their Elizabethan equivalent (smock).'²⁶³ But while it may have been a 'smock' to the company, only one reviewer calls it that; three, on the other hand, refer to it as a 'nightgown'.²⁶⁴ Whatever differences there are between smocks and nightgowns are apparently lost on the critics and, presumably, the audience. The Q1 nightgown thus finds its way to the Globe stage, not through any direct link with the text itself but through a series of events which begin at the RSC in 1989. As with a number of other times that aspects of Q1 are staged, it is apparently just a coincidence, rather than the result of a conscious decision to employ the text.

In addition to his use of Q1 as a justification of his decision to cut Q2-only passages, then, Block seems to have adopted some of the First Quarto's aesthetic features, but he adopted no lines which derive exclusively from the text. The question remains as to whether Block really believed that 'The text is our beginning and end'. What does it mean? He was, as his letter makes plain, aware that 'the text' as a singular entity does not exist. Perhaps he really believed his note to Rylance, that the Folio is the authentic version, and that his careful, informed editing brought it as close as possible to how *Hamlet* was seen on stage during

²⁶² Jaq Bessell, 'Actor Interviews: 2000 Red and White Companies interview', *Shakespeare's Globe Research Bulletin*, 18 (2001), p. 59.

²⁶³ Jaq Bessell, 'The 2000 Globe Season: The White Company: Hamlet', *Shakespeare's Globe Research Bulletin*, 17 (2001), p.7.

²⁶⁴ It was called a smock in Dominic Cavendish, *Time Out*, 14 June 2000. It was a nightgown to Paul Taylor, *The Independent*, 10 June 2000; Michael Billington, 'Beating the Distractions', *The Guardian*, 10 June 2000; and Oliver Jones, *What's On in London*, 14 June 2000.

Shakespeare's life, though this does seem unlikely. The importance of a production's base edition is once again highlighted. As indicated in the previous chapter, Philip Edwards in the Cambridge edition suggests that users of the play can choose 'the moment at which we would try to arrest the movement of the play and say "This is the *Hamlet* we want"; or even, if we dare, "This is the *Hamlet* that Shakespeare most wanted."'”²⁶⁵ Edwards also argues that the passages in Q2 but not F are parts which Shakespeare and his company had marked for deletion, which is presumably the inspiration for Block's similar claim.²⁶⁶

Block is, then, doing exactly what Edwards suggested: creating a text based on F and then asserting its authenticity. The argument is frequently made that the Globe is not truly authentic and can never be: audience members do not have to pass under severed heads on London Bridge on their way to the theatre or worry about catching the plague from their fellow playgoers.²⁶⁷ The Globe's success instead lies in the perception of authenticity. It did not matter whether Block really believed that his text was the closest to Shakespeare's stage version of *Hamlet* or that the text was the beginning and end of his production. The important thing for Block was to make the audience believe it, and that is what his claim of textual supremacy seeks to do. These issues of perception play an important role in the stage history of the First Quarto. In 2000 the Globe could not stage a full-scale production of a text known as the “bad” quarto: the three-year old theatre was, quite reasonably, unprepared to risk its early reputation, let alone its financial well-being, in presenting the kind of uncanny Q1 *Hamlet* that Holloway and Red Shift had. However much both the academy and practitioners had sought to authenticate it across the previous decade, the Q1 text was, clearly, not yet at the point where it could be successfully marketed to the Globe's audience as the ‘authentic’ *Hamlet*.

²⁶⁵ See Chapter 2; Edwards, *Hamlet*, p. 8.

²⁶⁶ See *ibid*, p. 30.

²⁶⁷ Imogen Bond, for example, makes this point in Bond, Interview with the author.

The Globe did, however, stage the First Quarto of *Hamlet* that same year. Unlike the main production, this Q1 performance was not reviewed in newspapers; indeed it has received little scholarly attention outside studies devoted to Q1's stage history. It was performed as part of an ongoing series called *Read Not Dead*, a project of staged readings started in 1995 undertaken by the Globe in addition to its full-scale productions. *Read Not Dead* readings were – and are – run by the Globe Education department and take place Sunday afternoons on a smaller stage than the Globe's main theatre, with the actors and coordinator giving their time for free and having less than a day together to prepare. The Q1 *Hamlet* reading was entirely separate from the main stage performances and involved no members of Block's cast or team.

The primary intention of *Read Not Dead* is to 'shed light on plays written between 1567 and 1642 that were *not* written by Shakespeare' through staged readings of these texts.²⁶⁸ So there is an immediate contradiction: if *Read Not Dead* is designed specifically for plays that are *not* by Shakespeare, then how did Q1 *Hamlet* fit? The introducer to the Q1 *Hamlet* reading addresses this issue: '*Read Not Dead*,' he said, is 'a project [...] to record all the plays of the period that survive other than Shakespeare's, so that's why we're doing the First Quarto of *Hamlet*. It's one of the curve-balls of our project.'²⁶⁹ As his tone of voice and the subsequent laughter documented in the audio recording demonstrates, he is joking, rather than making a claim that Q1 is non-Shakespearean.²⁷⁰ However, underlying his statement is an acceptance that the text is somehow perceived to be 'less Shakespearean' than Q2 and F; it perhaps even contains a tacit acknowledgement of the text as uncanny. Indeed, the very act of staging Q1 *Hamlet* within such a series raises questions surrounding the text's status: does

²⁶⁸ Patrick Spottiswoode, 'Contextualising Globe Education', in *Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, ed. by Christie Carson and Farah Karim-Cooper, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 134-146, p. 139. Italics in the original.

²⁶⁹ 'Hamlet Q1 Recording', London, Globe Theatre Archive, uncatalogued (lost). The identity of the introducer has eluded me.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

this staging advance it towards acceptability, or does it actually relegate it to the status of ‘not Shakespeare’ or perhaps ‘not quite Shakespeare’? Nahum Tate’s version of *King Lear* was also included in the series, so perhaps Q1 *Hamlet* should be seen in a similar vein – an informative adaptation but not sufficiently authentic to qualify for the name of Shakespeare. This is not quite fair, however. Writing in 2008, James Wallace (who played Hamlet in the 2000 reading) reflects that ‘*Read Not Dead* has also allowed the staging of “bad” quartos’, implying through the verb ‘allowed’ that the texts were *not* included within the original remit of the series. His use of the now-common quotation marks further suggests some discomfort with the designation of the texts as ‘bad’, even an awareness of the academic condemnation of such terminology.²⁷¹ The *Read Not Dead* series also included *Venus and Adonis*, which is of course uncontested as a Shakespearean text, and the first quarto of *Othello*, generally described as a ‘good’ quarto.²⁷² The inclusion of Q1 *Hamlet* in *Read Not Dead* therefore does not in itself relegate the text; rather it is an acknowledgement that the First Quarto is, by Shakespearean standards, rarely performed.

The *Read Not Dead* reading of Q1 *Hamlet* was, if the audio recording is anything to judge by, popular with its audience.²⁷³ The Arden3 editors Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor note that ‘some students in the audience complained that the text had been “translated” into modern English’, which suggests, as the editors indicate, that the First Quarto’s much-noted ‘rough’ language is actually easier for modern audiences to understand.²⁷⁴ They also observe that ‘as soon as [the actors] looked up to risk a few lines from memory they were in danger of reverting to Q2 or F’.²⁷⁵ Divergence from the scripts is common to *Read Not Dead*, and in

²⁷¹ James Wallace, ““That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once”: Staging Shakespeare’s Contemporaries”, in *Shakespeare’s Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, ed. by Christie Carson and Farah Karim-Cooper, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 147-154, p. 147.

²⁷² Q1 *Othello* is omitted from both Irace’s and Maguire’s studies, and is specifically referred to as ‘good’ in inverted commas by the British Library website: ‘Othello’, *Shakespeare in Quarto* <<http://www.bl.uk/treasures/shakespeare/othello.html>> [accessed 21 December 2013].

²⁷³ ‘Hamlet Q1 Recording’, Globe Theatre Archive.

²⁷⁴ Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet*, p. 33.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p. 16.

this respect, it might be said to resemble the theatre of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, when, according to G. E. Bentley, ‘rarely was a play given consecutive performances; [...] a letter perfect rendition must have been unheard of.’²⁷⁶ Laurie Maguire explains further:

To primary oral cultures, such as that of the Greeks, memory meant remembering, not memorisation; to chirographic cultures, such as that of twentieth-century Britain or North America, memory means memorisation. However, a transitional culture, with ‘secondary’ or ‘residual’ orality, such as that of the Elizabethans, might conceivably aim for memorisation, but be satisfied with remembering. Authors, in other words, might be content to have actors and printers make free with their lines within certain limits.²⁷⁷

If Maguire’s contention is right, then the very mistakes made during the *Read Not Dead* series unintentionally fulfil part of the Globe’s aim for authenticity.²⁷⁸

Returning to the Q1 staged reading, Thompson and Taylor’s claim of actors ‘reverting’ to Q2 or F holds true for some deviations from the script, but not all. Karl Stimpson as the gravedigger departs from the text more than any other actor, playing up jokes for laughs. His clowning corresponds with Maguire’s suggestion in her analysis of the BBC Shakespeare series; she notes that Falstaff in *I Henry 4* makes ‘an extraordinary number of errors’, and suggests that if ‘this actor is not just exceptionally careless, it may be that comic actors allow themselves a freer play of memory than more serious characters’.²⁷⁹ Comic characters, in other words, are not as bound to the text as others. Indeed, Hamlet himself tells his actors to avoid such ‘clowning’ – ‘let those that play your clowns speak no more than set

²⁷⁶ Quoted in Potter, ‘Nobody’s Perfect’, p. 86.

²⁷⁷ Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*, p. 148.

²⁷⁸ For more on the Original Practices project see the relevant chapters in *Shakespeare’s Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, ed. by Christie Carson and Farah Karim-Cooper, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

²⁷⁹ Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*, p. 136.

down for them' (Q2 3.2.36-37) – demonstrating that it was a practice familiar (and many assume annoying) to Shakespeare. It seems that the twentieth- and twenty-first-century clowns are as apt to improvise as those Hamlet rails against. Again, the *Read Not Dead* series is arguably all the more 'authentic' because the Q1 text is not reproduced perfectly on stage.

Excluding the clown's apparently intentional departures from the text, I record 66 instances where the actors do not speak the lines as written in the scripts they were using.²⁸⁰ Of these, 42 are mistakes which cannot be traced to the Q2/F texts, but are presumably attributable to the very brief rehearsal time. The origins of the remaining 24 can be traced, with varying degrees of certainty, to the two longer *Hamlet* texts. Of these, 19 are made by either Karen Hayley or James Wallace, playing Ofelia and Hamlet respectively. Some mistakes, or perhaps reversions, are caused by actors using the more familiar word order of Q2/F, as when Chris Myles as Horatio says 'A truant disposition good my lord' (Q2 1.2.168/F 1.2.166) instead of Q1's 'A truant disposition my good lord' (2.85), or when Hayley's Ofelia says 'The courtier, soldier, scholar all in him' (using the sequence, though not the exact wording, of Q2 3.1.150/F 3.1.152) rather than 'The courtier, scholar, soldier all in him' (Q1 7.196). At other times actors conflate Q1 with the better-known texts, as when Hamlet, played by Wallace, cries 'Mine uncle! Mine uncle!', mixing Q1's 'My uncle! My uncle!' (5.35) with F's 'Mine uncle!' (1.5.41). A number of the play's most famous lines are misspoken too: Wallace says 'To be or not to be – ay that's the point', inserting the word 'that' from the better-known versions in the place of Q1's 'there' (7.115). Similarly, Wallace misses out the 'to' in Q1's 'As to kill a king and marry with his brother' (11.17), thus bringing the text closer to the more familiar Q2/F version.

²⁸⁰ I first consulted the archival material at the Globe from October to December 2013, when the material was as yet uncatalogued. The following analysis is based on a comparison between the words spoken, as recorded in the tapes, and the performance script as printed. I visited the archive again in February 2017, by which time the archival room had been physically restructured and the items catalogued. Along with the restructuring, it seems the script has been lost and so I was unable to identify the edition of Q1 upon which the script was based.

Indeed, the students' complaint that the actors were making the text easier is in some cases the wrong way around. Occasionally, rather than simplifying the text, the actors complicate or antiquate it, as in the transposition of 'my good lord' quoted above, and at 17.122 where Chris Myles as Horatio calls for a scaffold to be 'up reared' instead of Q1's 'reared up'. It seems particularly apt to apply the memorial reconstruction argument here to test out Lois Potter's or Kathleen Irace's theories about actors remembering overheard lines. Wallace had never played Hamlet before, but he had played Rosencrantz in a production at the Hackney Empire in 1995.²⁸¹ If Potter's and Irace's theories apply, Wallace as Rosencrantz overheard lines in that production and accidentally used them or partially-remembered versions of them during the reading at the Globe.²⁸² However, Rosencrantz is not on stage for any of the lines Wallace replaces. Crucially, Karen Hayley – who after the clown makes the most deviations during the production – had never before performed in a production of *Hamlet*.²⁸³ The explanation must lie in the more general prevalence of *Hamlet* as a text studied, performed and quoted in so many different texts and contexts. Actors, of course, go to the theatre too: it is entirely possible that Wallace or Hayley, or indeed any of the cast members, had seen *Hamlet* performed or studied it; the Globe reading serves as another example suggesting that Q2 and F are so culturally powerful that they overwhelm the Q1 text.

The cast's occasional reversions to Q2/F are indicative of those texts' cultural ubiquity; in fact, Thompson and Taylor mention that in all four productions of Q1 *Hamlet* they had seen up to 2006, 'words and phrases from the other texts had crept back in'.²⁸⁴ As

²⁸¹ 'James Wallace CV', *QTalent* <http://www.qtalent.co.uk/artiste/james_wallace> [accessed 21 December 2013].

²⁸² See Irace, *Reforming the 'Bad' Quartos* and Potter, 'Nobody's Perfect'.

²⁸³ 'Karen Hayley' <<http://karenhayley.com/>> [accessed 4 August 2017].

²⁸⁴ Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet*, p. 16.

Rylance suggests, part of the Globe's attraction is as 'experimental theatre'.²⁸⁵ The *Read Not Dead* reading of the First Quarto can be seen as an experiment of the playability and accessibility of the text. It reveals the extent to which the two longer texts of *Hamlet* are ingrained into the collective theatrical memory: although it is not novel to suggest that Q2 and F dominate the modern perception of *Hamlet*, it is surely a surprise that even actors who had never played the same role revert to Q2/F lines of that character. Performances of Q1, it is clear, cannot escape the overwhelming cultural dominance of Q2/F.

National Theatre 2000: I would rather die

John Caird directed the National Theatre's millennial *Hamlet*, a production which starred Simon Russell Beale and toured nationally and internationally. Caird opened the rehearsals at the National by stating that '*Hamlet* is textually the most complex of all Shakespeare's works. It went through more changes than any other of his plays, and is a curious mixture of styles.'²⁸⁶ If Block's text as the 'beginning and end' imagines a single, notional text, then Caird's begins with an acknowledgement of *Hamlet*'s complicated textual history. His description of the play as 'a curious mixture of styles' provides a justification for making emendations to the play; Caird tells the team that they have the 'responsibility to make the evening coherent'.²⁸⁷ It is necessary, he explains, to cut segments of the play; to do otherwise would be to 'shirk' that responsibility. One obvious way Caird seeks to take on this responsibility is through cutting almost all international politics from *Hamlet*, removing

²⁸⁵ Mark Rylance, 'Research, Materials, Craft: Principles of Performance at Shakespeare's Globe', in *Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, ed. by Christie Carson and Farah Karim-Cooper, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 103-114, p. 103.

²⁸⁶ Jonathan Croall, *National Theatre Observed: The National Theatre at Work* (London, NT Publications, 2001), p. 14.

²⁸⁷ Croall, *National Theatre Observed*, p. 14.

Fortinbras entirely. In a book ten years later Caird describes the difficulty of retaining Fortinbras, particularly at the end of the play:

Shakespeare's technical mastery here gives the director a major headache in sustaining the dramatic tension after the death of his hero, the poor actor playing Fortinbras having to play the last scene to an audience that has no stake whatever in his kingship, no belief in his right to claim it and no patience left for any further dramatic gestures from anyone.²⁸⁸

In this statement, resonant of Holloway's complaint of 'boredom' above, Caird promotes the primacy of a successful tragic performance over textual fidelity. He cares for the audience and the ('poor') actors more than the text: he is a director first, a textual scholar after.

As Eyre had done a decade previously in 1989, Caird uses Jenkins's Arden2 as his base edition. His free exercise of artistic licence with this text shows throughout the promptbook. At the beginning of the Act 4 Scene 6, for example, before Horatio receives the letter from Hamlet, Caird inserts a small segment patched together from Act 1 Scene 1:

Barnardo: Who's there?

Marcellus: Barnardo?

Barnardo: He.

Marcellus: What, is Horatio there?

Horatio: A piece of him.

Barnardo: Welcome Horatio.²⁸⁹

This is a key example of the textual freedom which Caird repeatedly claims: he echoes the opening of the play both textually and visually – adding Marcellus and Barnardo in place of the 'Servant', and repeating the staging and blocking as well as the lines of Act 1 Scene 1. At

²⁸⁸ John Caird, *Theatre Craft: A Director's Practical Companion from A to Z* (London: Faber and Faber, 2010), p. 211.

²⁸⁹ *Hamlet* 2000 Promptbook, London, National Theatre Archives, RNT/SM/1/455.

the beginning of Caird's play Horatio meets Marcellus and Barnardo on the cold and dark ramparts before being visited by the dead Hamlet, who had been murdered by Claudius; now, Horatio greets Marcellus and Barnardo with the same words in what appears to be the same setting. In an uncanny echo of the opening, this time the scene precedes a visitation from the living Hamlet, who had recently escaped an attempt on his life by Claudius. If the distinction between living son and dead father blurs here in the text, it soon becomes even hazier: as Horatio reads his letter, Hamlet is to stand upstage and echo Horatio's words.

There are numerous other instances where Caird departs from the Arden2 text; crucially this includes around 840 lines of cuts, not to mention the additions, emendations and re-ordering. Only one emendation, however, echoes the First Quarto. During the gravedigger scene, Caird twice substitutes the obscure 'argal' with the easier reading 'ergo'. Jenkins retains 'argal', explaining that it is 'an uneducated pronunciation of L[atin] *ergo*, therefore. The further corruption allows a pun on the name of the Elizabethan logician John Argall'.²⁹⁰ Nowhere in Jenkins's edition does he indicate that the parallel scene in Q1 also reads 'ergo' (16.10). Caird presumably chose this reading solely for the sake of 'coherence' on the basis of Jenkins's footnote, unaware that he was employing a First Quarto reading. There are two further echoes of the First Quarto in the production, though neither is caused by Caird emending the Arden2 text. Caird retains Jenkins's emendation to 'diest', just as Eyre had done in 1989. As I argue in the previous chapter, the First Quarto's corroboration is incidental to Jenkins, who suggests that he would have made the same emendation whether Q1 agreed or not. The final echo of Q1 is even less clear than the others. Documenting the production, Jonathan Croall writes of a difficulty the company faced in rehearsals:

²⁹⁰ Jenkins, *Hamlet*, p. 377.

The day [Wednesday 14 June 2000] ends with the actors trying to choreograph the difficult moment when Laertes, played by Guy Lankester, and Hamlet both jump into Ophelia's grave, and have to be restrained.²⁹¹

This moment stems from one of Q1's most commonly used stage directions, 'Hamlet leaps in after Leartes' (16.145); it is a moment which can cause safety issues, as the Globe had discovered.²⁹² The Globe's resolution was to use a dummy in place of Ophelia; the National, as the recording of the production demonstrates, abandoned the idea entirely. The moment remains only as a textual echo recorded in the texts around the performance.

All three echoes of Q1 in Caird's production are therefore marked by equivocation and uncertainty. While Caird is far from rigidly faithful to the edition he followed, he almost completely excludes readings from the First Quarto. His *Hamlet* text would have been the same, presumably, had he never heard of the 1603 text. Caird's unwillingness to employ Q1 does not, however, derive from an ignorance of the text. When I interviewed Caird in 2014, before the interview proper started, the Red Shift production came up in conversation and I asked him whether he had seen it. His response gives a very clear indication of his stance on Q1: 'No I didn't go and see it. I would rather die than see it.'²⁹³ His answer to a later question, regarding whether the publication of the 2006 Arden3 edition would lead to more freedom to choose between the texts, reveals a similar stance even as he unconsciously echoes Irace's terminology: 'I think it's a mistake to go through Q1 and sort of cherry pick little bits of stuff that might sound interesting. I mean the source is so suspect.'²⁹⁴ One possible reason for his aversion to Q1 becomes clear when Caird, asked to what extent academia influences his understanding of the play, responds as follows: 'A lot in the sense that I read a lot and I suppose academia is responsible for the collective wisdom in all the

²⁹¹ Croall, *National Theatre Observed*, p. 22.

²⁹² Bessell, 'The 2000 Globe Season', p. 5.

²⁹³ John Caird, Interview with the author (London, 14 July 2014).

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

footnotes in every edition that one has ever read.’²⁹⁵ It further becomes clear not only that he does indeed read academic literature, but also which books he has been reading:

There’s certainly evidence that it was professionally altered for reasons of performance, whether for touring or that it needed to be shortened for whatever reason. [...] The way that the second quarto was rushed out to cover the first quarto – and there’s plenty of evidence to say that it was mistrusted at the time – I mean we even know which actor – it was Marcellus wasn’t it – who it’s almost certainly was the guilty party, and maybe also the actor playing Reynaldo?

SS: Voltemand I think.

JC: Ah yes Voltemar as he’s called in [Q1]. [...] Because the trail of evidence is so clear and because I know actors so well I would just automatically have too much respect for Will and his work to trust an actor.²⁹⁶

His explanation summarises much of the argument presented in Irace’s *Reforming the Bad Quartos*. While she is not the first to suggest that Marcellus reported the text, Caird’s recollection of another reporter, along with the suggestion that the text is also possibly shortened for touring, indicates that Caird had read Irace’s book or something derived from it. The only aspect of her argument that he seems to have rejected or forgotten is actually the central point encapsulated in the book’s title, her attempt to reform Q1. For him, the textual flaws of Q1 make it irredeemable, unreformable.

Caird’s adaptation of the text to create his own promptbook version demonstrates that he does not treat the text of *Hamlet* as sacred or untouchable. The roots of Caird’s rejection of the First Quarto lie, rather, in his decision to use the Jenkins’s edition, just as Eyre, his predecessor at the National Theatre, had done. Both NT productions considered in the thesis

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

so far have adopted the Arden2 edition and rejected the First Quarto; it becomes clear that Jenkins's editorial certainty, and his condescension towards those holding opposing viewpoints, has an inescapable impact on both readers and directors of his text. Caird, who begins his production with the responsibility to rewrite *Hamlet* for the sake of coherence, is unwilling even to approach the Q1 text for ideas. Despite his apparent knowledge of the recent criticism, Caird favours the arguments provided in the Arden2. Documenting Caird's rehearsal process, Croall implicitly makes a virtue of the production's use of Jenkins's text: 'the actors settle round a makeshift square of tables, armed with their Arden editions of the play'.²⁹⁷ Yet the martial metaphor 'armed' indicates the difficulties that a play like *Hamlet* can present, implying that the edition can defend the director and actors from such problems. To extend Croall's military metaphor, Jenkins's Arden2 does not provide Caird with all the weapons in the armoury; instead, it takes away those deemed 'bad'; it reduces his options rather than expanding them. Ultimately, the Arden2 edition leaves Caird less well equipped than he might have been in his quest to 'make the evening coherent'.

Conclusion

By the year 2000 the First Quarto had become a much more popular subject for academic study. Its reception had been to an extent reformed by the generation of scholars who worked on the text in the final decade of the century. Because of these academics, Q1 could no longer be simply ignored by the majority of Shakespeare scholars, though it was still deemed by plenty to be unworthy of the attention it was receiving, as demonstrated by Brian Vickers in his article 'Hamlet by Dogberry'.²⁹⁸ It was still essentially an unpopular text, no longer bad

²⁹⁷ Croall, *National Theatre Observed*, p. 14.

²⁹⁸ Brian Vickers, 'Hamlet by Dogberry', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 24 December 1993, 5.

perhaps, but still ‘bad’. If Q1 had become more prominent in academic circles, it was in 2000 actually less visible in the promptbooks of the two main house case studies presented here than it had been during the 1980s. Very few inflections of the text found their way into the promptbooks at either the Globe or the National. Those echoes that did occur may have been coincidental or indirectly derived from the text. As with the directors in the 1980s, the directors in 2000 made a choice of edition which then largely determined the extent to which they used Q1. Caird’s reading of the Arden² led to such an utter rejection of the First Quarto that he claimed hyperbolically to prefer death to the First Quarto. Block’s base edition, the Cambridge, on the other hand, argues that F is closest to the *Hamlet* on stage in Shakespeare’s time but invites its readers to create their own texts of *Hamlet*. Q1 was not culturally pervasive enough for the Globe to take the financial risk of trying to convince its audiences of the text’s authenticity, though the theatre did stage the text in a separate event. The *Read Not Dead Hamlet* had little public impact beyond a reference in the Arden³ edition a few years later, and the Red Shift tour’s reviewers, while intrigued at times, were in the end largely unimpressed.

As the millennium began, at the point at which *Hamlet: First Cut* was staged, historical arguments about the provenance of Q1 moved from the academy to the theatre and turned into debates around theatrical authenticity: the Red Shift production’s director and reviewers alike relegated the question of performance quality, discussing instead whether the text really was closest to *Hamlet* as performed in Shakespeare’s time. In the performance of Shakespeare’s plays, true authenticity is of course impossible. The perception of authenticity, on the other hand, is not only real, but vital for the reception of many mainstream performances of *Hamlet*. This was particularly acute at the Globe, where audiences were explicitly led to expect ‘authentic’ Shakespearean performance. There, Block presented to his audience a production firmly rooted in ‘the text’. Whatever his views on the First Quarto,

Block was unwilling or unable to put Q1 into the promptbook or programme for the theatre's first production of *Hamlet*. The First Quarto was in 2000 at best a contested text, and for a production at the Globe to succeed, particularly in its early days as a theatre, the audience needed to accept the fundamental notion of authenticity presented by the theatre. Block clearly knew this well: the mixed reaction to Red Shift's Q1 *Hamlet* indicates that any attempt to assert Q1's viability for performance on the main stage of the Globe would have been disputed. The academic debates around the text – even when directors were well aware of them – did not find their way into the texts for production at the Globe or National. In fact it seems that they worked to obscure Q1 entirely in a way that had not happened even in the 1980s. The First Quarto was thus absent from main house prompt copy, even from theatre programmes; instead it emerged by way of new and critically informed Q1 editions to full performance on smaller stages.

CHAPTER FOUR: 2004-2008

BEFORE AND AFTER ARDEN³

Different versions, different texts. What is the thing to do?

—James Naughtie, 2002²⁹⁹

At ten to nine on a Monday morning in May 2002, amid much worried talk about a conflict brewing between India and Pakistan, BBC Radio 4 listeners heard James Naughtie announce:

Now there's some controversy over the new Arden edition of *Hamlet* – you'll know that the Arden is the edition favoured in most academic circles – because this time, it's going to feature three different known versions of the play, which differ quite a bit really, instead of the one single amalgamated text, which was the approach in the past.³⁰⁰

This was the start of a six-minute interview with Ann Thompson and Stanley Wells in which Thompson defended the Arden's decision to edit all three texts of *Hamlet*. At the heart of the interview lies the question of what the purpose of an edition really is, particularly with a play so textually complicated as *Hamlet*. Ultimately, the problem of editing *Hamlet* is encapsulated by James Naughtie during the discussion, which serves as this chapter's epigraph: 'Different versions, different texts. What is the thing to do?'³⁰¹

Editorial theory has yet to come up with a satisfying response to Naughtie's question. Thompson and Taylor, pondering in 1997 their upcoming edition, defined a 'scholarly edition' of *Hamlet* as:

²⁹⁹ *Today Programme*, BBC Radio 4, 27 May 2002.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*

a reading version prepared by someone in the light of an idea of the play that includes as a point of reference at least one of the three early documents and which usually negotiates the relationship between that document or those documents and the possibilities of the play being realised as a performance text on the stage at some time.³⁰²

To that end they suggest that an editor ‘may take up one or more of the following options:’

1. S/he may try merely to reproduce the characteristics of an early surviving printed text.
2. S/he may try to reconstruct the characteristics of what R. A. Foakes calls the ‘mirage’ of a lost autograph manuscript.
3. S/he may supply what Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor call ‘a layer of ideal para-text’ never present in such early documents[.]
4. S/he may try to reconstruct the play as it was performed by Shakespeare’s company at a particular moment in its early history.
5. S/he may try to construct the fullest possible *Hamlet*, drawing on all the validated early texts.³⁰³

Thompson and Taylor acknowledge the possibility that ‘the publisher’s perfectly understandable’ commercial justification for printing ‘yet another’ conflated *Hamlet* may mean that their Arden3 edition would necessarily be a single text.³⁰⁴ They nonetheless spend much of the article outlining their objections to taking this single-text approach, and conclude by pondering what problems may arise if they ‘do persuade the publishers and the other general editors to allow us to print more than one text’.³⁰⁵ This is, of course, what they

³⁰² Thompson and Taylor, ‘O That This Too Too XXXXX Text Would Melt’, pp. 223-224.

³⁰³ Ibid, p. 224.

³⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 223.

³⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 236.

eventually did. When during the Radio 4 interview Wells was asked ‘why not lay them all out as the Arden editors have decided to do?’ he replied:

[I]t’s fine for them to be laid out for certain readerships. [...] I approve of the texts being made available in three edited versions. [...] What I don’t agree with is in a semi-popular edition, as the Arden is, an edition which is much read by schoolchildren, by undergraduates, confusing them by having a two-volume work called *Hamlet*.³⁰⁶

Previous editors, of course, had avoided this tendency by creating a single text, as epitomised in the editions of the 1980s discussed in Chapter Two above, but by the 2000s the academic standards that had produced them had largely been rejected. ‘Until recently’, as Wells tells Naughtie, the *Hamlet* texts ‘were conflated according to the whim more or less of the editor, with certain theories behind it sometimes, to make a single text’.³⁰⁷ Wells starts to give an example of one such ‘single text’ but Naughtie interrupts: ‘Hence the Harold Jenkins one in the last Arden.’³⁰⁸ Wells agrees: ‘Hence the Harold Jenkins. Hence also Ken[neth] Branagh’s text for his excellent film of the play. But on scholarly grounds it’s wrong to conflate.’³⁰⁹

Perhaps because of Naughtie’s interruption, Wells equates the creation of a scholarly printed edition of a play with the creation of a film script. There are, however, clear differences. Directors claim the authority, borne of artistic licence, to mould *Hamlet* into whatever shape they desire, without worrying about whether the result is truly ‘authentic’. They create art, not critically or historically accurate documents. Textual editors, on the other hand, are creating a fundamentally different text. They strive to present the – or a – ‘right’ text, despite the disagreement about the best way to do so. In fact, the very conflicts surrounding editorial theory demonstrate that editors seek, however vainly, a Platonic ideal of

³⁰⁶ *Today Programme*, 27 May 2002.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

editorial perfection. Of course, such an ideal view of editing is not always fulfilled in reality; editors are influenced by plenty of non-textual considerations. Even W. W. Greg, as Maguire notes, made the extraordinary claim that ‘if the general sense of educated Englishmen accepts a passage of Shakespeare as satisfactory, it is not likely to be seriously corrupt’.³¹⁰ A more widespread example identified by Gabriel Egan is the decision of almost every editor to call Hamlet’s mother Gertrude, even in editions based on the Second Quarto, where her name is consistently spelt Gertrard. The reason for this is editorial tradition rather than textual necessity, which the New Folger Library Shakespeare editors make explicit: they call their Q2 Queen Gertrude because the name in that form ‘has existed for nearly three hundred years’.³¹¹

The 2006 publication of the Arden3 three-text *Hamlet* marks a radical shift in both directorial and scholarly editing. During the 2002 interview Naughtie asks about the Arden3’s target readership:

Are we dealing here with something which is going to be used by scholars or producers of the play or people who are really looking for some authentic version, or is it going to be read by people who are really being introduced to Shakespeare? And if that is the case, won’t it be confusing?³¹²

Naughtie juxtaposes the professional user of Shakespeare with the newcomer likely to get confused. As Naughtie hints, the Arden3’s provision of all three versions of *Hamlet* may empower directors-as-editors to make choices between the three texts.

This chapter explores how the influence of Q1 on theatre changed following the silencing of the text in the main houses in 2000 discussed in Chapter Three above. I study the years immediately preceding and succeeding the publication of Arden3 in 2006. Between

³¹⁰ W. W. Greg, quoted in Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*, p. 61.

³¹¹ Quoted in Egan, *The Struggle for Shakespeare’s Text*, p. 204.

³¹² *Today Programme*, 27 May 2002.

2004 and 2008, before and after the text's publication, a number of *Hamlet* productions took place in Stratford and London. During this period there was no London or Stratford performance of the First Quarto, though in 2006 John Durnin directed the text at the Pitlochry Festival in Scotland. Over the same period, the internet's growing prevalence in society started to have an impact on the choice of theatre text. As with previous chapters, three mainstream performances and one fringe production are studied: Trevor Nunn's 2004 production at the Old Vic, Michael Boyd's 2004 RSC *Hamlet*, Greg Doran's 2008 RSC production, and finally Tim Carrol's fringe Factory *Hamlet* that toured the UK from 2006-2012. The chapter demonstrates that as the first decade of the millennium progressed, the First Quarto's influence on theatre increased, both in promptbooks and in other texts surrounding performance, particularly programmes. However, just as the Arden3 edition is published, with all its claims to textual and critical authority, the rise of the internet means that the availability of free, unannotated texts online threatens to diminish the impact of Thompson and Taylor's groundbreaking edition of *Hamlet*.

Old Vic 2004: The Young Hamlet

Trevor Nunn had been Artistic Director of the National Theatre in 2000 when John Caird staged *Hamlet* there.³¹³ Nunn was the first – and so far only – Artistic Director not to direct *Hamlet* during his time in charge of the National; it was not long after stepping down from the National that Nunn directed *Hamlet* at the Old Vic in 2004. There are a number of intriguing textual similarities between Caird's *Hamlet* and Nunn's: notably both choose the Jenkins 1982 Arden2 edition as their base text, by 2004 twenty-two years old. Like Caird, Nunn makes numerous cuts, amendments and rearrangements to the text, but without much

³¹³ See Chapter 3.

recourse to the First Quarto. Where Caird made no intentional departures towards Q1, Nunn three times departs from the Jenkins edition in favour of Q1, though two of these instances are disputable. While both directors' texts may look similar, Nunn demonstrates a greater acceptance of Q1 than Caird.

Nunn cast 19-year-old Samantha Whittaker as Ophelia, 26-year-old Rory Kinnear as Laertes, and 23-year-old Ben Whishaw as Hamlet. The 'skinny and vulnerable' Whishaw looks nothing like the traditional thirty-year-old Hamlet.³¹⁴ Indeed, the programme characterises the whole production through Nunn's decision to cast a young Hamlet. This derives, Robert Butler claims, from Nunn's reading of (Q2/F) *Hamlet* and its references to youth:

'The proposition that I'm making proceeds minutely from the text,' Nunn explains, over a mug of tea. 'The word "youth" – I haven't done a word count on this – I think is used in the text more than any other. In scene after scene after scene.' Nunn quotes Laertes speaking of 'a violet in the youth of primy nature'. He quotes Hamlet appealing to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern 'by the consonancy of our youth'. He might have quoted Ophelia's description of Hamlet as 'the unmatched form and feature of blown youth'. He might have rattled off a dozen others.³¹⁵

It is not only the theatre programme that notes the youthful nature of the production; it is a consistent feature of the reviews. John Gross for the *Sunday Telegraph* states that 'We know how old Hamlet is' before quoting the line 'I have been sexton here, many and boy, thirty years' but in fact Nunn cuts this specific date reference.³¹⁶ Similarly, the Gravedigger's statement that Yorick's body was in the ground for 'three and twenty years' (Q2 5.1.163-164) does not accord with the age of Whishaw's Hamlet. Nunn therefore emends this to read 'a

³¹⁴ Rhoda Koenig, 'Majesty and mystery go missing at Nunn's dreary Elsinore', *The Independent*, 28 April 2004.

³¹⁵ Old Vic 2004 *Hamlet* Programme, London, Victoria and Albert Museum Archives, uncatalogued.

³¹⁶ John Gross, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 2 May 2004.

dozen years', a half-line which echoes Q1, where the Gravedigger tells Hamlet that a skull has been in the ground 'this dozen year' (Q1 16.86). Q2 and F both provide oft-quoted evidence that Hamlet is thirty: the line Gross quotes where the gravedigger claims to have worked for thirty years is combined with his claim that he took up his profession 'the very day that young Hamlet was born' (5.1.139-140), which is conveniently also 'that day that our last King Hamlet overcame Fortinbras' (Q2 5.1.135-6). Yorick has been dead for 'three and twenty years' (Q2 5.1.163-164) meaning he died when Hamlet was around seven. Q1, on the other hand, never indicates Hamlet's age. The Q1 gravedigger claims a skull 'hath been here this dozen year [...] ever since our last King Hamlet slew Fortenbrasse' (Q1 17.87); but he makes neither of the other claims, and it is at best ambiguous as to whether the skull is even Yorick's. Numerous academics use the 'dozen year' date combined with their calculation that the Q2/F Yorick died when Hamlet was around seven to argue that Hamlet is likely to be 18, but this is inconsistent with a separation of the three versions of *Hamlet*: Hamlet's age in Q1 surely cannot be determined through conflating its lines with those of Q2/F.³¹⁷ Despite this shaky evidence, the general consensus is that Q1 Hamlet is younger than that of the better-known texts; indeed, when Terri Bourus staged Q1 in the USA in 2011, she called the production 'Young Hamlet' and later named her book about the text *Young Shakespeare's Young Hamlet*.³¹⁸ In the strictest sense, Nunn's casting cannot be said to derive from the First Quarto, but the traditional reading of Q1 Hamlet as a younger character is clearly involved.

The second echo of the First Quarto comes during Act 4 Scene 1 in which the King announces his intended response to Hamlet's murder of Polonius. In Jenkins's Arden2 it reads:

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends,

³¹⁷ See, for example, Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet*, vol. 1, p. 419, though Thompson and Taylor are careful not to make any definite claims about Q1.

³¹⁸ Bourus, *Young Shakespeare's Young Hamlet*.

And let them know both what we mean to do
 And what's untimely done. [So envious slander],
 Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
 As level as the cannon to his blank,
 Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name
 And hit the woundless air. O come away,
 My soul is full of discord and dismay. (Arden2 4.1.38-45; brackets in original)

Nunn emends line 40, 'And what's untimely done. [So envious slander]' to read 'And what's untimely done. So haply slander', thereby eliminating jealousy and making the line more hypothetical or positive, depending on whether 'haply' is taken to mean 'perhaps' or 'hopefully'.³¹⁹ Indeed Nunn's version also changes the whole grammatical structure of the sentence: here 'haply' acts as an adverb and modifies not 'slander' but the later phrase 'may miss our name' whereas in Jenkins's edition, the word preceding 'slander' is an adjective. Jenkins's King is arrogant, expecting others to envy him; the King in Nunn's production is more uncertain, willing to trust his fate to luck.

Yet none of the three source texts has either Jenkins's or Nunn's version. The line in the Arden3 Q2 reads: 'And what's untimely done []' (4.1.40). The bracketed empty space is provided because 'It is generally assumed that the second half of this line is missing in Q2. [...] In F the King continues *O come away* as at 44, omitting the intervening lines'.³²⁰ Jenkins provides the hypothetical half-line 'so envious slander', arguing:

For the words missing from the text most eds. have accepted Theobald's suggestion, as improved by Capell, *So, haply, slander*. But *haply*, a too evident stopgap, adds little

³¹⁹ Old Vic 2004 *Hamlet* Promptbook, London, the offices of Mark Rubinstein Limited.

³²⁰ Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet*, vol. 1, p. 358.

to *may* (l. 43) unless some inappropriate doubt, and an adjective describing slander seems preferable.³²¹

Nunn, by rejecting Jenkins's suggestion, thus follows an editorial convention established by much earlier editors, a convention that has acquired authority from generations of critics and from the weight of precedent. Q1 has no corresponding line, but the equivalent scene (Scene 11) reads 'Haply the air and climate of the country / May please him better than his native home' (Q1 11.123). Theobald, editing in the 1730s, had no access (so far as anyone knows) to the as-yet un-rediscovered First Quarto, so while the line may have an echo of Q1, it does not directly derive from the Q1 text. It is, essentially, a faux-Shakespearean half-line, of the kind that has been inserted into editions and performance texts for centuries.³²² Of course, so is the line Jenkins that suggests, but for Nunn it lacks the credibility conferred by the long history of Theobald's half-line. Nunn's adoption of the reading, it could be argued, has no roots in a desire to adopt the First Quarto; it is instead a textual coincidence.

The only incontrovertible use of Q1, then, is the third: it comes earlier in the same scene, when the two gravediggers are discussing Ophelia's death. In Arden2 the Gravedigger complains that 'great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves more than their even-Christen' (Arden2 5.1.27-29). Nunn emends 'their even-Christen' to Q1's more straightforward 'other people' (Q1 16.17). The most immediate effect of this change is to make the line more comprehensible, but it also serves in a small way to de-Christianise the play. It is common to write about a production of *Hamlet* as for a particular time, and Nunn's modern-dress, youthful production aims for exactly that: the programme even talks of a '*Hamlet* which can speak to us in 2004'.³²³ A *Hamlet* in which religious references are removed is certainly closer to the conditions of the twenty-first

³²¹ Jenkins, *Hamlet*, p. 336.

³²² See, for example, Laurie Osborne, *The Trick of Singularity: Twelfth Night and the Performance Editions* (Iowa, University of Iowa Press, 1996).

³²³ Old Vic Programme, V&A Archives, p. 5.

century than the seventeenth. The theatre programme highlights this choice and makes this very point:

Nunn even goes to the notorious Bad Quarto for alternatives which he feels will work. [...] That strange phrase ‘even-Christen’ is explained in the footnotes as meaning everybody else in Christendom, but [Q1’s reading] not only makes immediate sense to a modern audience, but is in fact much funnier. So, despite the fact that it comes from a highly questionable edition of the play, Nunn has used it in preference.³²⁴

This explanation comes from a section in the programme explaining Nunn’s choices as a director, written by Elaine Peake of the professional theatre programme producers John Good Holbrook. Unlike the productions four years earlier at the Globe and the National, the programme at the Old Vic takes time to explain the provenance of *Hamlet* and specifically of Q1:

The popular explanation for this is that it is a version of the play ‘stolen’ by a minor actor in Shakespeare’s company, probably the actor playing Marcellus, who then dictated the play to the printer from memory. Alternatively, it has been suggested that this is Shakespeare’s first draft of the play. Either way, it is a version which makes sense as an acting edition, but is philosophically less complex than the later texts.³²⁵

By presenting two views of the text without aligning herself to either theory, she leaves the field open to highlight Nunn’s role as director/editor: ‘directors’, she writes, are ‘left in the position of not knowing for sure whether the printed editions of *Hamlet* are what the writer wrote or what the players played’; they must decide for themselves.³²⁶ Though ‘To the untrained eye, the choice of what to cut may seem to be at the whim of the director, [...] Trevor Nunn for one has very definite reasons for his decisions’.³²⁷ Peake’s implication is

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Ibid.

that Nunn as a director has authority to decide which lines to cut or emend, an editorial authority beyond the comprehension of audience members who are not privy to his ‘very definite reasons’. Rather than pretending that the Old Vic *Hamlet* is some kind of ‘pure’ version of Shakespeare, she acknowledges and embraces the textual challenges, but confers on Nunn the ability, knowledge and indeed responsibility for making the textual decisions:

Ultimately, a director cannot rely on the scholarship and opinions of others, however we have come to revere the printed word. Like the four centuries of directors before him, Trevor Nunn has used his experience and intuition to make sense of Shakespeare’s words[.]³²⁸

As represented by Peake, Nunn is a director/editor admirably facing up to the dilemma of deciding which *Hamlet* to stage.

The reviewers largely accept this, making no mention of Nunn’s textual choices, which are mainly restricted to choosing between Q2 and F.³²⁹ Nunn’s reviewers also tacitly accept his choice to relocate the ‘To be’ speech to before Polonius’s advice to Laertes at the beginning of Act 2, earlier even than the Q1 location.³³⁰ By 2004 the relocation of ‘To be’, using the Q1 structure as license, had become so common that Ann Thompson later joked she felt it necessary to comment when a play did *not* place it in the Q1 location.³³¹ Nunn does move it to a different place from other directors, though, and the silent acceptance of this relocation – neither Peake’s programme nor the critics mention it – demonstrates once more the increasing acceptance of First Quarto influences.³³² However, just before the ‘To be’ speech, Nunn inserts a silent scene: a visualisation of Ophelia’s description to Polonius when

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ See the various reviews held at: Old Vic 2004 *Hamlet* Review Pack, London, Victoria and Albert Museum Archives, uncatalogued.

³³⁰ See for example Koenig, 2004.

³³¹ See Ann Thompson, *Third Annual London Shakespeare Lecture 24 March 2014*, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAuyGg8yF8Y>> [accessed 4 August 2017].

³³² See Review Pack, V&A Archive.

she describes Hamlet entering ‘pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other, / And with a look so piteous in purport / As if he had been loosed out of hell’ (2.1.75-80). Nunn’s scene shows Ophelia dancing alone to pop music before Hamlet enters. The promptbook provides the following instructions:

Ophelia dances / Ophelia puts on make up / Ophelia dances again / Hamlet enters DR door – leaves door open / Hamlet holds Ophelia’s hand / Hamlet exits DR door – leaves door open / Ophelia wipes face with tissues / Ophelia exits thru [sic] DL door – shuts door / Hamlet enters UC and crosses downstage towards trap³³³

Nunn visualises Ophelia’s account of Hamlet’s intrusion, though he adds no new words to Shakespeare’s text at this point. Several reviewers criticise this silent scene being non-Shakespearean at the same time that they ignore the numerous examples where Nunn freely edits the words themselves. Reviewers, again, it seems, are less concerned with strict textual fidelity than with fidelity to their own image of the play: directors face the task of creating a production based on the notional cultural memorial reconstruction of an iconic, collectively imagined *Hamlet*, rather than anything in material textual existence.

Nunn’s decision to use the Arden2 as a base text for his production at the Old Vic means he puts on what was by textual standards a reasonably conventional production. Nonetheless, Nunn’s younger Hamlet – indeed, younger *Hamlet* – is closer to a feature commonly associated with the First Quarto and Nunn’s single use of a Q1 line passes by without comment. The silence of the critics cannot be simply ascribed to them not noticing, since Elaine Peake highlights his decision in the programme. Rather it is an implicit acceptance of Nunn’s right as a director/editor to be textually selective, as long as he does not disrupt the archetypal *Hamlet*: Nunn replaces a line no-one really knows anyway, so he is forgiven. Though Nunn’s textual choices echo his colleague Caird’s in that both use the First

³³³ Old Vic 2004 *Hamlet* Promptbook, London, the offices of Mark Rubinstein Limited, no shelfmark.

Quarto only in very rare circumstances, Nunn's programme presents and defends some of his textual choices and the rationale behind them, whereas Caird's programme makes no mention of his own textual interventions. Though this can be ascribed partially to the differences between the two directors, it is nonetheless symptomatic of the rise in Q1's popularity, in parallel with the continuing editorial work on the Arden3 edition: Caird's 2000 production avoided the First Quarto and his programme did not even mention its existence; in 2004 on the other hand not only does an experienced director at a prestigious London theatre use lines from the First Quarto, he even publicises the fact in the theatre programme and commissions a defence of it. Given that Nunn employs only a few Q1 words, the space given in his programme to justify this action seems disproportionate. Jenkins's rejection of the text does not have as great an impact on Nunn's production in 2004 as it had on Caird's production four years earlier. At this point in 2004 it is slowly becoming fashionable to be seen to know the First Quarto and to be seen to use it – a sign of education, knowledge and authority. In the end, however, there is still scant use of words and tropes from the Q1 text at this point: Jenkins's edition still plays a major role in suppressing the First Quarto in performance.

RSC 2004: Which Hamlet?

Further north in the same year, Michael Boyd's debut production as the Royal Shakespeare Company's Artistic Director saw him directing Sam West in *Hamlet*. Jonathan Bate's essay 'Which Hamlet?' features in the theatre programme, and starts as follows:

Shakespeare couldn't decide what to do with his most famous speech. The earliest surviving text of *Hamlet* is highly inaccurate in many of its particulars, but there is little doubt that its shape reflects that of the play as first performed. In that text (known as the 'first quarto'), Hamlet enters 'reading on a book' and launches into his

soliloquy ‘To be or not to be there, ay there’s the point.’ His famous question is asked as if in response to something in the book he is reading.³³⁴

Bate conscientiously avoids any mention of the memorial reconstruction theory or the notion of ‘bad’ quartos. His programme note as a whole presents the First Quarto as a legitimate source for information on historical performances of *Hamlet*: ‘the first quarto [...] offer[s] striking suggestions as to how the play may have been cut in Shakespeare’s own time’.³³⁵ Yet in an ironic echo of the ‘highly inaccurate’ First Quarto, Bate misquotes that very text, adding an extra ‘there’ before ‘ay’. He thus accidentally renders the *doppelgänger* Q1 version of ‘To be’ even stranger.

While Bate, misquotations aside, carefully positions Q1 according to the modern scholarship, the theatre programme as an entity presents a more confusing picture of the First Quarto. Later in an unattributed section the programme states that ‘Q1 is a “bad quarto” because it is full of omissions, transpositions and paraphrases and is thought to be a “pirate” copy dictated by the actor playing Marcellus.’³³⁶ In the same passage, seemingly conflicting claims are made: the section claims that ‘Like *King Lear*, there are two authoritative texts of *Hamlet* which differ substantively’ but concludes that ‘Q1, Q2 and F1 are the authoritative texts’.³³⁷ While it may not be a particularly illuminating guide to the First Quarto, the programme nonetheless dedicates considerable space to exploring the textual history of the play and repeatedly brings the text to the audience’s attention. As at the Old Vic, the RSC programme demonstrates a newfound necessity to contextualise the performance of *Hamlet* within its print history.

Boyd follows his 1980 and 1989 RSC predecessors in the adoption of Spencer’s 1980 Penguin edition as his base text; indeed, at several points his programme resonates with the

³³⁴ *Hamlet* 2004 Programme, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Royal Shakespeare Company Archive, uncatalogued, p. 7.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*

³³⁶ *Ibid.*

³³⁷ *Ibid.*

past productions and with the Penguin text.³³⁸ The similarities continue in the promptbook: like Daniels, Boyd moves the ‘To be’ soliloquy to its First Quarto location and, again like Daniels, Boyd also uses Q1 lines in an attempt to blend the edited text together. After the Penguin’s 2.2.163 (‘Be you and I behind an arras then.’) Polonius uses Corambis’s Q1 lines:

Marry, my good lord thus.

The Prince’s walk is here in the gallery.

There let Ophelia walk until he comes.

Yourself and I will stand close in the study (Q1 7.103-106).³³⁹

After 2.2.168 (‘Look where the wretch comes reading’) Polonius again uses one of Corambis’s lines – ‘Madam will it please your Grace to leave us here?’ (Q1 7.110) – which serves as the transition point into the relocated ‘To be’ section taken from 3.2. Then at the end of this transposed scene, after the Penguin’s 3.1.181 (‘as you please’), Polonius says:

But if you hold it fit, let me alone

To find the depth of this: let me work.

I’ll try him every way: see where he comes again.

I’ll board him presently.³⁴⁰

These Q1 lines allow the play to return to 2.2.171. Boyd thus not only adopts the First Quarto’s structure but uses its lines to transition into and out of the relocated scene. However, the theatre programme indicates that they ‘experimented with several different possibilities for To be or not to be’, and later in the RSC edition Boyd states ‘I flirted until late in rehearsal with transposing “To be” as a “suicide bomber” speech immediately before “Lights, lights, lights!”’; the promptbook even has a crossed-out copy of the soliloquy placed there.³⁴¹

³³⁸ See for example *Hamlet 2004 Programme*, RSC Archive, pp. 12-13.

³³⁹ *Hamlet 2004 Promptbook*, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Royal Shakespeare Company Archive, RSC/SM/1/2004/HAM1.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.* The lines from ‘Let me work’ to ‘he comes again’ derive from Q1 7.202-204; other parts derive from Q2/F.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*; Bate and Rasmussen, *Hamlet*, p. 219.

Ultimately Boyd went with the First Quarto's placement, arguing that 'It worked as a thrilling dramatization of the difficulty of direct action, but it pushed the speech's vulnerability out the door'.³⁴² His 'editorial' decision is an artistic one, but it is supported, 'authenticated' even, by Q1's placement.

If the relocation of 'To be' is a prominent statement of intent, Boyd makes numerous changes which are less easy to spot. One Q1 influence is the minor rewriting of 2.1.1 to clarify that Polonius is referring to Laertes, from 'Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo' (Penguin 2.1.1) to 'Give this money and these letters to my son'.³⁴³ This small change, as with many of Boyd's emendations, goes unnoticed, but echoes Daniels's similar rewriting in 1989.³⁴⁴ Boyd incorporates numerous other aspects of Q1 into his prompt copy, aspects rarely seen in Q2/F performances. The Penguin's Act 4 Scene 6, where Horatio receives Hamlet's letter, is replaced by Q1 Scene 14, the conversation between Horatio and the Queen unique to the First Quarto. Boyd's production is the first case study not wholly based on Q1 to include this scene. The uncut Q1 scene is 34 lines long, compared to the Penguin's 33, but where Q1 has short verse lines, most of the Penguin scene is written in long prose lines. The scene thus works out to be considerably shorter in the Q1 version, and it also includes the specific information that Hamlet 'writ down that doom / 'Pointed for him to be performed on' Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (Q1 14.27-28), compared to Hamlet's Q2/F tease that 'Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England. Of them I have much to tell thee' (Penguin 4.6.26-28).³⁴⁵ The information that Horatio conveys to the Queen here permits Boyd to cut 53 lines from Hamlet's later explanation in 5.2.³⁴⁶ The scene thus allows for a streamlining of the final few scenes of the play and thus a significant acceleration of

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ *Hamlet* 2004 Promptbook, RSC Archive.

³⁴⁴ See Chapter 2.

³⁴⁵ *Hamlet* 2004 Promptbook, RSC Archive.

³⁴⁶ 'So much for ... could learn us' (Penguin 5.2.1-9) and 'Up from my ... Thou knowest already.' (Penguin 5.2.12-55).

dramatic pace. Boyd's inclusion of the scene may at first seem to hint at some kind of quest for the past, the kind of authenticity that Poel and Holloway were searching for, but the scene, as with the rest of the play, does not escape unedited in Boyd's production. He cuts seven lines or part-lines and reorders one to bring the syntax closer to modern English: he approaches the scene, essentially, in precisely the same way as he does the rest of the play. Boyd does not attempt to recreate an authentic moment, nor stake any claims about the First Quarto. He uses the text to speed up the pace of the play and bring an unusual perspective on the play's relationships, most strikingly through the clear alignment of the Queen with Hamlet and Horatio that the Q1 scene provides.

Boyd continues his use of Q1 into the next scene, replacing the Penguin's first 52 lines of 4.7 with two Q1 lines: 'Hamlet from England! Is it possible? / What chance is this? They are gone and he come home' (Q1 15.1-2). The cut results in considerable differences in characterisation: the omitted lines contain the discussion between Laertes and the King about Hamlet's role in killing Polonius, and the King's justification for not directly executing Hamlet. The cut builds on the previous scene's realignment of the Queen's position by omitting the King's claim that 'She is so conjunctive to my life and soul / That, as the star moves not but in his sphere, I could not but by her' (Penguin 4.7.14-16), a claim which elicits more sympathy from the audience than any other outside his prayer scene in Act 3 Scene 3. The suggestion that the King truly loves the Queen is thus erased and his character thereby becomes a little shallower. The substitution of these lines comes within a wider series of cuts both in this scene and more broadly in the end of the play. Without recourse to Q1, Boyd cuts approximately 37 of the remaining 140 lines in this scene, mostly to remove the commonly-cut references to Lamond. The beginning of Act 5 sees Boyd making a similar use of the First Quarto again to shorten the gravedigger scene. The first 39 lines of Penguin's 5.1 are replaced with Q1's 16.1-19. Boyd's scene contains the same essential elements of contesting

Ophelia's right to a Christian burial and joking about her death, but, crucially, does everything much more quickly. In fact, all in all, Boyd makes recourse to the First Quarto so many times that there are too many to detail here; each time, he uses Q1 to summarise, shorten, or clarify the Penguin's text.

The critical reaction to Boyd's textual decisions suggests that reviewers are unaware of the extent to which he adopted Q1 readings. A small number of reviewers are unimpressed with Boyd's textual choices, although none make explicit the link with the First Quarto or even refer to the detail and justification provided in the programme. John Gross states simply 'Some of the readjustments of the text puzzled me.'³⁴⁷ Charles Spencer notes that 'the choice of textual variants is sometimes perverse' without further explanation.³⁴⁸ Michael Billington notes the relocation of the 'To be' soliloquy without passing judgement either way. Far more common, however, is the response of critics such as Kate Bassett and Patrick Marmion, who do not mention the textual choices at all, either not realising or not caring that Boyd had adopted unusual readings. Particularly noteworthy among this group of critics is Paul Taylor, whose lengthy review (over 1300 words) fails to mention any textual links between Boyd's *Hamlet* and the First Quarto.³⁴⁹ Four years after writing of the Red Shift production that 'The violent nunnery scene now comes joltingly early', Taylor calls the RSC *Hamlet* 'fluent' and 'well-paced'.³⁵⁰ Taylor's silence may be because he simply does not notice the change, but Bate's article in the programme highlights the decision: 'Most boldly, the nunnery scene is placed early, as in the first quarto'.³⁵¹ Where Taylor in 2000 scorns Q1's unique scene between Horatio and Hamlet's mother, he passes over the scene without comment in his 2004 review of Boyd's production.

³⁴⁷ John Gross, *Sunday Telegraph*, 25 July 2004.

³⁴⁸ Charles Spencer, *Daily Telegraph*, 23 July 2004.

³⁴⁹ Paul Taylor, *The Independent*, 29 July 2004.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ *Hamlet* 2004 Promptbook, RSC Archive.

The disparity between the reaction of the critics to Boyd and to the 1999-2000 Red Shift *Hamlet* – most clearly visible in Taylor’s two reviews – could well be the result of three factors. Firstly, where critics are willing to dismiss a fringe touring company’s textual assertions, they are less ready to query the authority of the RSC Artistic Director, particularly when the right to edit the text is conferred on him by Bate, who is identified as ‘Professor of Shakespeare and Renaissance Literature at the University of Warwick’ in the programme. Second, from 2000 to 2004 the First Quarto continued to become more prominent, or at least less obscure, in public debate, thanks in part to the Arden3’s editorial choice and the subsequent media coverage – not least the BBC interview on national radio with which this chapter opened. Thirdly, there is a key difference in the title of Boyd’s production and Holloway’s: Boyd’s *Hamlet* is *Hamlet*, while Holloway’s is *Hamlet: First Cut*. Knowing that a production is primarily based on one of the ‘right’ texts of *Hamlet* allows a reviewer to concentrate on other aspects of the production, such as the quality of the actors, the set and so on; even if the production borrows rather heavily from the First Quarto, the most it warrants is a sentence condemning Boyd’s textual decisions. The reaction to Red Shift shows that in the early twenty-first century, if the base text of a performance is signalled as Q1 then the majority of any given review will be spent discussing the text and either condemning or praising the text – not the production.

The First Quarto for Boyd is an aid to his attempt to accelerate the pace of the production, particularly at the end. By freely editing the text with reference to Q1 he produces his own *Hamlet*, and, aside from a few frowns from the critics, his changes are largely accepted. The lines replaced, after all, are not crucial parts of the notional *Hamlet*. To return to Bate’s contribution to the programme:

Keen-eared auditors will discover that Boyd has been eclectic in his choices, weighing each textual variant according to its merits, moving freely between the early texts and opting for rigorous pruning rather than reckless lopping.³⁵²

Bate's picture of Boyd as a kind of textual gardener making editorial choices on the basis of his own taste is exactly what might be expected from a text that postdates the publication of the Arden3 text. Yet it is important to remember that Boyd's production actually predates the publication. Just as happened in the 1980s, a production at the RSC using the Penguin as its base edition leads the way in incorporating more aspects of the First Quarto in its prompt copy than other productions of its time.

Editorial Interventions: The RSC and The Arden3

James Naughtie's 2002 question – 'What is the thing to do?' – meets with three different responses in 2006. From an academic textual perspective, the most prominent is of course the publication of Thompson and Taylor's Arden3 three-text *Hamlet*. Eric Rasmussen gives an indication of its significance in his 2007 review:

I don't imagine that there are many Shakespearians on the planet who did not know of Arden's long-announced plan to present a groundbreaking edition of all three textual versions of *Hamlet*.³⁵³

Thompson and Taylor's edition is rooted firmly in the new millennium: the logical, even necessary, next step following the revisionist work of the late twentieth century. 'Just as the 1982 Arden2 *Hamlet* marked the culmination of the tradition of conflated editions,' as Rasmussen writes, 'Arden3 is a milestone in the recent history of version-based editing.'³⁵⁴ It

³⁵² *Hamlet* 2004 Programme, RSC Archive, p. 8.

³⁵³ Eric Rasmussen, 'Editions and Textual Studies', *Shakespeare Survey*, 60 (2007), 361–369, p. 361.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

represents textual scholarship in a world where the certainties of previous generations no longer seem so certain. Their approach, according to MacDonald P. Jackson, is ‘attuned to the relativism, pluralism, and skepticism of our time’; they even describe themselves as ‘agnostic’ regarding the relationship between the three texts.³⁵⁵ At the same time, they preserve previous editions’ prioritisation of a single text, through the publication of Q2 in one main volume and Q1/F in a separate supplementary volume. At first the disparity was also highlighted financially: the cheapest that each volume could be bought for was £9 and £55 respectively because the Q1/F volume was initially available only in hardback; this imbalance was rectified the next year with its publication in paperback.³⁵⁶

While the Arden3 was reshaping the editing of *Hamlet*, Boyd’s RSC was presenting its Complete Works Festival, in which it staged Shakespeare’s works over the course of a year, to a mixture of critical responses.³⁵⁷ The festival performed several functions for the theatre, not least to inaugurate the temporary Courtyard Theatre in anticipation of the closure of the Royal Shakespeare and Swan Theatres for renovations. It also served as a theatrical prelude to what Boyd calls ‘a long-held ambition’, the publication of the RSC Complete Works edition in 2007, timed to coincide with the building works.³⁵⁸ Two academics led the editorial team: ‘Jonathan Bate’s role’, according to the edition’s preface, ‘has been akin to a theatre company’s artistic director’ as he ‘devised the guiding principles, wrote almost all of the introductory materials and was the final arbiter for every editorial decision.’³⁵⁹ Eric Rasmussen, as ‘stage director’, oversaw the more mechanical aspects such as punctuation,

³⁵⁵ MacDonald P. Jackson, ‘The Arden Shakespeare *Hamlet*, and: The Arden Shakespeare *Hamlet*: The Texts of 1603 and 1623 (review)’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 58, 3 (2007), 388-391, p. 389; Thompson and Taylor, vol. 1, *Hamlet*, p. 507.

³⁵⁶ See Jackson, ‘The Arden Shakespeare *Hamlet*’.

³⁵⁷ For an extensive exploration of the festival, see, Michael Dobson, ‘Shakespeare Performances in England, 2006’, *Shakespeare Survey*, 60 (2007), 284–319.

³⁵⁸ William Shakespeare, *Complete Works*, ed. by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 64.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 6.

stage directions and so on.³⁶⁰ The two Complete Works – festival and edition – act as powerful symbols of the RSC’s artistic intent. Performance literally precedes text, and as Bate makes clear, the RSC considers its *Complete Works* to be the first ‘right’ one for three hundred years:

Modern bibliographic investigation has decisively shown that the early printed texts of *Hamlet* represent different moments in the play’s evolving stage-history. A ‘conflated’ *Hamlet* is not a Shakespearean original: it is a version of the play created by Rowe nearly a hundred years after Shakespeare’s death. [...] All existing Shakespeare editions are deeply flawed: Rowe set editors off down the wrong path and they have not returned. [We] draw on late twentieth-century scholarly innovations but inaugurate the twenty-first-century editorial tradition [...] Here, then, is the actors’ Shakespeare: the text authorized by the King’s Men and edited for the Royal Shakespeare Company.³⁶¹

This, then, is the RSC’s answer to the question of editing, a justification surely written more for the RSC’s lay audience than for academics. Bate’s decision to prioritise the Folio, not to mention his overzealous claim to be ‘inaugurating’ the new editorial tradition, sets him, like Stanley Wells, directly against the Arden.³⁶² Thus in the first decade of the twenty-first century two approaches to Shakespeare compete for authority: the Arden prioritises the early texts in their multiplicity, while the RSC sees performance, past and present, as the legitimising factor for its version of *Hamlet*.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Ibid, p. 53-57.

³⁶² There are of course numerous objections to Bate’s claims, many of which John Jowett makes in his review of the edition: John Jowett, ‘Editions and Textual Studies: The RSC Complete Works’, *Shakespeare Survey*, 61 (2008), 394-403.

Factory Theatre 2006-2012: The Return to a Victorian Text

Yet even as these two landmark editions are published, the impact of the internet – a factor which promises to transform the staging of Shakespeare – starts to make itself felt in texts for performance. Tim Carroll’s Factory Theatre production of *Hamlet* is the first case study in this thesis to reveal a substantial impact that derives from the internet. As a new, innovative fringe theatre company, the Factory pioneers the use of the internet, indicating how other companies may try to approach online texts in the future. The Factory Theatre was founded in 2006 by Tim Evans and Alex Hassell, who offered Carroll the role of Associate Director. The premise of the Factory’s *Hamlet*, the company’s first show, was that the members of a large repertory company learn several parts each; the audience were asked to bring props, and each night they assigned roles to the cast just before the performance started. This radical ensemble experiment was successful; it toured throughout the UK from 2006 to 2012, led to other Factory projects and attracted the attention and support of a number of high-profile actors, including Euan McGregor, Bill Nighy and Mark Rylance. There were plenty of positive reviews; the Factory’s marketing quotes *The Evening Standard*, *The Times*, and *The Independent* respectively: ‘a theatrical coup ... heart-in-the-mouth theatre, unbearably poignant, unrepeatabe’, ‘the hottest ticket in town’ and ‘a rare feat – incredible and terrifying’.³⁶³ From night to night, the location, stage, props, cast, and of course the audience were all different. The prime stable factor, uniting the production – indeed, preventing it from being solely an improvisation series – was the Factory’s *Hamlet* text.

With such a radical approach to the play, it might be expected that the Factory’s approach to the text would be equally modern, reflecting the most recent textual scholarship and embracing the new millennium’s Arden3 move towards multiplicity in Shakespeare’s

³⁶³ ‘Factory Theatre Hamlet’, <<http://www.factorytheatre.co.uk/hamlet.html>> [accessed 4 August 2017].

plays. Actually, the Factory used an edition ultimately derived from William Wright and William Clark's Globe *Hamlet*, a text first published in 1864. This choice is not as obscure as it first seems: the Globe edition's text was used in the Variorum edition, which in turn was posted online and became known as the Moby Shakespeare, named after the server which hosted the site.³⁶⁴ Though there is some disagreement over which website was the first to publish the Moby text, it has been online since at least 1993, meaning that it has been freely available longer than most new undergraduates have been alive.³⁶⁵ The appeal of Moby Shakespeare for the Factory Theatre is clear. In 2006, the Factory was a group of disparate actors with little money and no fixed space for rehearsals. Providing everyone with a script that could easily be dispersed and duplicated was the best option: a digital text was ideal. In addition to its long-standing availability (which already confers familiarity and a form of prestige), Moby is an easily accessible and navigated text; the ctrl+f function makes it convenient for finding quotations or counting the instances of a given word; it is the first result of an online search of '*Hamlet* full text' on Google; it can be downloaded with a few clicks of the mouse or keyboard; and, crucially for struggling theatre companies, the text is long out of copyright. Well over a century since its original prominence, these factors have given the Globe Shakespeare new influence in a very different context.

Yet the very age of the Moby texts is, according to Andrew Murphy, 'fatal' for 'many scholars and students'.³⁶⁶ The Moby text, argues Murphy, bears no traces of important twentieth-century advances in bibliography; he cites as example the advances of Greg and his fellow New Bibliographers in identifying the correct publication date of the Pavier quartos.³⁶⁷

Murphy further argues that:

³⁶⁴ For a history of the Moby text, see Eric M. Johnson, 'Open Source Shakespeare: An Experiment in Literary Technology', <http://www.opensourceshakespeare.org/info/paper_toc.php> [accessed 4 August 2017].

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Andrew Murphy, 'Shakespeare Goes Digital: Three Open Internet Editions', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 61, 3 (2010), 401-414, p. 405.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

Problems of a similar nature arise with other plays, compounded by the fact that Clark and Wright had a tendency to favour eclectic editing methods, sometimes picking and choosing readings from different editions without consistently considering the exact authority of these texts.³⁶⁸

Murphy's objection to the Victorian conflation has been levelled at most major editions of *Hamlet* from the late-twentieth century, and indeed at the RSC edition discussed above.³⁶⁹ The question might be asked as to whether these considerations actually apply to *Hamlet*, particularly in reference to the First Quarto. After all, the three source texts were all available to editors in 1864 – if anything Q1 was treated with more respect, given that it had not yet received the label 'bad', and given the excitement over the recent discovery of a second copy of the text, discussed in Chapter One above. Yet this ironically seems to lead to a greater exclusion of the Q1 text: Clark and Wright were also the editors of the original Cambridge series, and in the Globe edition they explain that they follow the same editorial principles as they do for their Cambridge editions. While they consider Q1 'obviously a very imperfect reproduction', they deem it of sufficient merit to print separately in their Cambridge series in parallel to their conflated Q2/F text.³⁷⁰ The Globe text – and its online descendant the Moby – thus retains little Q1 influence. The only evidence of the First Quarto's existence is found in the by-now familiar stage direction for Hamlet to leap into the grave.

The Factory production makes large cuts to the Moby text, totalling around a third of the text. Unusually in comparison to the other case studies of this thesis, there are apparently no additions, rearrangements or emendations to the text – only cuts and one or two re-

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ See, for example, Jowett, 'Editions and Textual Studies'.

³⁷⁰ See Clark and Wright, *The works of William Shakespeare*, Vol. 8; and William Shakespeare, *The Works of William Shakespeare, The Globe Edition* ed. by William George Clark and William Aldis Wright (Cambridge and London: Macmillan and Co, 1864).

introduced passages.³⁷¹ No review of the Factory *Hamlet* mentions the textual choices, probably because, once again, no-one noticed; no notice is given in the theatre programme simply because there is no programme. This re-emergence of the Globe text in 2006 shows the rather paradoxical impact of modern technology on textual studies, and reiterates what its editors wrote 150 years ago:

We trust that the title which has been chosen for the present edition will neither be thought presumptuous nor found inappropriate. It seems indeed safe to predict that any volume which presents, in a convenient form, with clear type and at a moderate cost, the complete works of the foremost man in all literature, the greatest master of the language most widely spoken among men, will make its way to the remotest corners of the habitable globe.³⁷²

They of course could have had no idea how true their prediction would prove in the text's online proliferation. If the use of Moby is the third response to Naughtie's question of multiple texts that opens this chapter, it is also the least considered. A director who chooses to use a modern print edition at least has the opportunity to read and engage with the editor's arguments and defence of the various editorial decisions, not to mention consider the careful textual collations at the bottom of each page or end of each volume. Even if academics are yet to figure out how exactly to answer Naughtie's question, most agree by 2006 that it is not conflation. Yet the Moby text promotes just such a conflated text, giving rise to the possibility that the editions of the 1980s will be replaced not with carefully prepared new editions in the new millennium, but with a text from the time of Charles Dickens and Queen Victoria. The Factory Theatre's adoption of the Moby text is perhaps an early indication of how theatres will select their editions in the twenty-first century, and it does not bode well.

³⁷¹ The Factory Theatre Company kindly gave me access to their online portal, from which I downloaded the *Hamlet* text.

³⁷² Clark and Wright, *Works*, (1864), p. vi.

RSC 2008: Enterprising Editing

Two years after the Factory tour started, the RSC staged *Hamlet* again. Textually, the production represents a move away from previous RSC productions of the play, but it does not realise any fears that the Moby text would immediately dominate performance of *Hamlet*. The production was directed by Gregory Doran in 2008 and starred David Tennant as Hamlet and Patrick Stewart as Claudius. The literary department of the Royal Shakespeare Company generously supplied me with a digital copy of the text to study; this digital text itself illustrates Doran's approach to the play. At the top of each page is a header that reads 'Hamlet – Edited and directed by Greg Doran – Updated 1st nov [sic] 2008'. Doran's role as editor is not only highlighted at the top of every page but even privileged by being placed before his job as director and is further enhanced by the understanding implicit from the word 'Updated' that his work as editor was a long, slow process that required frequent revision. Indeed, this 'edition' is held in high regard at the RSC, as their protective stance towards the text demonstrates: at the beginning of the document is the strict injunction in large, bold red font that the text is 'to be used for your own research purposes only' and my name is watermarked on each page of the PDF document to prevent copyright violations. The RSC's regard for this text as an edition in its own right is not misplaced. Of all the case studies considered in this thesis, Doran's base edition(s) required the most work to identify, and, uniquely, his text's precise provenance remains elusive.

The theatre programme provides a glimpse into Doran's work process. It contains a brief 'Rehearsal scrapbook' charting the progression of the production from the first week towards performance. The first entry, written by Doran, opens: 'To cut or not to cut' and explains that:

there's no such thing as a definitive production, perhaps because there's no such thing as a definitive text. The first published edition we have of the play, the First Quarto, has lines like 'To be or not to be. Aye, there's the point' and is usually referred to as the 'Bad' Quarto. It's short [...], but it is nearly half the length of the next edition, the Second Quarto [...]. Shakespeare must have continued to revise the play [...] because by the time his fellow actors published [the First Folio,] the text had been cut down and substantially rearranged.

He can't ever have imagined the play would be performed at length[.]³⁷³

It may be implicit from his explanation that Doran believes that Q1 is a raw, unpolished version by Shakespeare, though perhaps intentionally there is a degree of ambiguity in his wording. The by-now standard passive sentence is used without personal commitment: Q1 is 'usually referred to as the "Bad" Quarto'.³⁷⁴ The 2008 programme's explanation about the First Quarto's provenance is shorter and less detailed than the 2004 programme. Unlike the Boyd production, Doran's programme contains no long essays about the source texts: while the 2004 programme focused heavily on academic commentary with its articles by Stephen Greenblatt and Jonathan Bate, the 2008 programme is more concerned with the rehearsal process than with literary criticism or historical inquiry. Yet as the quotation above makes clear, Doran's explanation in the programme can also read as a defence for his own editing of the play. Doran's implication, which echoes Edwards's argument in his Cambridge edition – a text Doran seems to use at points – is that rather than revere *Hamlet* as an untouchable icon, he has the right to create his own version of the play since Shakespeare himself never had a 'definitive' text.

³⁷³ *Hamlet* 2008 Programme, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Royal Shakespeare Company Archive, no shelfmark.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

Later in the ‘scrapbook’ Doran writes of ‘the whole company’ reading the play through line by line with ‘every possible edition of the play at hand’.³⁷⁵ This perhaps goes some way to explaining the complexity of Doran’s script: it seems that he consulted numerous editions as source texts of equal merit, rather than take the approach of others who use one edition as a base text and occasionally diverge from that. While it is uncertain exactly how Doran created his playscript, parts of it seem to be based on the RSC’s own edition, discussed above. In a private email a member of the RSC literary department indicated that she believed the text was based on the RSC edition; and indeed parts of the programme are simply rewordings of the RSC *Hamlet*’s introductory material.³⁷⁶ But there are also, clearly, other editions at work. Precisely which ones Doran means by ‘every possible edition of the play’ is not certain, but significantly, there is evidence in his division of the third and fourth acts that he consulted the Arden3 edition published two years earlier.

The act division between the so-called closet scene and the Queen’s conversation with the King which immediately follows, classified in most editions as 3.4 and 4.1, is disputed. The Queen does not leave the stage, the argument goes, so there should no new scene here, let alone a new act. In fact, as Thompson and Taylor demonstrate, even the editors who employ this division only do so under protest, unable to resist editorial tradition and unwilling to cause the inevitable confusion that would follow any reorganisation of the scene divisions. Thompson and Taylor themselves follow suit in their main volume:

We have decided to join the queue of editors who preserve the traditional 3.4/4.1 division, muttering our disapproval at the foot of the page but conceding that a different disposition of act and scene numbers affecting not only 3.4 but the whole of

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

³⁷⁶ Private email. I have not yet got her permission to use her name here.

Act 4 would be a serious inconvenience to readers trying to find passages quoted in the huge range of existing criticism and commentary.³⁷⁷

While this is their position in their Q2 volume, they allow their muttered disapproval to escalate to action in their edition of F, renumbering the scenes so that what is 4.1 in their Q2 edition remains part of 3.4 in F; 4.2 becomes 3.5; 4.3 is 3.6; 4.4 is 3.7. Then the traditional 4.5 becomes 4.1, and the rest of the act follows accordingly before the two versions join back together at 5.1. This rearrangement has textual justification but does, as Thompson and Taylor concede, tend towards confusion. Doran follows this scene and act division in his promptbook, providing solid evidence that he consulted the Arden3 Folio text.

If Doran uses the new Arden3 edition, however, he makes only limited recourse to its text of the First Quarto. As with many of his RSC predecessors, Doran employs the First Quarto's placement of the 'To be' soliloquy. While Daniels and Boyd used lines from the text to blend the transition into the performance, Doran simply shifts from 2.2 to 3.1 and back without inserting any Q1 lines, thereby demonstrating that it is by no means a dramatic necessity actually to include words from the First Quarto when restructuring the play according to the Q1 shape. There are two instances, however, where Doran does employ a verbal echo derived from the First Quarto. In 1.2.197 where Spencer, Jenkins, Hibbard and Edwards all read 'In the dead waste and middle of the night', Doran's text replaces the word 'waste' with 'vast', a reading taken from Q1's 2.1.12. The reason for choosing this line is not altogether apparent. Hibbard argues that 'There is [...] no reason whatever to reject *waste* in favour of Q1's *vast*', and none of the four editions of the 1980s adopts it, though several editions from earlier in the twentieth century do. It seems that the new Arden3's influence can again be seen: in the main Q2 volume, Thompson and Taylor unsurprisingly retain the line as it is in Q2, but in their footnote they observe, perhaps a little pointedly, that while

³⁷⁷ Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet*, p. 551.

some editors use the Q1 reading, ‘Other editors who do not adopt “vast” feel obliged to discuss it’. Is this what inspired Doran to edit the line? It is entirely possible that he preferred the word, having seen it in the textual apparatus of any of the many editions he consulted, but the only modern edition to promote Q1’s reading, albeit implicitly, is the new Arden³.

The other reading derived from the First Quarto comes at the beginning of 2.1, where the Cambridge reads: ‘Give him this money, and these notes, Reynaldo’ (Cambridge 2.1.1). Just as Daniels and Boyd had both rewritten Polonius’s first instruction to Reynaldo for the sake of clarification, so too does Doran, amending the line to ‘Give my son this money and these notes, Reynaldo.’³⁷⁸ Doran, then, does not do anything very unusual with the First Quarto, despite the new Arden³ edition’s demonstrable influence on his production. If Doran seems a little unadventurous with regards to Q1, the same cannot be said for his approach to the play’s text overall. His most striking emendation serves as an example of his readiness to adapt the text freely. It comes early in the play, during Claudius’s opening decrees about Fortinbras in 1.2. Part of the section according to the Cambridge edition – which seems to be his base text for this section of the play – reads:

Thus much the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew’s purpose, to suppress
His further gait herein, in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject; and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltemand (Cambridge 1.2.27-34)

³⁷⁸ *Hamlet* 2008 Promptbook, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Royal Shakespeare Company Archive, RSC/SM/1/2008/HAM1 (also soft copy provided by email). See Chapter 2 and this chapter, above.

The re-worked section used by Doran reads:

Now thus the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle to young Fortinbras
That he suppress his nephew's further march
And threatening enterprise toward our state.
We here dispatch you good Cornelius
And Voltemand for bearers of this greeting
To old Norway[.]³⁷⁹

On the surface this passage is unremarkable: it retains the same meaning, in principle if not detail, as the Cambridge edition and, like plenty of other directors, Doran cuts lines to shorten the passage. To understand the significance of this passage, however, it is necessary to remember that in this production Claudius was played by Patrick Stewart, most famous then for his role in *Star Trek: The Next Generation* as Captain Jean-Luc Picard of the Starship *Enterprise*. Of Stewart's lines quoted above, there is one that is entirely made up. Making up 'Shakespeare' lines is not in itself unheard of; within this thesis precedent comes in the form of the 'haply slander'/'envious slander' line discussed above, and of course the process has been going on for centuries. What is unique here, however, is that the sole purpose of Doran's addition, 'And threatening enterprise toward our state', seems to be to allow Stewart as Claudius to use the word 'enterprise' to allude to his earlier star role. This allusion in turn echoes the moment when Shakespeare himself seems to be playing with his actors' past roles of Caesar and Brutus in Act 3 Scene 2. The RSC ensemble's harmless in-joke, however, extends to absurdity in the BBC/RSC education pack, which quotes the passage and then 'recommend[s]' that teachers 'use Shakespeare's words with [their] students' in an activity

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

analysing Claudius's opening speech.³⁸⁰ Through the combined authority of the BBC and the RSC, this entirely made-up 'Shakespeare' quotation gains some currency.

Part of Stanley Wells's attack during the 2002 BBC interview involves criticising Thompson for 'confusing' undergraduates and schoolchildren 'by having a two-volume work called *Hamlet*'.³⁸¹ Yet this RSC version of *Hamlet* ends up in an education pack targeted specifically at students and presumably 2008 saw teenagers across Britain dutifully annotating Doran's addition, believing it to be Shakespeare's. Crucially, no-one anywhere mentions that a non-Shakespearean line is used in the play or in the education pack simply because no-one notices: a line that is definitely non-Shakespearean is accepted without comment because the auditors simply do not realise that it is not printed in one of the early texts. As has been demonstrated already in a number of case studies considered here, it is only when people already know a line (or think they do) that they complain. This is best confirmed by Michael Billington's review of Doran's 2008 *Hamlet*. On 6 August he quoted the first line of Hamlet's soliloquy as 'O that this too too sullied flesh would melt' (Q2 1.2.92). The next day, *The Guardian* printed an explanation as follows:

Several readers have complained that in the review of the RSC's *Hamlet*, below, Michael Billington quoted the prince's opening soliloquy as saying: 'O that this too too sullied flesh would melt.' 'Sullied', they objected, should have been 'solid'. In fact there are three respected versions of this text. In the first quarto: 'O that this too much grieu'd and sallied flesh / Would melt to nothing'; In the second quarto: 'O that this too too sallied flesh would melt, / Thaw and resolute itselfe into a dewe,'; and in the first folio: 'Oh that this too too solid Flesh, would melt, / Thaw, and resolute it self into a Dew'. 'Sallied' nowadays is usually given as 'sullied'. No version is more

³⁸⁰ 'RSC Education Pack *Hamlet*' (2008), p. 17, <downloads.bbc.co.uk/hamlet/rsc_hamlet_education_pack.pdf> [accessed 4 August 2017].

³⁸¹ *Today Programme*, 2002.

decisively authentic than the others. Michael Billington could not discern which one Tennant was using.³⁸²

The line that Tennant used, or at least, that is printed in the promptbook, is indeed ‘solid’, though it is entirely possible that Tennant may have said it differently on different nights, and indeed what the word sounds like may vary depending on the location of the seat. Perhaps drawing on the Arden³, *The Guardian*’s assertion that all three texts are equal is an unusual example where a public reference to Q1 gives this text as much credence as the other two. Some lines can be subjected to all kinds of tampering and, provided that the result sounds ‘authentic’, no-one will complain, as the ‘Enterprise’ allusion makes abundantly clear. Other lines, however, are treated as public property and will be accordingly disputed in the case of any perceived changes.

The majority of theatre critics, it seems, generally side with the public in complaining when an anticipated line is not spoken. Many reviews mention the cuts Doran made; nearly all are negative. Nicholas de Jongh also picks up on the sullied/solid debate and claims that sullied is the ‘now generally accepted’ reading.³⁸³ He further states that ‘Doran’s production, with odd cuts and textual rearrangements, lacks sufficient sense of Denmark under threat of war.’³⁸⁴ Billington complains that Doran ‘unforgivably’ cut the line ‘Since no man knows of aught he leaves, what is’t to leave betimes? Let be.’³⁸⁵ Paul Taylor and Quentin Letts decry the decision for Fortinbras to arrive at the end of the scene but remain mute; indeed, Quentin Letts spends three paragraphs complaining about the cuts.³⁸⁶ Susan Irvine protests that Doran

³⁸² ‘Corrections and Clarifications Column’, *The Guardian*, 7 August 2008. The Guardian’s assertion that the three texts of *Hamlet* are all as valid as each other is an unusual example where a public reference to Q1 gives this text as much credence as to the other two.

³⁸³ Nicholas de Jongh, *Evening Standard*, 6 August 2008.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁵ Michael Billington, *The Guardian*, 6 August 2008.

³⁸⁶ Paul Taylor, *The Independent*, 6 August 2008; Quentin Letts, *The Daily Mail*, 6 August 2008.

‘snips a bit out of “To be or not to be”’.³⁸⁷ In the end only one reviewer, Christopher Hart, has anything positive to say about Doran’s textual choices:

It’s Shakespeare, after all, not the Bible, and has always been tinkered with. Doesn’t the earliest First Quarto, as poorly remembered by some washed-up old actor from Shakespeare’s troupe, give us the less-than-immortal line ‘To be or not to be. Aye, there’s the point’?³⁸⁸

Yet Hart’s broader defence of Doran only extends to minor ‘updates’: changing ‘arras’ to ‘mirror’ and ‘rapier’ to ‘weapon’ in keeping with the play’s modern-dress set, rather than of Doran’s larger editing role. The lesson from Doran’s production seems to be that fiddling with the text of *Hamlet* is easily forgiven but only if the lines changed are not famous. Precisely what is a ‘famous’ line is not so easy to define, but making up lines to allude to an actor’s celebrity past goes unnoticed, while the omission or emendation of parts of popular soliloquies is sure to be condemned by reviewers. The same rule applies to the use of the First Quarto. If a major production dared to use Q1’s version of ‘To be or not to be’, all the reviewers would certainly comment on it and all or nearly all would surely condemn it, as the reviews of Holloway’s *Hamlet: First Cut* indicate. Yet the use of other, less noticeably ‘wrong’ lines, derived from Q1 or even simply made up, disturbs no-one because they pass by without anyone realising, even theatre critics and, I suspect, academics who work on the text of *Hamlet*. After all, Bate’s ‘To be or not to be there’ typo in 2004 not only goes unnoticed in the Boyd production programme, but also ends up being printed in the RSC individual edition of *Hamlet*.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁷ Susan Irvine, *Sunday Telegraph*, 10 August 2008.

³⁸⁸ Christopher Hart, *The Sunday Times*, 10 August 2008.

³⁸⁹ Bate and Rasmussen, *Hamlet*, p. 10.

Conclusion

If the First Quarto rose in prominence in academic circles in the 1990s, the mid-2000s saw a similar rise in the public sphere, and particularly a re-emergence into theatre programmes: the main house case studies from 2000 at the National and Globe considered in the previous chapter may have omitted any mention of Q1, but all three main house productions of 2004-8 explained the text's provenance in varying degrees of detail. Instead of ignoring Q1, directors were now starting to make a virtue of using the text. Indeed, Nunn and Doran both made much of the text in their programmes and other publicity material, despite actually adopting few Q1 lines. At the same time, promptbooks show a clear increase in the use of lines derived from the First Quarto. Boyd in particular incorporated more Q1 lines into his production than any other case study so far. Even before the publication of the Arden3, Q1 was becoming a more popular text both to discuss and to perform. It was still however, as all three programmes make clear, the "bad" quarto: directors' continued use of *Hamlet* editions published at the height of New Bibliography in the 1980s meant that the stigma surrounding Q1 from that period persisted. Despite its fall from grace within Shakespearean textual studies, the theory of memorial reconstruction remained popular, reiterated by the theatre programmes at the RSC and the Old Vic, and with each reiteration the theory became more accepted by the public and by theatre professionals. Alongside this, there was a definite and perceptible development in the First Quarto's influence on the texts around performance. More Q1 lines and Q1-inflected features were incorporated into prompt copy; the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy, for example, was more frequently performed in the Q1 location than the Q2/F version.

Soon after the publication of the new Arden3, the RSC staged a celebrity *Hamlet* that consulted both its own recently-published *Complete Works* text and the Arden3, not to

mention numerous others, in an echo of the textual multiplicity of Thompson and Taylor's recent edition. Arden3 presents to directors the opportunity of adopting Q1 lines, but, of course, it does not force a director to choose these lines. Its publication signalled the possibility for directors to create their own text with more ease than ever before, but did not change the fortunes of Q1 overnight: while Doran did choose between texts, he skipped physically over the First Quarto every time he consulted the Arden3 Folio text. As Arden3 was coming out, the internet was increasing in significance; so, while among the four case studies of this chapter Carroll was unusual in his choice of a free online edition, the increasing ubiquity of the internet meant that performances following this would be more and more likely to use the Moby Shakespeare. There were – and increasingly are – other editions of *Hamlet* online, including Arden3, but these are mainly protected by paywalls.³⁹⁰ Editing Shakespeare is of course a long, labour-intensive and expensive process, so publishers are rightly concerned about the financial implications of free online modern editions of Shakespeare, yet the ever-growing demand for all online material to be free puts the system in difficulty. If Arden3 brought about the possibility of Q1's reversal in fortune, the Moby text threatened to undo the Arden3's work and renormalise the conflated text of previous generations.

³⁹⁰ The Arden3 texts are available online: Drama Online <<http://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com>> [accessed 26 July 2017].

CHAPTER FIVE: 2010-2011

TEXT, PERFORMANCE AND THE INTERNET

Q1 of Hamlet, or the ‘First Quarto’ as it is also called, is a short and generally inferior early text of the Shakespearean play, entered in the Stationer’s Register in 1602 but not published until summer or fall 1603. The other two early printed texts of Hamlet are the second quarto (Q2, 1604) [sic] and Folio (F, 1623). The first quarto was unknown to scholars until 1823, when the first of only two known copies was discovered by Sir Henry Bunbury. The exact relationship between Q1 and the other early texts of the play, as well as its genesis as a text, has been extensively debated since this time, but there [sic] it is apparent that scholars are not yet close to a resolution. Writing in 1962, Albert B. Weiner argued influentially that Q1 represented a ‘tourbook’ copy, derived originally from a text not unlike that of Q2 or F, which had been trimmed and simplified for performance by a small number of actors on tour in the provinces.

—Q1 *Wikipedia* Page, 2010³⁹¹

As the first decade of the twenty-first century ended, the change in Q1’s fortunes paralleled a much wider societal change, as a number of internet companies grew from tiny start-ups to huge international corporations. YouTube was founded in 2005 by three men in California, and before the end of the year users were viewing more than two million videos per day. That figure reached 100 million per day by the time Twitter was launched in July 2006.³⁹² The

³⁹¹ ‘Hamlet Q1’ (first version), *Wikipedia* (26 February 2010)
<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Hamlet_Q1&oldid=346511147> [accessed 14 May 2015].

³⁹² Jefferson Graham, ‘Video websites pop up’, *USA Today*, 21 November 2005
<http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/tech/news/techinnovations/2005-11-21-video-websites_x.htm> [accessed 14

growth of both companies continued for several years: during February 2010 an average of 50 million tweets were being sent every day, and in May that year YouTube users in the United States averaged 470 million video views per day – totalling 4.6 billion for the month.³⁹³ Both companies are operated on a for-profit basis and have been valued at at least a billion dollars since 2009.³⁹⁴

YouTube and Twitter both have their own hierarchical structures that implicitly rank users and pages based on popularity. This system inevitably leads to competition for attention; Stephen O’Neill notes that ‘YouTubers partake in a Hamlet-like desire for story and for remembrance, a desire to leave a digital footprint’ and that for ‘uploaders and viewers alike, being noticed or leaving a trace emerge as key motivating factors in online exchange and interaction.’³⁹⁵ O’Neill views the proliferation of voices as a broadly positive progression, with YouTube providing a platform for amateurs to engage creatively with Shakespeare’s plays. Sharron O’Dair, on the other hand, warns that this populist model leads to the ‘deprofessionalization’ of English studies: ‘Do we really mean to suggest that with respect to art, the judgements of 100,000 average Joes, aggregated algorithmically, are equal to those of one Plato?’³⁹⁶ Twitter and YouTube provide a platform for anyone with an internet connection to put forward any theory on any topic, however ill-informed or factually

May 2015]; ‘YouTube serves up 100 million videos a day online’, *USA Today*, 16 July 2006 <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/tech/news/2006-07-16-youtube-views_x.htm> [accessed 14 May 2015].

³⁹³ Claudine Beaumont, ‘Twitter users send 50 million tweets per day’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 23 February 2010 <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/twitter/7297541/Twitter-users-send-50-million-tweets-per-day.html>> [accessed 14 May 2015]; ‘comScore Releases May 2010 U.S. Online Video Rankings’, *comScore*, 24 June 2010 <<http://www.comscore.com/Insights/Press-Releases/2010/6/comScore-Releases-May-2010-US-Online-Video-Rankings>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

³⁹⁴ YouTube was bought in 2006 for \$1.65 billion: ‘Google buys YouTube for \$1.65bn’, *BBC News*, 10 October 2006 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/6034577.stm>> [accessed 14 May 2015]; Twitter was valued at \$1 billion in 2009: Brad Stone, ‘Twitter’s latest valuation: \$1 Billion’, *New York Times*, 24 September 2009 <http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/09/24/twitter-to-become-techs-newest-1-billion-company/?_r=0> [accessed 14 May 2015].

³⁹⁵ Stephen O’Neill, *Shakespeare and YouTube: New Media Forms of the Bard* (London: Methuen, 2014), pp. 95, 88.

³⁹⁶ Sharron O’Dair, ‘“Pretty much how the internet works”; Or, Aiding and Abetting the Deprofessionalization of Shakespeare Studies’, *Shakespeare Survey*, 64 (2011), 83-96, p. 94.

inaccurate. Yet the proliferation of voices on YouTube and Twitter does not guarantee any single user attention.

Wikipedia, on the other hand, professes a limited editorial control: it is freely available for all to edit but in the case of disputes there is a structured system of arbitrators and administrators to mediate disputes and enforce the decisions with a variety of sanctions.³⁹⁷ Wikipedia was launched in 2001, earlier than YouTube and Twitter. Like these two sites, Wikipedia was conceived of as a for-profit company, but in 2002 the founders decided to turn it into a charity.³⁹⁸ Wikipedia also grew exponentially, with its English language version reaching three million articles in 2009.³⁹⁹ In 2010, Roger Stritmatter, operating under the username BenJonson, created the first version of the Q1 *Hamlet* Wikipedia page, whose 168 words comprise the epigraph to this chapter.⁴⁰⁰ The article's bibliography provided two references to scholarly works, but on closer inspection it becomes clear that both refer to the same book: Albert B. Weiner's 1962 edition of Q1 – coincidentally, the same edition Walters had used at the Orange Tree in 1985, as discussed in Chapter Two above.⁴⁰¹ The Wikipedia article was expanded over the next five years, with 101 revisions by 18 distinct editors.⁴⁰² As it stood in 2015 it had sections on the 'Unique characteristics of Q1', the 'Bad quarto theory' (which contained a subsection on its 'Relation to Q2'), and on the 'Alternate version theory'.⁴⁰³ In a growth mirroring the growth of

³⁹⁷ See 'Wikipedia: Wikipedians' <<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Wikipedians>> [accessed 4 August 2017]; and 'Wikipedia: Arbitration Committee' <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Arbitration_Committee> [accessed 4 August 2017].

³⁹⁸ *Open Sources 2.0: The Continuing Evolution*, ed. by Chris DiBona, Danese Cooper, and Mark Stone (Sebastopol: O'Reilly, 2005).

³⁹⁹ Bobbie Johnson, 'English Wikipedia hits three million articles', *The Guardian*, 17 August 2009 <<http://www.theguardian.com/technology/blog/2009/aug/17/wikipedia-three-million>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

⁴⁰⁰ 'Hamlet Q1' (first version), *Wikipedia*.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰² 'Hamlet Q1: Revision history', *Wikipedia* <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Hamlet_Q1&offset=&limit=500&action=history> [accessed 14 May 2015].

⁴⁰³ 'Hamlet Q1' (revised version), *Wikipedia* (4 January 2015) <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Hamlet_Q1&oldid=640959674> [accessed 14 May 2015].

YouTube, Twitter or indeed Wikipedia itself, the article increased in size more than eightfold to over 1400 words. Wikipedia also slowly became the de facto first stop for huge swathes of the population looking for information on all kinds of topics. In 2010-12 the Q1 article became another forum for conflicts around the First Quarto and Shakespearean authority. This specific Wikipedia page and the wider website, along with Twitter and YouTube, simultaneously reflect and inform the evolving public perception and directorial approach to Shakespeare generally and the First Quarto of *Hamlet* in particular.

After its 2010 creation by Stritmatter, Q1's Wikipedia article underwent 23 revisions by three users in the space of 20 days, apparently indicating an elevated level of interest in the topic.⁴⁰⁴ However, a closer inspection shows that of the three contributors, two were prolific Wikipedia editors who make numerous edits per day, mainly fixing links and performing administrative functions.⁴⁰⁵ The third was Stritmatter himself, whose contributions were mainly stylistic, correcting small mistakes. Midway through his contributions, he wrote in the 'Talk' section that 'The article obviously needs much expansion and more footnotes. I have only supplied a preliminary synopsis of the debate about Q1 and its connection to questions such as the Ur-Hamlet.'⁴⁰⁶ It was not, however, until 2012 that any other substantial contributions were made. Paul Barlow, editing under his real name, made 56 edits during the month of July that year.⁴⁰⁷ He added all the separate sections referred to in the paragraph above, and expanded the bibliography from one distinct work to eight, including Hibbard's Oxford edition, an Eric Sams article, Bate's RSC edition, Egan's *The Struggle for Shakespeare's Text*, and the British Library's Shakespeare Quartos

⁴⁰⁴ 'Hamlet Q1: Revision history', *Wikipedia*.

⁴⁰⁵ For example, the user 'Swarm' made five hundred Wikipedia edits between 21:25 23 March 2015 and 03:49 30 April 2015: 'User contributions for Swarm', *Wikipedia* <<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:Contributions/Swarm&offset=&limit=500&target=Swarm>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

⁴⁰⁶ 'Talk: Hamlet Q1', *Wikipedia* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:Hamlet_Q1> [accessed 14 May 2015].

⁴⁰⁷ 'Hamlet Q1: Revision history', *Wikipedia*.

website.⁴⁰⁸ Despite a further 16 subsequent contributions by 14 users, the final substantive editing of the article within the time period of this thesis came with Barlow's final revision at the end of July 2012.⁴⁰⁹

Despite the apparent number of contributors and variations that the article underwent, the Q1 Wikipedia page was only really the work of two people, neither of whom was an expert on the text. Roger Stritmatter was in 2015 Associate Professor at Coppin State University in Maryland, USA.⁴¹⁰ His listed research interests were 'Shakespeare and the modern imagination, the Shakespearean authorship question, censorship and literature, authorship identification theory, and the Bible as literature.'⁴¹¹ His education was listed as 'a B.A. in anthropology and journalism', 'an M.A. in Anthropology', and 'a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature'.⁴¹² His insistence that Shakespeare was not the real author of his works led to a number of disputes online, wherein he often resorted to crude mockery, patronisation and insult.⁴¹³ In a demonstration of the successful operation of Wikipedia's arbitration system, his behaviour eventually led to a 'topic ban', whereby he was 'banned indefinitely from all articles, discussions, and other content related to the Shakespeare authorship question, William Shakespeare, or Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, broadly construed'.⁴¹⁴ The Wikipedia page's other main contributor, Paul Barlow, was also an academic, holding a BA, MA and D.Phil. all in the History of Art from Sussex University.⁴¹⁵ His research interests were in the Victorian period, and indeed he made clear on his

⁴⁰⁸ 'Hamlet Q1' (revised version), *Wikipedia* (31 February 2012)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Hamlet_Q1&oldid=505109383> [accessed 14 May 2015].

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid. I plan to submit more comprehensive information following the submission of this thesis.

⁴¹⁰ 'Faculty Profile: Dr Roger Stritmatter', *Coppin State University*

<http://www.coppin.edu/site/custom_scripts/faculty_profile.aspx?faculty=rstritmatter> [accessed 14 May 2015]. As of July 2017 the link no longer seems to be live.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ 'User talk: BenJonson', *Wikipedia* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User_talk:BenJonson> [accessed 14 May 2015].

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

⁴¹⁵ 'Paul Barlow', *Northumbria University* <<https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/our-staff/b/paul-barlow/>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

Wikipedia page that he was ‘By education and expertise [...] a Victorianist and a specialist in art’.⁴¹⁶

So although the two contributors to Q1’s Wikipedia page were both academics, neither was an expert in the field; indeed, neither had published work on the topic elsewhere. Despite Stritmatter’s education and position, he was not deemed by the Wikipedia authorities to be an ‘RS’ (Received Scholar), and he eventually brought about his own blocking.⁴¹⁷ In fact, the page’s omissions actually demonstrate its non-specialists origins: notably lacking is any reference to the Thompson/Taylor Arden3 edition, to any of the chapters in Thomas Clayton’s book, and to the work of Terri Bourus, Lukas Erne, Kathleen Irace, Margrethe Jolly, Zachary Lesser, Laurie Maguire, Paul Menzer, Emma Smith, Tiffany Stern, Stephen Urkowitz, and Paul Werstine.⁴¹⁸ If this page is anything like representative, it seems that the web – and Wikipedia in particular – requires academics to take a more active role to ensure the best up-to-date information is available online.

Aside from the struggle between the two main contributors, the page was also the site of another conflict over authority. In 2011 a user with the pseudonym S.Camus made the only reference to the new Arden3 text anywhere on the Q1 Wikipedia page; it was not, however, in the main article but on the talk page, which is separated from the main article through the use of tabs. S.Camus queried Stritmatter’s designation of Q1 as ‘generally inferior’ to Q2/F:

‘generally inferior’ is a judgement which, although it was consensual or near consensual for a long time, has been less and less so for a few decades. Things have

⁴¹⁶ Ibid; ‘User: Paul Barlow’, *Wikipedia* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Paul_Barlow> [accessed 14 May 2015].

⁴¹⁷ ‘User talk: BenJonson’, *Wikipedia*.

⁴¹⁸ See Bourus, *Young Shakespeare’s Young Hamlet; The Hamlet First Published*, ed. by Clayton; Irace, *Reforming the ‘Bad’ Quartos*; Jolly, *The First Two Quartos of ‘Hamlet’*; Lesser, *Hamlet After Q1*; Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*; Menzer, *The Hamlets*; Smith, *Five Revenge Tragedies*; Stern, ‘Hamlet Q1 as a “Noted” Text’; Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet*; Urkowitz, ‘Back to Basics’; also Stephen Urkowitz, “‘Brother, can you spare a paradigm?’: Textual generosity and the printing of Shakespeare’s multiple-text plays by contemporary editors’, *Critical Survey*, 7 (1995), 292-8; and Stephen Urkowitz, ‘Well-sayd olde Mole’; and Werstine, ‘A Century of “Bad” Shakespeare Quartos’.

reached the point where the latest editors of the play for a major academic edition (Thompson and Taylor for Arden 3) have taken stock of the impossibility to give authority beyond dispute to any one of the three earliest texts and have therefore decided to present a three-text edition of Hamlet. Brandishing phrases such as ‘generally inferior’ reflects bygone scholarship, not the academic standards now prevailing.⁴¹⁹

This challenge was, however, rejected by Barlow when he came to work on the page in 2012. He responded:

Not true. In fact the view that Q1 represents some ‘legitimate’ alternate text is very much a minority one. This ‘bygone scholarship’ is in reality the norm. The postmodernist fantasy that Q1 is somehow equally valid was a blip. That’s not to say that it does not preserve useful evidence. The three text version only came about because *Hamlet* is such an ultra-canonical work that there is a scholarly market for detailing *every* variation.⁴²⁰

Barlow’s strongly-worded response does not, of course, match with the evidence presented in Chapter Two above, but no-one has since posted on the site. To the casual reader of Wikipedia, then, the ‘fantasy’ of Q1’s authority is indeed a blip, confirmed by the subsequent silence on the matter.

Academics may continually warn their students that Wikipedia is not to be treated as a scholarly source; nor is it the best source for accurate information for the lay reader. Yet this website is undeniably the first or one of the first places that many go to when looking for information on an unfamiliar topic. Specialists’ passive neglect or active rejection of Wikipedia means that public perception does not keep pace with scholarship. Instead it is left

⁴¹⁹ ‘Talk: Hamlet Q1’, *Wikipedia*.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid*.

to a fringe of keen dilettanti who with the best of intentions provide inaccurate, incomplete or frankly biased information. Wikipedia nonetheless makes everyone feel like an expert on anything. For all its benefits, the rise of the internet, particularly in the current wave of ‘fake news’, means that traditional figures of academic authority sometimes have to contend with millions of tales ‘Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, / Signifying nothing.’⁴²¹ These are the issues that this chapter will explore. In the first section I examine how the National and the Globe – the two theatres competing for the place as London’s top Shakespeare-producers – respond in 2010 to evolving technology and scholarly beliefs concerning Q1. Then I analyse two other *Hamlets* of the new digital age, examining Imogen Bond’s 2011 Q1 production at the White Bear and finally Ian Rickson’s 2011 *Hamlet* at the Young Vic, starring Toby Stephens. I point to the role of Wikipedia in particular as a purveyor of information about Q1 in this new internet era; rather than producing the better-informed debate as might be hoped, the internet actually works to promote much older scholarship, and threatens to bring perceptions of Q1 back to the 1980s.

National and Globe, 2010: Globalised Conflict

Nicholas Hytner’s National production of *Hamlet* in 2010 saw a 32-year-old Rory Kinnear playing a ‘scruffy postgraduate’ in an Eastern European police state.⁴²² In 2011, half a mile along the Thames at the Globe, Dominic Dromgoole directed a touring production starring the twenty-three-year-old Joshua McGuire. A decade previously, as explored in Chapter Three above, the two theatres had both produced *Hamlets* using editions with similar conflationary approaches: the 2000 Globe *Hamlet* was based on the 1985 Cambridge edition,

⁴²¹ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. by Kenneth Muir (London: Methuen, 1951), 5.5.26-28.

⁴²² Janine Goedert, *d’LëtzeburgerLand*, 16 November 2010.

while the National's production of that year used Harold Jenkins's 1982 Arden². Neither performance really drew on Q1, and both directors omitted any mention of the play's texts in their programmes.⁴²³ The intervening decade had witnessed a number of significant developments in academic approaches to *Hamlet*'s textual history, particularly, as discussed in the previous chapter, with the publication of Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor's Arden³ edition of *Hamlet*.⁴²⁴ At the beginning of the new decade, the productions at the National and the Globe respond to these academic shifts: in their very different ways they highlight a number of the unresolved issues surrounding Q1's provenance and the role that it plays in performances of *Hamlet*.

Both theatres may in 2000 have failed to make any mention of Q1, but their programmes a decade later contain explanations of the textual history of *Hamlet*. Hytner's for the National runs as follows:

Hamlet was probably first performed in 1601. The First Quarto – the 'Bad' Quarto – was first published in 1603: it was a pirate edition, heavily truncated and possibly transcribed (badly) by the actor who played Marcellus at the Globe, Marcellus's lines being the only ones that seem to be accurately remembered. The Second Quarto – the first authoritative text – was published in 1604. A shorter text, with several significant cuts (including, for instance, the soliloquy 'How all occasions do inform against me') and some additions, was published in the First Folio in 1623 and probably represents the version of the play that the King's Men were playing at the time of publication.⁴²⁵

Not only does Hytner use the common term "'Bad' Quarto', but his language here is weighted. The adjective 'pirate' conveys the sense of moral transgression while 'truncated' connotes extreme physical violence, which is compounded by the parenthetical adverb

⁴²³ See Chapter 3.

⁴²⁴ Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet*.

⁴²⁵ *Hamlet* 2010 Programme, London, National Theatre Archives, RNT/PP/1/3/295.

‘badly’: the ‘pirate’ was not even good at what he did. Hytner does, however, combine the traditional New Bibliographical rationale and terminology with concessions to more recent scholarship through scare quotes and the cautionary adverb ‘possibly’. Judging by his programme, then, Hytner had a much milder attitude towards Q1 than the director of the previous National *Hamlet*, John Caird. The difference is in degree, however, not kind: while Hytner may not go as far as Caird by professing a hyperbolic preference for death over watching a production of the First Quarto, he still, in practice, rejects the text.⁴²⁶

The Globe’s Dominic Dromgoole, on the other hand, presents a very different Q1. While he calls the text ‘much the most impure’ version of *Hamlet*, he nonetheless ascribes to it much more authority.⁴²⁷ Dromgoole’s programme provides a brief history of touring productions:

Playing conditions [on tour] often meant a full text was impossible, and actors would often take advantage of distance from the patron and the author, to put together the swifter version they often preferred playing.⁴²⁸

Citing the Q1 frontispiece’s claim to represent a text performed at Oxford and Cambridge, Dromgoole goes on to claim that ‘The First Quarto is clearly a touring text.’⁴²⁹ The implication is obvious: despite its textual issues, Q1 has authenticity as a work staged in the seventeenth century and is thus superior to the other two texts both as a historical record and as the version ‘preferred’ by the players. The only source he cites is the First Quarto itself: it is the text, not the scholars, which provides his authority. Dromgoole further claims an authentic link with the past, stating that ‘it seemed right when preparing something to travel, to use what evidence there was of how the King’s Men would adapt their own productions for

⁴²⁶ See Chapter 3.

⁴²⁷ *Hamlet* 2011 Programme, London, Globe Theatre Archive, no shelfmark.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

the road.⁴³⁰ Far from Hytner's truncated text, then, for Dromgoole, this is a story of expert artisan editing, a practical touring *Hamlet* that can support the Globe's reputation and branding as an 'authentic' touring playhouse.

The underlying difference between Hytner's and Dromgoole's views of Q1 in fact reflects two conflicting schools of *Hamlet* scholarship. Hytner's description derives from the New Bibliographic commonplace that Q1 was a memorial reconstruction by Marcellus. Although by 2010 this theory had been subjected to intense academic criticism for two decades, it persisted – and continues to persist – in public perception. In 2014, for example, Simon Russell Beale, interviewed by Shakespearean scholar Sonia Massai, put forward that view in a BBC Four documentary.⁴³¹ On the other hand, Dromgoole's suggestion seems to derive from the early New Textualist Kathleen O. Irace's *Reforming the 'Bad' Quartos* of 1994, which argues that Q1 was a memorial reconstruction made collectively by a group of touring players who were legitimately performing *Hamlet* but had left the playbook in London, a view repeated in her edition of Q1 for the Cambridge Early Quartos series.⁴³²

If the two directors hold contrasting views of Q1's origins, they both consistently follow through with them in rehearsal, dramaturgy and eventually on stage. Indeed, Hytner's choice of text confirms from the outset his dedication to the New Bibliographers: despite the publication of the Arden3 *Hamlet* just four years earlier, Hytner uses the same text as Caird – Harold Jenkins's Arden2 edition from 1982, by then 28 years old. Hytner's professed happiness to 'play fast and loose' with the texts of *Hamlet* would have been much better facilitated by the Arden3, providing as it does each of the three texts as a separate edition.⁴³³ In fact, the textual options available to a director of *Hamlet* in 2010 were abundant, so

⁴³⁰ Ibid.

⁴³¹ 'Shakespeare's First Folio', *The Secret Life of Books*, presented by Simon Russell Beale, BBC 4, 9 September 2014.

⁴³² Irace, *Reforming the 'Bad' Quartos*; Irace, *The First Quarto of Hamlet*.

⁴³³ 'Sir Nicholas Hytner talks about his production of "Hamlet" at MGS' *YouTube*, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKnYi8JBBehs>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

Hytner's choice of the older text is strangely reductive, making it harder for him actively to choose even between Q2 and F. It highlights the continued relationship between the National and Harold Jenkins's Arden2 *Hamlet*: whatever Hytner's rationale, every National Theatre production of *Hamlet* since the publication of the Jenkins edition up to 2010 used that text.

Hytner's production does nonetheless resonate with echoes of the First Quarto. The first instance is the casting of Cornelius as a woman, Q1's Cornelia. Such a decision is hardly unusual for productions in the twenty-first century, and particularly not for a theatre like the National, which prides itself on being an 'equal opportunities' employer.⁴³⁴ It may well be thought of as little more than coincidence, but in fact this decision finds its historical precedent in the First Quarto. There are two occasions, furthermore, both in Act 3 Scene 2, where the First Quarto is the unambiguous source of textual decisions for Hytner's production. At 3.2.38, after 'reform it altogether' is added the response 'We will my lord', to which Hamlet replies 'Well, go make you ready.'⁴³⁵ This brief exchange is taken from Q1's 9.39-40, and coincides with Hytner's cut of much of Hamlet's advice for actors just before this line, and with all his advice to the clown just after it. Paradoxically, then, at precisely the place where Q1 famously elaborates, Hytner uses a brief section from that text to abbreviate his Q2/F version: he distances himself from the First Quarto through the use of lines from that very text.

This same section is, perhaps unsurprisingly, where Dromgoole inserted his largest single extract from Q1. The Globe text therefore reads:

My Lord, we have indifferently reformed that among us.

HAMLET

⁴³⁴ See any of the jobs advertised on the National Theatre's website: 'Careers at the National Theatre', *National Theatre* <<http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/your-visit/careers-at-the-national-theatre>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

⁴³⁵ *Hamlet* 2010 Promptbook, London, National Theatre Archives, RNT/SM/1/615.

O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; And then you have some again, that keeps one suit of jests, as a man is known by one suit of apparel, and, gentlemen, quotes his jests down in their tables, before they come to the play, as thus ‘Cannot you stay till I eat my porridge?’ and, ‘You owe me a quarters wages’, and ‘Your beer is sour’, and, blabbering with his lips, and thus – when, God knows, the warm Clown cannot make a jest unless by chance, as the blind man catches a hare: Masters, tell him of it.

SECOND PLAYER

We will my lord.

HAMLET

Well, go make you ready.

Exeunt Players

*Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.*⁴³⁶

To contrast this, once again, with Hytner’s editing, the National’s text reads:

Hamlet: O reform it altogether.

1st Player: We will my lord.

Hamlet: Well, go make you ready.

*Enter Polonius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.*⁴³⁷

The decisions of both directors at this point actually go against the commonly expressed claim that Q1 goes at a faster pace than the other two texts. Here, the Globe Hamlet continues to quote long-forgotten catchphrases, whereas the National’s Prince quickly dismisses the players and effects the performance of *The Mousetrap*. It is, in fact, the section Spencer includes in his Penguin edition – a section cut by numerous RSC directors, as discussed

⁴³⁶ *Hamlet* 2011 Promptbook, London, Globe Theatre Archive, no shelfmark. This section draws on Q1 9.29-40, though some parts are omitted.

⁴³⁷ *Hamlet* 2010 Promptbook, National Theatre Archive.

above. Dromgoole's rationale in adding this section is presumably that this is a comic bit; however, on the three occasions I saw the production, the 'joke' consisted of one of the actors repeating each catchphrase in a silly voice. No-one laughed.

Later in the same scene, the National's Hamlet says 'must take' instead of 'mistake', a direct replacement of the Arden2's 3.2.246 with Q1 9.161.⁴³⁸ Harold Jenkins provides the alternative line in his footnotes, which is possibly where Hytner got the reading. A close reading might discern, as Zachary Lesser notes of the whole scene, that the Q1 reading is cruder than the Q2/F and that Hamlet therefore appears crueller.⁴³⁹ But frankly, this change is so minor as to be almost negligible: as Chapter Four above indicates, even Michael Billington mishears individual words while watching a performance.⁴⁴⁰ All in all, it is entirely possible that if Hytner had never heard of Q1, his *Hamlet* would essentially have been textually the same: Hytner's prompt copy bears precisely the same rejection of the First Quarto that Caird's had a decade earlier. Never does Hytner acknowledge anywhere that he draws on the First Quarto in his production; only in the programme does he even recognise the text's existence. In fact, when he was asked about his textual changes to *Hamlet* during a Q&A session at Manchester Grammar School, he gave a five-minute answer detailing the history of *Hamlet*'s publication but completely left out any mention of the First Quarto.⁴⁴¹

Dromgoole, by contrast, is keenly aware of his production's connection with the First Quarto, and more than willing to discuss it. In his programme he claims to 'have worked from principally the Folio, but where abridgement is necessary, [to] have often leant on the First Quarto, which has a robust energy and a winning ability to get on with it.'⁴⁴² Indeed, he twice states that his production is mainly based on the Folio ('the best and most conclusive

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ Lesser, *Hamlet after Q1*.

⁴⁴⁰ See Chapter 4.

⁴⁴¹ 'Sir Nicholas Hytner talks about his production of "Hamlet" at MGS', *YouTube*.

⁴⁴² *Hamlet* 2011 Programme, Globe Theatre Archive.

evidence of the author's intentions') with some additions from the First Quarto.⁴⁴³ Despite this claim that the Folio is his base text, more than half of the textual introduction is spent discussing the provenance of the First Quarto. Dromgoole's prioritisation of Q1 over the other two texts distinguishes him from Hytner – indeed, it distinguishes him from almost every other mainstream UK director of the preceding decade, as this thesis has explored. Dromgoole inserts around 117 separate lines from Q1 compared with Michael Boyd's 2004 RSC *Hamlet* – the next most Q1-influenced production – which used 64.⁴⁴⁴ It may come as a surprise, however, to learn that Dromgoole, despite his position as Artistic Director of the Globe – with its links to scholars and its reputation for carefully-researched historical performance practice – does not use as his base text the Arden3, nor any other carefully-prepared modern edition. Rather, he uses the Moby Shakespeare, the online version of a Victorian text discussed in Chapter Four above. If anything demonstrates the internet's ubiquity, it is Dromgoole's adoption of the Moby text. By 2010 the internet's use had increased exponentially to the point that even such a well-resourced and, by-now, firmly established theatre as the Globe adopts the text.

If the Globe and National productions use vastly different texts, so too do they receive vastly different critical receptions. Hytner's production received overwhelmingly positive reviews, and there was particularly warm praise reserved for Rory Kinnear. The reviewers are, however, without exception incorrect in their references to the text. Michael Coveney, writing for *London Theatre News*, calls the production 'full-text', thereby demonstrating that he had not read the programme's claim that 'About 500 lines have been cut from the text [...] which takes the Second Quarto as its basis though it observes some of the Folio amendments.'⁴⁴⁵ David Benedict for *Variety*, on the other hand, had read it, but takes it at

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴ Based on my own examination of the promptbooks.

⁴⁴⁵ Michael Coveney, *London Theatre News*, December 2010; *Hamlet* 2010 Programme, National Theatre Archive.

face value, stating that Hytner's *Hamlet* was 'trimmed but textually unaltered' – unaware of the numerous changes Hytner had in fact made.⁴⁴⁶ Even Paul Levy, writing for the European edition of the *Wall Street Journal*, makes some factual errors, which, on closer inspection, derive from the programme itself: 'All the lines (save the 500 cut from the Second Quarto used for this staging, which reduces the playing time to three and a half hours) are given their full worth.'⁴⁴⁷ Levy gets both his numbers and his texts wrong: the National's base text is Jenkins's, a conflation of both Q2 and F, and Hytner actually cuts 955.5 lines, nearly twice as many as he claims in the programme.⁴⁴⁸

The reviewer for *The Express*, Neil Norman, singles out a particular scene which he claims had not been cut: Hytner 'retain[s] all of The Players [sic] sequences'.⁴⁴⁹ A look at the promptbook, however, tells a rather different story, assuming Norman means the Mousetrap sequence: Hytner cuts lines 158-167 (from 'So far from' to 'love grows there. '), 177-178 ('The instances that ... but none of love. ') 183-207 ('Purpose is but ... contrary run / That') and 211-216 ('Nor earth to ... and it destroy') – around 39 of the 81 lines in the Mousetrap, or 48%.⁴⁵⁰ In fact, the 955.5 lines that Hytner cuts come in the context of Arden2's total of 3834 lines, so Hytner's production, where no professional reviewer really notices any lines missing, actually cuts just under a quarter of the text. These mistakes and oversights made by reviewers when addressing the text in performance once again reinforce the idea that reviewers assume a notional *Hamlet* that does not necessarily correspond with the complexities of the text itself. Time after time reviewers demonstrate that when they write about the text, it is the perception of textual fidelity rather than textual fidelity *per se* that they

⁴⁴⁶ David Benedict, *Variety*, 12 October 2010.

⁴⁴⁷ Paul Levy, 'Faith just isn't believable for a modern-day Hamlet', *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, 15 October 2010.

⁴⁴⁸ All calculations concerning the National's 2010 production are based on my own examination of the promptbook.

⁴⁴⁹ Neil Norman, 'What is it about Hamlet?', *Daily Express*, 8 October 2010.

⁴⁵⁰ *Hamlet* 2010 Promptbook, National Theatre Archive.

are concerned with. A director can get away with vast quantities of deletions, relocations, and rewritings as long as the plot of the play is largely unaltered and the famous lines are intact.

In contrast to the critics' thorough approval of Hytner's production, the reviews of Dromgoole's *Hamlet* are decidedly lukewarm. No national newspaper in Britain gives the production more than a mediocre rating: *The Daily Express*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph*, *The Times* and *Time Out* all give the production three stars out of five, while *The Sunday Times* rates it at a mere two.⁴⁵¹ Comments such as 'This is not a profoundly affecting *Hamlet*' and 'You will undoubtedly encounter deeper and more moving Hamlets than this' are common.⁴⁵² The critical reaction perhaps brings to mind once more the New Bibliographical designation of 'bad', particularly when it is contrasted with the positive reception of Hytner's performance. Given this, the argument could easily be made that Dromgoole's experiment with the 'bad' Q1 ultimately resulted in a mediocre production. This claim would give support to those such as Dillon who argue that Q1 is, in essence, an unperformable text.⁴⁵³ However, even though Dromgoole adopts by far the greatest number of First Quarto lines of all the case studies in this thesis, the production still only uses fewer than a thousand words from Q1 out of a total of just under 19,000 words spoken, equating to around 5%.⁴⁵⁴ Given the tiny proportion of the play that it actually takes up, the quality of Dromgoole's production cannot reasonably be ascribed to the use of Q1. Rather, it is decisions such as the setting and the directorial approach and indeed the casting that make the real difference. For critics and audiences alike, the young Joshua McGuire is simply no match for the National's veteran Rory Kinnear. Moreover, it is worth noting that the reviewers'

⁴⁵¹ Julie Carpenter, 'Globe heads home with pacy Dane', *The Daily Express*, Friday 6 May 2011; Patrick Marmion, *The Daily Mail*, 22 April 2011; Sarah Hemming, *The Financial Times*, 16 April 2011; Lynn Gardner, *The Guardian*, 6 May 2011; Charles Spencer, 'A stripped down Prince, fast and fresh', *The Daily Telegraph*, 9 May 2011; Sam Marlowe, *The Times*, Wednesday 25 May 2011; Caroline McGinn, *Time Out*, 12 May 2011; Maxie Szalwinska, *Sunday Times*, 8 May 2011.

⁴⁵² Marlowe, *The Times*; Spencer, *The Telegraph*.

⁴⁵³ For example, Dillon, 'Is There a Performance in this Text?'

⁴⁵⁴ Based on my own examination of the promptbook.

criticisms do not all vilify Q1. Its long-acknowledged quality of pace might well have influenced *The Sunday Times*'s otherwise unforgiving review which approvingly notes – as do *The Telegraph* and *Time Out* – that the performance is under 3 hours.⁴⁵⁵

The Globe and National used their productions to act metonymically, representing each theatre's dramatic approach and philosophy. Both were directed by the Artistic Directors of the institution in question and, it should be noted, both reached a much wider audience than a standard performance even at these large institutions would normally reach. The National *Hamlet* played for two months on the Olivier stage before touring the UK and finally transferring to the Lyttleton for a further ten days.⁴⁵⁶ It was also filmed and broadcast live as part of the hugely successful NT Live series, expanding the reach of the National to a much wider audience across the UK and indeed internationally.⁴⁵⁷ It was even broadcast again as part of the National Theatre's fiftieth anniversary celebrations in 2013.⁴⁵⁸ The Globe's *Hamlet* actually reached further still – the company revived the performance for two tours. The first came in 2012 when a new company toured mainly in the UK and ended in New York. The second revival, starting in 2014, was much more extensive and indeed newsworthy. After the successful 2012 Globe to Globe festival – the Globe's contribution to the Cultural Olympiad, where 37 theatre companies from 37 countries performed the complete plays of Shakespeare, each in a different language – Dromgoole's *Hamlet* was revived once again for an even more ambitious project: to take the production to every country in the world.⁴⁵⁹ Instead of starring Joshua McGuire, however, this incarnation of the

⁴⁵⁵ Szalwinska, *Sunday Times*, 8 May 2011; McGinn, *Time Out*, 12 May 2011.

⁴⁵⁶ See the NT *Hamlet* programmes for 2010 and 2011, both catalogued as RNT/PP/1/3/295.

⁴⁵⁷ 'Hamlet', *National Theatre Live* <<http://ntlive.nationaltheatre.org.uk/productions/15342-hamlet>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

⁴⁵⁸ See 'National Theatre 50', *National Theatre* <<http://50.nationaltheatre.org.uk/>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

⁴⁵⁹ The 2012 Globe to Globe festival contained 37 languages only if you count the various forms of Spanish and Arabic as separate languages, and are prepared to accept the suggestion that 'Hip Hop' is a language of its own. See *Shakespeare Beyond English: A Global Experiment*, ed. by Bennett and Carson; see also 'Globe to Globe Shakespeare', *Shakespeare's Globe* <<http://globetoglobe.shakespearesglobe.com/archive/2012/>> [accessed 14 May 2015]; for the 2014-2016 *Hamlet* project see 'Globe to Globe *Hamlet*', *Shakespeare's Globe*

production took the ‘original conditions’ experiment even further: it had a rotating ensemble cast, in which each member could play several roles. The incredible logistical feat, dubbed ‘Globe to Globe Hamlet’, acted as a successful international marketing campaign for the Globe, generating headlines and academic discussion at home and abroad.

Both Dromgoole’s and Hytner’s productions, then, served to represent their respective theatres in London, across the UK and across the world; in doing so, they also represented different approaches to the First Quarto, each based ultimately on New Bibliographical terminology and thinking. Hytner’s approach is textually old-fashioned, in the sense that he uses an edition nearly three decades old. Yet his directorial vision is decidedly less so. He updates the setting to a modern police-state, and through on-stage action implies strongly that Ophelia’s death was neither suicide nor accidental, but rather a state-sanctioned murder; Gertrude’s famous set-piece thereby becomes an act of enforced propaganda.⁴⁶⁰ Hytner also freely emends the text on the strength of his own authority as director, and publicly justifies such an action on a number of occasions.⁴⁶¹ Almost half – 34 out of 72 – of his textual emendations (not counting cuts) are not derived from the folio or either of the quartos; and in keeping with his professed approach, most of these changes involve clarifying the meaning of one or two words. The National production therefore is a strange mingling of a thirty-year-old base text with a contemporary visual approach. The rationale for the Globe production, on the other hand, is heavily reliant on the authority of original performance conditions and historical precedent. By using the Moby text as his base, Dromgoole in fact starts with a Victorian base text accessed through a twenty-first century medium: an at once thoroughly anachronistic and thoroughly modern text. He further complicates the situation by

<<http://globetoglobe.shakespearesglobe.com/>> [accessed 14 May 2015]. See also Dominic Dromgoole, *Hamlet: Globe to Globe* (London: Canongate, 2017).

⁴⁶⁰ See also Nicholas Hytner, *Balancing Acts* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2017).

⁴⁶¹ ‘Nicholas Hytner Lecture on How to do Shakespeare’, *YouTube* <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6olzcG2CF0U>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

incorporating into it aspects of Q1 to create a text which is performed wearing authentic-ish clothes ('Elizabethan cloaks on over their brown overalls or tweed skirts').⁴⁶²

The natural rivalry between the National and the Globe – caused by geographical proximity and the quest to be the definitive Shakespeare company in London – might be said to have borne itself out in the theatres' approaches to *Hamlet*. Disseminating their productions to far bigger audiences than ever before, the two theatres attempted to create the definitive *Hamlet* performance, or at least, a definitive *Hamlet*, along the clichéd notion of creating a '*Hamlet* for our times'.⁴⁶³ Each was successful in its own way; Hytner's was critically more popular, but the Globe's monumental tour by far outshone the National production as an act of branding and self-promotion, not to mention simply as a logistical achievement. Even as they enacted the cultural aspirations of their respective theatres, these productions offered two very different answers to the question of Q1's place in performance. Dromgoole, taking a semi-historicist approach, authenticated his production by 'lean[ing]' on the First Quarto where 'necessary', and spent a large proportion of his programme's introduction explaining his rationale. On the other hand, Hytner did what many directors following the New Bibliographers had done before; he almost completely ignored the First Quarto, and made no mention of the text at the few points where he put it to use. In many ways echoing the debates about Q1's place in the canon that were simultaneously happening on the pages of Wikipedia, both theatres, in their competing *Hamlet* performances, act out the struggle for attention, authority and authenticity as the true representatives of Shakespeare's textual intentions.

⁴⁶² Kate Bassett, *The Independent on Sunday*, 8 May 2011.

⁴⁶³ Caroline McGinn's *Time Out* review, for example, mentioned this notion: McGinn, *Time Out*.

White Bear 2011: Localised Conflict

In 2011, over a decade since the Red Shift production explored in Chapter Three above, the First Quarto returned to the London stage in a production directed by Imogen Bond. Bond had been a trainee director under Sam Walters at the Orange Tree in 2006; during that time Walters mentioned to Bond the existence of Q1. At first Bond thought he was joking, but, as she informed me in an interview, she was quickly intrigued.⁴⁶⁴ The conversation led eventually to Bond's own production of Q1 in the White Bear theatre, a space reminiscent of the Orange Tree's original home above a pub, where Walters's production had been.⁴⁶⁵ Bond's production was part of her Master's Degree at Birkbeck, in a process whereby she directed the performance and then analysed the reactions of the audience in a dissertation. In order to do so, she held post-show question and answer sessions with the audience twice a week, conducted interviews, and asked audience members to fill out email response forms. Bond, both director and academic, in many ways epitomises the increasingly common comingling of creative and critical practice. In the years following the Q1 production, she pursued her doctorate at Birkbeck at the same time as working at the Orange Tree Theatre as the 'Community and Education Director', a role which included directing at least one play per year.⁴⁶⁶ In some ways Bond's production was a culmination of two aspects of Q1's *Hamlet*: though the fields of academia and theatre creation often met at various points (Poel's first production, for example), never were they so closely joined perhaps as when Bond directed *Hamlet* at the White Bear.

As Bond herself notes, her production was a particularly self-conscious experiment:

⁴⁶⁴ Bond, Interview with the author.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid; 'Imogen Bond', *Orange Tree Theatre* <<https://www.orangetreetheatre.co.uk/people/director/imogen-bond>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

[A] contemporary audience experiences Q1 in performance, not as a ‘bad’ version of *Hamlet*, or as a play in its own right. Rather, [...] *Hamlet* himself in this version does not meet with our expectations. Behind him stands the ghost of what we *think* *Hamlet* is: an iconic image of the intellectual, introspective Prince, which this *Hamlet* can never fully reach. [...] Q1 *Hamlet* can never quite satisfy us, and will always appear incomplete.⁴⁶⁷

The other texts are present, consciously so, in this production: just as Thompson and Taylor note that Q2/F ‘crept back in, perhaps inadvertently’ to the performances of Q1 they saw, in this production the actors and audience are aware that what they are watching is some kind of non-*Hamlet*.⁴⁶⁸ This self-consciousness is borne out in the Q&A sessions, where all of the questions revolve around the use of the Q1 text – in fact, a number of the contributors seem to be very well acquainted with the history of the texts.⁴⁶⁹

As with previous Q1 productions, the White Bear production immediately signals itself to be the ‘wrong’ *Hamlet*, this time by adopting the title *Hamlet: 1603*.⁴⁷⁰ The first line of Bond’s online advertising calls it ‘*Hamlet*, but not as we know it’ and she heavily emphasises the differentness of Q1.⁴⁷¹ Unwilling to commit to a specific origin theory in the marketing materials, Bond states that ‘Scholars disagree on exactly what it is (an early draft? A “shooting script” assembled from the actors’ recollections?), but it is an unquestionably authentic text.’⁴⁷² Her unwillingness to offer more than a general summary of the theories of the text’s provenance is in common with the explanations provided in the other theatre programmes examined in this thesis, presumably an attempt to entice potential audience

⁴⁶⁷ Imogen Bond, ‘*Hamlet*’s Ghost’ (unpublished master’s thesis, University of London, Birkbeck College, 2011).

⁴⁶⁸ Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet*, p. 16.

⁴⁶⁹ Imogen Bond, Interview with the audience [on mp3 file, date unknown].

⁴⁷⁰ Sam Walters called his production *Hamlet: First Quarto* and Jonathan Holloway titled his *Hamlet: First Cut*.

⁴⁷¹ See ‘*Hamlet: 1603*’, *Remote Goat* <<http://www.remotegoat.com/uk/event/129406/hamlet-1603/>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

⁴⁷² ‘*Hamlet: 1603*’, *Vital Signs* <<http://vitalsignstheatre.co.uk/index.php/hamlet-1603/>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

members without committing to a particular view. However, when I interviewed her in 2014, three years after the production, Bond was more willing to state her view, albeit cautiously, saying: ‘I think a really clever writer has got their hands on [the Folio text and edited it down to 75 minutes.] I have this sort of little fantasy in my head that Shakespeare preferred that version, and that it was [Shakespeare who] did the cutting’.⁴⁷³

Having studied directing under Sam Walters, Bond approached the text of Q1 in a textually conservative way: ‘I learnt how to direct via Sam [...] and [his approach] is very much [just to] do the play’ without emendation.⁴⁷⁴ Bond’s copy of Arden3 used for the production does indeed bear no marks of emendation. In this sense she provides from the outset a response to Janette Dillon’s claim that any textual emendation in a performance of Q1 ‘precludes’ it from ‘demonstrating the performability’ of the text.⁴⁷⁵ The White Bear performance is, in fact, the only case study in this thesis that openly strives for absolute textual fidelity. Of course, Bond’s fidelity was not to Q1 *Hamlet*, but to the Arden3 edition of it, which, as the editors meticulously document, itself deviates from the ‘real’ text a number of times.⁴⁷⁶ Just as the most noticeable textual deviations of her mentor’s production had actually derived from his base edition, so too do Bond’s divergences come from her base text. While the changes in Walters’s production stirred some controversy, Bond’s production received only one professional review. In her own analysis afterwards, she claimed that the professional ‘verdict’ ‘appear[ed] to be negative’, unlike the ‘non-professional’ response, which was ‘almost entirely positive’.⁴⁷⁷ Of course, the records Bond generously provided me with indicate that the majority of ‘non-professional’ reviews and responses to her work were made by her friends and acquaintances. Bond herself does mention the possibility of audience

⁴⁷³ Bond, Interview with the author.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ Dillon, ‘Is There a Performance in this Text?’, p. 84. See Chapter 2.

⁴⁷⁶ As with all editors, Thompson and Taylor make a number of emendations to the text.

⁴⁷⁷ Bond, ‘*Hamlet*’s Ghost’, p. 3.

bias in her own analysis, though she stops short of mentioning the significant factor of her relationship with the respondents.

She is, however, certainly right that the only professional reviewer, Lucy Powell for *Time Out*, was largely unimpressed by the event. Powell suggests that the production could best be summarised as ‘Hamlet without the best bits’.⁴⁷⁸ Moreover she criticises the text at length:

The ‘bad quarto’ of the 1603 text – heavy on action, short on soliloquy, is thought to be constructed from performers’ memory. Many of the most luminous lines are missing or mangled, some scenes are reordered, most are truncated, peopled by strangely familiar characters like Rossencraft and Gilderstone. The whole has a hazy, historical appeal, but it’s the poetic paucity that’s so baffling[.]⁴⁷⁹

Powell’s review has echoes of recent responses to the First Quarto: her use of the word ‘truncated’ comes less than a year after Hytner had employed the very same word in his programme. Equally, the notion that Q1, or parts of it, are ‘strangely familiar’ calls to mind the numerous responses to Jonathan Holloway’s Red Shift production in 2000 which commented on the uncanny nature of the text.⁴⁸⁰

Yet there is also a nagging suggestion of Bardolatry here in Powell’s reluctance to condemn the text entirely: since some of Q1, after all, is identical or very similar to Q2 or F, to denounce the whole thing would be equivalent to blasphemy. By suggesting that the text is incomplete, mangled, or lacking in poetry, Powell indicates her capacity to detect Shakespearean fakes, and simultaneously proclaims her (more important) ability to appreciate the famed poetry of Shakespeare. Indeed, Powell’s review functions as a demonstration of

⁴⁷⁸ Lucy Powell, ‘Hamlet: 1603’, *Time Out* <<http://www.timeout.com>> [accessed 10 November 2014].

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁰ See Chapter 2.

her membership of the elite group able truly to appreciate *Hamlet*. A. A. Milne's hyperbolic introduction to *Wind in the Willows* is surely apt here:

One does not argue about *The Wind in the Willows*. [...] The book is a test of character. We can't criticise it, because it is criticising us. But I must give you one word of warning. When you sit down to it, don't be so ridiculous as to suppose that you are sitting in judgment on my taste, or on the art of Kenneth Grahame. You are merely sitting in judgment on yourself. You may be worthy: I don't know. But it is you who are on trial.⁴⁸¹

Of course, the whole concept of a review rests on the notion of the reviewer's authority as a legitimate arbiter of taste, and Powell's review reassures her readers that she is indeed worthy. Her use of the passive voice ('is thought to be constructed') acts as a grammatical *legerdemain* avoiding the tricky question of exactly who is doing the thinking. Moreover, the confident tone of the rest of her textual explanation implies a great wealth of knowledge inaccessible to the average theatre-goer. By spending more than half her review explaining the textual history of Q1, Powell elevates herself above a lay *Time Out* readership, which presumably knows little about the texts of *Hamlet* and therefore accepts her aesthetic judgement along with the textual explanation. This struggle for authority brings to mind Leah Marcus's argument about the cultural capital available for those who demonstrate the ability to appreciate *Hamlet*.⁴⁸² Marcus notes that an appreciation specifically of the 'To be' soliloquy is necessary for entrance into this group, and that any attempt to evaluate Q1's version is seen as 'evidence of a tin ear'.⁴⁸³ And indeed, Powell fits this characterisation well, mocking Hamlet as he 'glumly ponders' the line 'To sleep, to dream, is that all?'⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸¹ Kenneth Grahame, *Wind in the Willows* (1909), ed. by Arthur Rackham (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1993), p. 9.

⁴⁸² See epigraph to Chapter 3.

⁴⁸³ Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance*.

⁴⁸⁴ Powell, *Time Out*.

By contrast, those members of the audience who respond to Bond's request for written feedback specifically do *not* seek any kind of authority. As the respondents are all connected to Bond to a greater or lesser degree and presumably aware that they know significantly less than Bond about *Hamlet*, they make no claims regarding Q1's origins. In fact, whenever respondents give negative feedback, they always couch it euphemistically – and personally – with such terms as 'The only thing I didn't get', 'I couldn't work out why', etc.⁴⁸⁵ Indeed, respondents repeatedly claim limited knowledge of the text throughout. Aside from the obvious desire not to offend, these responses are significant because the respondents tacitly elevate Bond, both acknowledging and in some ways generating her authority: exactly opposite to what Powell does in her review.

Hamlet: 1603 is, of course, unique in this thesis: the productions discussed so far have had numerous professional reviews and no audience feedback questionnaires. If it is unusual to find such direct conflict between a director and her only reviewer, it is perhaps just as rare that both are female. Bond is the first female director considered in this thesis; the dispute over her authority will find itself mirrored in the only other production directed by a woman, Lyndsey Turner, discussed in Chapter Six below. Nonetheless, this 2011 indirect battle for authority between the two theatre professionals – director and reviewer – demonstrates once again Q1's capacity as a nexus for various approaches and ideologies to clash. Powell firmly established herself as an authority on both historical matters and artistic judgement. Bond on the other hand makes no claim to authority; rather the respondents to her surveys attribute the capacity and right to her – as director and academic – to make authoritative statements concerning the First Quarto. It is certain that Bond has far more knowledge of the debates around Q1's origins and utility in performance than Powell. If Powell had been confronted and asked to defend her implicit claim about the text's origin, it is highly unlikely that she

⁴⁸⁵ Imogen Bond, Private correspondence (I have anonymised the responses).

would be able to back it up with evidence or references to scholarly work. The reactions to Bond's production suggest that though the internet may make everybody feel like experts online, when it comes to a direct encounter – either through correspondence or in real life – with a perceived figure of academic and theatrical authority, a more traditional deference to authority persists. This conflict, and the one between the Globe and National, and the one on Wikipedia, are in the end all iterations of the same debate: who 'owns' (Q1/Q2/F) *Hamlet*? Is it theatre professionals? Academics? Reviewers? The audience? The First Quarto does not necessarily provide the answers to these questions, but time and again across the period considered in this thesis, it has served as a site for these debates to take place.

Young Vic 2011: Monkeying About with Shakespeare

The Young Vic's 2011 production of *Hamlet* provides another example of how information is disseminated in this new internet era. Ian Rickson directed Michael Sheen in a production which saw Denmark transformed into a mental asylum, in a production which took several radical staging decisions and in so doing frustrated several reviewers. In an image reminiscent of Franco Zeffirelli's 1990 film, Rickson's production opens with Hamlet silently mourning over his father's coffin before it is buried.⁴⁸⁶ Rickson's most divisive decision, however, involves an act of theatrical trickery at the end, whereby the actor who is apparently Fortinbras takes his mask off and reveals himself to be Hamlet, who had just been seen to be buried onstage – the programme even gives special thanks to the hypnotist and illusionist Derren Brown.⁴⁸⁷ Some critics see the production as full of gimmicks, claiming, for example, to 'have never left a production of *Hamlet* feeling as irritated and cheated', or that 'the play is

⁴⁸⁶ *Hamlet*, dir. by Franco Zeffirelli, (Warner Bros., 1990).

⁴⁸⁷ *Hamlet* 2011 Programme, London, Young Vic Theatre, no shelfmark.

here undone by too many look-at-me larks from director Ian Rickson', or even that 'This is poison'.⁴⁸⁸ Others, however, see it as 'fresh' or 'brilliant'.⁴⁸⁹ Rickson's approach certainly differentiates his production from the contemporary *Hamlets* at the Globe and National. Yet this radical directorial approach does not translate to a textually innovative methodology. Quite the opposite: Rickson presents himself as textually conservative in his programme. It contains the by-then common textual introduction: first defining Q1, then discussing the provenance of Q2 and F before explaining the production's specific textual choices. In fact, the Young Vic's programme presents the Q1 text in a very similar manner to Hytner's NT programme, arguing that it is a memorial reconstruction by Marcellus:

The 'First Quarto' was printed in 1603 in a pirate edition. It was, apparently, pieced together from memory, the chief pirate probably being the actor who played Marcellus in the first production, as the scenes in which he appears are closer to the other versions we have than any other scenes.⁴⁹⁰

Yet overall the Young Vic programme provides a less disparaging commentary than the National's, with the only potential condemnation of the text being the commonly-used New Bibliographical term 'pirate'.

In fact, the use of scare quotes each time a specific text is mentioned might be said to indicate unease with all textual matters. This unease is compounded by a small error later in the programme: 'The "First Folio" was printed in the collection of Shakespeare's plays published by his fellow actors John Heminges and Henry Condell in 1623, seven years after his death.'⁴⁹¹ The claim that the First Folio was printed 'in' the collection indicates that whoever wrote the textual introduction was unfamiliar with the history of Shakespeare's text

⁴⁸⁸ Charles Spencer, *The Daily Telegraph*, 10 November 2011; Quentin Letts, *The Daily Mail*, 10 November 2011.

⁴⁸⁹ Sarah Hemming, *The Financial Times*, 11 November 2011; Libby Purves, *The Times*, 10 November 2011.

⁴⁹⁰ *Hamlet* 2011 Programme, Young Vic Theatre.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*

and was probably rephrasing something from a book or – more likely – the internet.

Moreover, the textual note goes on to claim that:

A complete performance of all the Hamlet material would last four-and-a-half hours.

In this production, we play a text shorter by about a quarter, drawn, as is usual, from the ‘Second Quarto’ and the ‘First Folio’.⁴⁹²

It could be argued that the inclusion of the phrase ‘as is usual’ hints towards a reluctance to be seen to edit the text, perhaps borne out of Rickson’s inexperience in directing Shakespeare. Despite the radicalism of his directorial approach, he is uncertain of his authority to emend the text so he appeals instead to the authority of tradition. At first glance the textual introduction’s next paragraph seems to counteract that argument:

Less usually we follow the ‘First Quarto’ in placing two passages – Hamlet’s ‘To be or not to be’ and his extended scene with Ophelia – early, preserving what is likely to be an actor’s memory of how the play was first performed.⁴⁹³

Despite suggesting that they were doing something unusual, the programme still makes an appeal to the authority of theatrical tradition – in fact it is an appeal to historical authenticity. The programme suggests a hesitancy to lay claim to free textual emendation, but this hesitancy is unfounded, given that Rickson demonstrates the same readiness to cut and adapt the text as many of the other directors discussed in this thesis.

What is of prime interest here is the ‘Resource Pack’ that the Young Vic made to accompany the production. While the textual introduction in Rickson’s programme may have used the New Bibliographical terminology, the resource pack presents a very different view of Q1:

⁴⁹² Ibid.

⁴⁹³ Ibid. Note that it is not actually ‘less usual’; numerous productions use the First Quarto’s placement of the ‘To be’ scene.

Three early version [sic] of Hamlet exist, called the First Quarto, the Second Quarto and the First Folio. The versions are all slightly different – some lines have been added or omitted, and some words are different. The first quarto of Hamlet was published in 1603 by Nicholas Ling and John Trundell, and printed by Valentine Simmes. It contains about half the amount of text of the second quarto, which was also published by Nicholas Ling in around 1604-5. The first folio, which included all of Shakespeare's works and was really the first Complete Works of Shakespeare was published in 1623 by Edward Blount and William & Isaac Jaggard. From these three versions, scholars and directors work to reconstitute the 'original' Hamlet, but it is almost impossible to know what the original Hamlet was exactly like.⁴⁹⁴

The pack was certainly made by someone not closely associated with the production: it quotes from lines that Rickson cut, and provides a scene summary where 'To be' is placed not in the Q1 location as per the Young Vic production, but in its Q2/F location. Clearly, it is also the case that resource packs are niche documents, written for a very specific and limited readership and rarely encountered outside educational institutions. Nonetheless this marks the first moment in the twenty-first century that a mainstream London theatre – admittedly its education department – presents the First Quarto on the same footing as the other two texts.

In fact, Rickson's base text is the same as Dromgoole's, the Moby *Hamlet*, meaning that of the three mainstream *Hamlets* of 2010-2011 in London, only the National's is based on an edition less than 150 years old. The text is of course edited for the production, and despite the claim that the text is 'shorter by about a quarter', the Moby text's 29,535 words spoken (excluding stage directions, speech prefixes, and act and scene headings) is reduced to 19,016 words, 64% the length of the original text: more than a third of the text is cut. If the

⁴⁹⁴ 'Young Vic *Hamlet* Resource Pack', <<http://www.youngvic.org/taking-part/schools-colleges/resource-packs>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

textual introduction underestimates the extent of cutting, so too does it underestimate the extent of Q1's influence. The first indication of this influence comes early on in the promptbook, when Claudius asks Laertes his suit. Laertes replies:

My dread lord,
Now that the funeral rites are all performed
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation,
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.⁴⁹⁵

This response includes one Q1 line, 'Now that the funeral rites are all performed' (Q1 2.16), which alludes to the opening burial of the old King Hamlet. The insertion of this single line recasts Laertes's motives: though Laertes still comes to see the 'coronation' of Claudius, the combination of Q1 and Q2/F here creates a character who at least in part came to mourn Old Hamlet's death. Since the mention of the funeral rites comes at the beginning of Laertes's speech and before any mention of Claudius's coronation, it prioritises the funeral over the coronation, suggesting that at least initially Laertes's allegiance was more to Old Hamlet than to Claudius. To some extent the inclusion of this line also diminishes the audience's sense of Hamlet's insanity when he claims variously that 'the funeral baked meats / Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables' (Q2 1.2.179-180) and that his 'father died within's two hours' (Q2 3.2.120); after all, the audience had indeed seen Old Hamlet's burial less than two hours earlier. 'Indeed', we can agree, 'it followed hard upon'.

⁴⁹⁵ *Hamlet* 2011 Promptbook, London, Young Vic Theatre, no shelfmark.

As the programme indicates, Rickson's text also follows the First Quarto by employing its placement of the 'To be' speech and the nunnery sequence. Hamlet's speech changes meaning with this new location; it no longer comes confusingly soon after the soliloquy announcing his plans to use the play to 'catch the conscience of the King' (Q2 2.2.540). In its Q1 place, this is the first we see of Hamlet since he found out his father was murdered, and in that sense provides a more comprehensible cause of Hamlet's gloom. This relocation has been seen numerous times but Rickson makes a more unusual emendation to this section by adding 'with a book' to the stage direction 'Enter Hamlet', just before his 'To be' scene.⁴⁹⁶ The sight of Hamlet with a book during the fishmonger exchange is a feature of the Folio ('enter Hamlet reading on a book', F 2.2.164SD), but the book's presence in the 'To be' speech derives from the First Quarto, where the king says 'See where he comes, poring upon a book' (Q1 7.110). With the relocation of the speech and presence of Hamlet's book, Rickson's *Hamlet* creates both structural and visual parallels with Q1 at the most famous set piece of the play.

There is also a Q1 passage in the promptbook which remains only in the promptbook. Early in Act 3 Scene 4 where Hamlet confronts Gertrude, the typed script reads:

HAMLET (*from 'bad quarto'*)

Mother, mother, O are you here?

How is't with you mother?

GERTRUDE

How is't with you?

HAMLET

I'll tell you, but first we'll make all safe.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

*(Locks the door)*⁴⁹⁷

These lines do indeed come from the ‘bad quarto’: Q1 11.4-7. Hamlet’s suspicion that they are being watched fits with Rickson’s vision of *Hamlet*, where the protagonist’s mental health is continually brought into question. Yet the passage quoted is crossed out in pencil from Hamlet’s speech prefix before the line ‘Mother, mother’ up to ‘we’ll make all safe’, leaving only the stage direction to lock the door. This passage, inserted and then removed, reveals a number of things about the journey to production. Firstly, it demonstrates that Q1 was consulted in more depth than just a structural level. The italicised description ‘from “bad quarto”’ is, however, unique: it is the only place anywhere in the promptbook that a directorial insertion is marked on the text. The other numerous emendations and additions are all printed with no markings, just as the cuts are silently deleted. Most of this section is deleted, but Hamlet’s action of locking the door is retained, suggesting once again – as with the location of the ‘To be’ speech – that the text’s authority as a supposed memorial reconstruction leads to the retention of its actions but not its words.

Of the reviews for the Young Vic production, only two mention textual issues at all. Libby Purves accepts without question the programme’s claim for textual normality: ‘There are few lines lost beyond the usual cuts (it is three and a half hours, modern style).’⁴⁹⁸

Christopher Hart’s relies less on the programme; in one of the few favourable comments in his otherwise condemnatory *Sunday Times* review, he writes:

It’s quite right to monkey about with Shakespeare, cut and dice: you can’t make a *Hamlet* without breaking eggs. You can even take ideas for a revised order from the dodgy First Quarto, as they do here, the version of *Hamlet* that gives us the

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ Purves, *The Times*.

memorable lines: ‘To be or not to be, aye there’s the point, To die, to sleep, is that all?

Aye all.’⁴⁹⁹

This clearly echoes Hart’s earlier review of Hytner’s NT production, quoted above. Hart’s assertion here that it is ‘quite right’ liberally to approach Shakespeare’s text serves as a reminder that the common public perception is precisely the opposite. Numerous amateur reviews on the internet demonstrate the view that editing Shakespeare is wrong, perhaps best encapsulated in the complaint that ‘The Mel Gibson version of *Hamlet* adds and deletes words. (Which is something you’re not supposed to do with Shakespearean works.)’⁵⁰⁰ The contrast between Hart’s claim and this assertion that ‘you’re not supposed to’ edit Shakespeare’s texts indicates that even figures of authority will be criticised if they are seen to ‘monkey about’ with Shakespeare too much, if not by Hart, then by plenty of others. Hart’s review acts in a similar way to Powell’s *Time Out* review discussed above: his reference to Q1’s ‘To be’ soliloquy indicates his knowledge of *Hamlet* and thereby sets him apart as an elevated authority. Despite the absence of the Q1 version of the soliloquy in the Young Vic production – or rather, because of its absence – Hart becomes the possessor and conveyor of knowledge as well as critical judgement. He uses the First Quarto to shore up his own authority as a theatre reviewer at the same time as granting to Rickson the license to edit *Hamlet*.

Rickson makes limited use of Q1, drawing on its structure and to a limited extent also on its action. In relation to the performance of *Hamlet*, he is by far the most radical and divisive of the three mainstream London directors in 2010-2011. In his approach to the First Quarto’s text, he falls somewhere between Nicholas Hytner’s disregard and Dominic Dromgoole’s willing appropriation. Almost all the reviewers ignore Rickson’s uses of Q1;

⁴⁹⁹ Christopher Hart, *Sunday Times*, 13 November 2011.

⁵⁰⁰ ‘*Hamlet* (1987)’, *IMDB*, <<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0093138/>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

they instead waged an ideological war over his conceptual theatrical approach to *Hamlet*. Of the three times that reviewers comment on Rickson's textual choices, only one addresses the use of Q1: that review completely accepts it. By 2011 the use of Q1 had undergone great changes since the beginning of the millennium. Of course, Rickson's actual use of words from Q1 in his promptbook was only marginally more than that of John Caird at the National 11 years earlier. The drastic changes are on the fringes of productions, in the other texts surrounding performance. Q1 now permeates through the edges of performance: the structure, the programmes, the reviews.

Conclusion

The Young Vic and White Bear productions both indicate that attitudes to Q1 continued on a trajectory of reformation, but the text was still far from being accepted as authentic or authoritative. Tellingly, in the context of the argument present in this thesis, it is only the White Bear Q1 production which used the new Arden3 text. Promptbook practice seems to have lagged behind academic trends, but it does follow them eventually, as the slow but steady increase in the use of the First Quarto text demonstrates. Of the non-Q1 case studies in this thesis, Dromgoole's at the Globe is by far the most influenced by Q1. By referring to the text as an authentic historical source which could provide information for a modern-day touring production, Dromgoole relies on the often-maligned text to assert his own directorial authority. Though he draws on the theory of memorial reconstruction by travelling players, a theory not then in vogue, he also responds to the increased academic interest in Q1 by relying on the text more than any other mainstream London director of the previous two decades. He maintains the Globe's reputation as a centre of academic research and study by responding theatrically to the scholarly interest in the First Quarto. Dromgoole's direct competitor at the

National took the opposite approach; Hytner upheld the National's reputation as a theatre more targeted at popular/populist modern productions.⁵⁰¹ Rather than taking on board the academic discussion of the previous decades, he gave a Q2/F conflation that, despite huge cuts, was textually indistinguishable from the 'real' *Hamlet* expected by the reviewers. In a reflection of the two theatres' branding and roles, Hytner appealed to his innate authority as the Artistic Director of the National to justify the changes he made, while Dromgoole at the Globe used historical precedent for his validation: a use of the First Quarto not seen in earlier Q2/F case studies.

Both Dromgoole and Hytner led their theatres in pioneering work to increase the proliferation of their *Hamlets* through high-profile innovation. The two ventures served to enforce the authority of the theatres and to increase their profiles and, ultimately, their incomes. The two contrasting approaches demonstrate a deep divide concerning the value of the First Quarto in performance. Hytner, who was not concerned with authenticity, disregarded Q1; Dromgoole, who *was* concerned with authenticity, relied on the text to provide it. This is a substantial change from the situation ten years earlier, where Giles Block at the Globe and John Caird at the National both ignored Q1 precisely because of its perceived inauthenticity. At the Globe at least, the First Quarto had made the transition from inauthentic to authentic. Dromgoole could do what Block could not, appropriating Q1 to promote an idea of his production as closer than ever to the original conditions of Shakespearean performance. Of course, Dromgoole's use of the text at first seems to be a reflection of how up to date he is with scholarship, but curiously his rationale was based on an idea that had not been seriously defended in print since the 1990s.⁵⁰²

⁵⁰¹ See 'About the National Theatre', *National Theatre* <<http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/discover-more/welcome-to-the-national-theatre/about-the-national-theatre>> [accessed 14 May 2015].

⁵⁰² Though there have been intermittent defences of the New Bibliography, such as in Giorgio Melchiori's work, the theory of collective memorial reconstruction was last argued by Kathleen Irace in 1994, and repeated in her 1998 edition. See Giorgio Melchiori, 'The continuing importance of New Bibliography', in *In Arden: Editing*

Dromgoole was not the only one to put forward the theory of group memorial reconstruction during this period; Lucy Powell's *Time Out* review and even the White Bear's promotional material drew on it. Given that this theory was not supported by a large proportion of either the New Bibliographers or their successors the New Textualists, it seems odd that it was given so much prominence during the period around 2010. The explanation may simply be that these various people all had copies of Irace's New Cambridge edition of Q1 or her *Reforming the 'Bad' Quartos*, or even Albert Weiner's out-of-print 1964 edition of the First Quarto. A more likely link between these people, however, is that they all owned computers: the most prominent and accessible place that the group memorial reconstruction theory was presented was the version of Wikipedia's Q1 article as it stood, unedited, from September 2010 to July 2012 – the time when Dromgoole, Powell and Bond were all writing. The revised Wikipedia page contained almost the same explanation quoted in this chapter's epigraph, though with some important changes:

Albert B. Weiner argued in 1962 that Q1 represented a 'tourbook' copy, derived originally from a text similar to Q2 or F, which had been trimmed and simplified for performance by a small number of actors on tour in the provinces. But Hardin Craig disagreed in his introduction to Weiner's edition, arguing that Q1 is descended from an earlier draft of the play and that 'the second quarto is Shakespeare's revision and amplification of that earlier play.'⁵⁰³

It is telling that the Young Vic's programme, but not its resource pack, used similar language to the Wikipedia article as it stood in 2011. While Craig's reported suggestion that Q1 is a first draft was taken up nowhere except in Bond's advertising, the Wikipedia page on the First Quarto of *Hamlet* clearly performed an important role in shaping theatre programmes as

Shakespeare, ed. by Ann Thompson and Gordon McMullan (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2003), pp. 17-30; Irace, *Hamlet*; and Irace, *Reforming the Bad Quartos*.

⁵⁰³ 'Hamlet Q1' (revised version), *Wikipedia* (20 September 2010)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Hamlet_Q1&oldid=385845867> [accessed 14 May 2015].

the second decade of the millennium developed. In fact, the viewing figures for the Q1 page even experienced a sudden peak during the Q1 run at the White Bear, rising from the mid-20s each day to suddenly 181 views on 26 May 2011.⁵⁰⁴ This is not to claim that anyone performed a straightforward copy-and-paste directly from Wikipedia, or that it was the only source for those texts which echo its assertions, but there is no doubt that the site informed public perception, taking the role of trusted educator even for highly informed directors and theatre critics. Simultaneously, the Moby text's ubiquity, accessibility and readiness to be adapted threatened to undermine 150 years of textual scholarship – of the three performances of Q2/F in this chapter, only the National uses a text other than the Moby. So, contrary to what might be expected, the years following Arden3's publication did not see the same take-up of the new edition in performance as the 1980s had. Though Doran used the modern edition as one of his sources and Bond used the Arden3 Q1 text, the major theatres did not embrace the new edition as readily as they had Jenkins's Arden2: with the rise of the internet, traditional centres of authority started to cede some of that authority to the Moby text and Wikipedia articles. At the very moment that the First Quarto looked like it would start becoming a marketable text for performance, the internet overshadowed it, instead reproducing an orthodoxy based on century-old scholarship.

⁵⁰⁴ 'Wikipedia article traffic statistics: Hamlet Q1', *Wikipedia* <http://stats.grok.se/en/201105/Hamlet_Q1#> [accessed 14 May 2015].

CHAPTER SIX: 2015

THE FUTURE FOR Q1?

I'm absolutely not in conversation with the history of the manuscripts or the academic conversation around badness or goodness of quartos. I don't give a shit. I'm just a theatre maker[.]

—Lyndsey Turner, 2014⁵⁰⁵

Benedict Cumberbatch as Hamlet was the hottest theatre ticket in London in 2015. The production had a huge media profile because of Cumberbatch's recent popular successes, especially in the BBC TV series *Sherlock*.⁵⁰⁶ Leading up to the performance, numerous news articles online, in print, on the radio and on television concentrated on how quickly the performance sold out (famously, it did so faster than any other London show since records began) and on the predictable long queues of hopeful fans trying to get one of the tickets reserved for on-the-day sale.⁵⁰⁷ It was, clearly, a far cry from Sam Walters's Orange Tree Q1 production in a room over a pub thirty years earlier. Of course, Cumberbatch was not starring in a performance of the First Quarto, but the production did turn out to use a highly contested text. The commercial West-End company Sonia Freidman Productions produced the play, directed by Lyndsey Turner. Turner was known mostly for directing new writing – the plays

⁵⁰⁵ Lyndsey Turner, Interview with the author (London: 16 November 2014).

⁵⁰⁶ *Sherlock*, BBC Wales and Hartwood Films, 2010-2017.

⁵⁰⁷ Daisy Wyatt, 'Benedict Cumberbatch as Hamlet: Eager fans queue overnight for tickets to watch beloved actor at the Barbican', *The Independent*, 6 August 2015 <<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/news/benedict-cumberbatch-fans-queue-overnight-for-hamlet-tickets-to-watch-their-beloved-actor-at-the-10443201.html>> [accessed 4 August 2017]; Daisy Bowie-Sell, 'An insider's guide to queuing for day tickets to Benedict Cumberbatch's "Hamlet" at the Barbican', *Time Out* <<https://www.timeout.com/london/blog/an-insiders-guide-to-queuing-for-day-tickets-to-benedict-cumberbatchs-hamlet-at-the-barbican-081115>> [accessed 4 August 2017]; Hannah Furness, 'Sherlock vs Shakespeare in Cumberbatch's 18 hour Hamlet queue' <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/celebritynews/11785997/Sherlock-vs-Shakespeare-in-Cumberbatchs-18-hour-Hamlet-queue.html>> [accessed 4 August 2017].

Chimerica and *Posh* – and for her work with Caryl Churchill: she had never before directed Shakespeare. Turner’s *Hamlet* takes a unique place in this thesis. It is the only non-Q1 case study to be directed by a woman and the only straightforwardly ‘celebrity’ *Hamlet* in the thesis: unlike David Tennant and Patrick Stewart in 2008 or Daniel Day-Lewis and Judi Dench in 1989, Cumberbatch did not perform as part of a Shakespeare institution or with an established Shakespeare director.

If in 2006 the Factory *Hamlet*’s use of the Moby text gives early signs of the internet’s influence on performance, the Barbican production firmly embraces the digital age. Clips circulated on YouTube of Cumberbatch coming out of the Barbican entrance to sign autographs and one video reached over 1.2 million views in less than a month, as Cumberbatch implored his followers not to film his performance of the ‘To be’ soliloquy.⁵⁰⁸ Indeed, the production inspired numerous opinion pieces and even an article in *The Guardian* comparing it to the Labour Party’s ongoing leadership election.⁵⁰⁹ In the midst of all this hype, it might be expected that the textual details faded; in fact, the popularity of this production led to a hyper-exaggeration of everything around the production, and particularly the text, as will be seen. Given this intense public interest, the production in many ways epitomises the way directors and critics act with and react to a textually variant *Hamlet*. It is both exceptional among and typical of the productions studied in this thesis. For this reason, I want to consider it as the final test case for the influence of the First Quarto on contemporary performance. The production’s promptbook suggests, furthermore, some of the ways in which the internet may shape future approaches to the performance text of Shakespeare.

⁵⁰⁸ ‘Benedict Cumberbatch being good to his fans after a performance of *Hamlet* at the Barbican Centre’, *YouTube* <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MnDaWY2Pmt8>> [accessed 4 August]; ‘Benedict Cumberbatch urges fans not to take photos during *Hamlet* play’, *YouTube* <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9e-ud9zhVuc>> [accessed 4 August 2017].

⁵⁰⁹ Martin Kettle, ‘What *Hamlet* can teach the Labour leadership about getting things right’, *The Guardian*, 20 August 2015 <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/20/labour-leadership-hamlet-cumberbatch>> [accessed 4 August 2017].

Turner kindly agreed to give me an interview in November 2014, a year before her production opened. From the moment the production was announced, it was clear that it would necessarily be centred around Cumberbatch and would therefore be targeting a different demographic to that of the RSC, Globe or National Theatre. Turner acknowledged precisely this in the interview:

I'm in absolutely no doubt that I'm making this for a nineteen-year-old Shakespeare virgin, so I've got a very, very clear audience in mind. And it's not the scholars and it's not the academics. It's a nineteen-year-old from Hackney who's never seen this play before. And that nineteen-year-old from Hackney watches an awful lot of HBO drama, and all the big boxsets and the Aaron Sorkin stuff and really likes the film *The Social Network* so the expectation for that audience member is that if somebody says, 'I've got an idea, let's hide behind a thing and wait until Ophelia comes,' they want to see it straight away. They want a scene to go by and then see it.⁵¹⁰

Clearly, Turner views any kind of textual authenticity as subordinate to the needs of her audience. Much in the way that Eyre had tried to anticipate his NT audience in 1989, Turner wants to fulfil the expectations of her audience, providing them with a kind of Shakespearean instant gratification. She does not seek any of the historical or performance authenticity sought after by such directors as Poel or Holloway, or even by Block or Dromgoole at the Globe. Rather her goal is to introduce a younger audience to Shakespeare and surprise them by satisfying what she perceives to be their expectations and desires for performance.

In light of this, I asked what her approach to the text would be. She responded as follows:

I'm using a comparative textual analysis that's on the Wooster Group website. [...] I started with what you might call a comparative analysis, and a system of highlighting

⁵¹⁰ Turner, Interview with the author.

what's in Q2 that isn't in Q1, what's in F that is later cut from Q. I just wanted to get to know all three of these possibilities simultaneously. Then I'm using two 'book' books. One of them is the RSC edition. And I'm using that often as a resource to look at punctuation. Because it's pretty fine I think in terms of where actors breathe and how punctuation creates intent or meaning and then when I'm getting really stuck because I don't know what a word means or an expression means, I'm going into the Arden. So I'm using [...] Arden for footnotes, RSC for punctuation and tips. But what I did was I created a big word document, that was effectively Q2 and that's been my base camp.⁵¹¹

She established that it was the Jenkins Arden² edition, but that 'My friend who I'm working with is using [the Arden³ Q2 volume] so we've actually got two sets of Arden notes between us.' Asked about why she decided to take this approach, she answered:

[A director friend's] advice was take control of, take command of the punctuation of the text and you've directed a fifth of the play already and so that led me to think, well I'd need to see all the ranges of the punctuation and because it's quite an intimidating job trying to make a performance draft, I thought I'll start on something very, very small, and very, very nerdy. And I'll just look at the difference, I'll read out the difference. [F]irst [the] process was get to know F, Q1 and Q2 on a largely technical level: punctuation, what's added, what's omitted, what word changes from one to the other. So that took a good long while to make one [Microsoft] Word version to rule them all.⁵¹²

⁵¹¹ Ibid.

⁵¹² Ibid.

This is the creation of a new text, an internet-age version of Doran's editorial approach, but would the Q1's reputation as the 'bad' quarto put her off using Q1 lines? She rejected the idea in very clear terms:

I'm absolutely not in conversation with the history of the manuscripts or the academic conversation around badness or goodness of quartos. I don't give a shit. I'm just a theatre maker who's got a very clear idea of what this *Hamlet* should be so when I see a line that does it loads I keep that line and when I see a line that doesn't do it at all, I bin that line.⁵¹³

As a director without any textual theories to defend or prove, whose job is 'to tell a story', as she put it, Turner sees the texts as a means to an end and does not worry about their provenance when choosing between them – much like Daniels at the RSC in 1989.⁵¹⁴

Turner's desire to compare the three texts would of course have been possible without the internet if she had used Bernice Kliman's 1991 *Enfolded Hamlet* parallel text or the two volumes of the 2006 Arden3.⁵¹⁵ It is clear, however, that the work would have been considerably less convenient: the *Enfolded Hamlet* is a big, expensive book available only in specialist libraries, and as of August 2017 was on sale on Amazon for £87.⁵¹⁶ Trying to use the Arden3 in a similar way would involve holding two books open and require a constant flicking back and forth, and all of that is before the inconvenience of typing out the whole of whichever *Hamlet* a director is to use. Indeed, even the Wooster Group's site is not free of difficulties: opening the page using Internet Explorer or its more modern iteration, Microsoft Edge, causes the browser to crash every time. This is, nonetheless, the direction that editing

⁵¹³ Ibid.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

⁵¹⁵ Bertram and Kliman, *Enfolded Hamlet*; Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet*.

⁵¹⁶ 'The Enfolded Hamlets: Parallel Texts of Each with Unique Elements Bracketed: Parallel Texts of {Q2} and <F1> Each with Unique Elements Bracketed (AMS Studies in the Renaissance) Hardcover', *Amazon.co.uk* <https://www.amazon.co.uk/d/cka/Enfolded-Hamlets-Parallel-Elements-Bracketed-Studies-Renaissance/0404623387/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1501858668&sr=8-2&keywords=enfolded+hamlet> [accessed 4 August 2017].

for Shakespeare performance seems to be moving in: a more informed editing enabled by the wider availability of the three *Hamlet* texts brought about by the internet. Turner's approach to the text represents the recent trend that was first seen with Doran of directors taking active roles as critically informed editors, empowered by the increasing availability of a variety of texts.

Turner's complex textual approach yields a similarly complex production text.⁵¹⁷ In fact, not only does she incorporate lines from all three *Hamlet* texts, she also shows a willingness, unique in this thesis, to incorporate lines from other Shakespeare plays into her *Hamlet*. She includes lines or part-lines from *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *A Winter's Tale*, *Henry VIII*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *2 Henry IV*.⁵¹⁸ Her use of the First Quarto, on the other hand, is more limited. Indeed, there are only six instances where the text adopts or echoes Q1 lines or words. As with many of the case studies in this thesis, most of these may be ascribed to coincidence or may be only indirectly derived from the text. The first comes in Turner's 1.1, a scene more closely corresponding to the latter parts of the traditional 1.2. Near the end of Turner's scene Horatio says 'My gracious lord, I'll leave you for a while.' The phrase 'My gracious lord' is not found in Q2 or F, but Q1 Leartes does use it at 2.15. Such a common construction is of course hardly unique to Q1; it is used in several other Shakespeare plays, including *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Richard III*, and given the extent to which Turner incorporates other Shakespearean texts, it is far from certain that this is intentionally derived from the First Quarto.

Two scenes later in Turner's production, in Act 1 Scene 3, Polonius advises Laertes that he should 'Bear it that the opposed may beware of thee' in 1.3. Then in Turner's Act 2

⁵¹⁷ In addition to giving me an interview, Turner generously supplied me with a copy of her production's finalised text: *Hamlet* Barbican 2015 Promptbook, private copy supplied by Lyndsey Turner.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

Scene 3, Hamlet tells Ophelia that Polonius should play the fool ‘nowhere but in his own house’. In both lines Turner expands Q2/F’s contractions: ‘Bear’t’, ‘th’opposed’, ‘in’s’. Q1 provides all three in their full form (Q1 3.34, 7.176). Similarly, after his conversation with his father’s ghost, Hamlet refers to the ‘tables’ of his memory at a point where only Q1 uses the plural (Q1 5.74, Q2 1.5.98, F 1.5.97). Later in the same scene Hamlet asks Horatio, Marcellus and Barnardo ‘Never to speak of this that you have seen tonight’ where Q1 5.123 has the word ‘tonight’ but both Q2 and F omit it (Q1 5.123, Q2 1.5.153, F 1.5.153). These instances, once again, do not necessarily derive from the First Quarto. Throughout her text Turner consistently expands contractions without reference to Q1, as for example in Act 1 Scene 4 where she expands Q2/F’s ‘Look too’t’ (Q2 1.4.134) where there is no comparable Q1 line. Equally, all three texts use the plural of ‘tables’ in a line Turner cuts that comes ten lines after the Q1’s singular ‘table’. The word ‘tonight’ is also used in a line Turner cuts (Q1 5.114, Q2 1.5.143, F 1.5.143) which comes just before the point where only Q1 includes the word. As with many of the previous case studies, several of the Q1 echoes in Turner’s promptbook could be ascribed equally to intentional uses of the First Quarto or to mere coincidence.

The examples so far are minor, the kind of changes that previous case studies indicate would escape reviewers’ notice. Yet Turner also risks tampering with the most famous of soliloquies. Part of her version of the ‘To be’ soliloquy reads as follows:

[...] Who would these fardles bear
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life
 But for the dread of something after death,
 The undiscovered country from whose bourne
 No traveller returns, it puzzles the will
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have

Than fly to others we know not of.⁵¹⁹

She uses the Q1 reading ‘for’ in place of ‘that’ in ‘But for the dread of something after death’ (Q2 3.1.77). By doing this and inserting the word ‘it’ two lines later (‘it puzzles the will’; Q2 3.1.79, has no ‘it’), she makes the syntax of the line easier to follow. This may be an editorial decision informed by the First Quarto, but as the inclusion of the non-Q1 ‘it’ indicates, Turner does not feel bound to adhere strictly to any given version of the text. Given the ubiquity of these words it is difficult to identify the First Quarto as the cause of the decision. Turner’s final dubious link to Q1 is the by-now familiar preference of ‘diest’ over Q2’s ‘didst’ and F’s ‘diddest’, a change that has been seen several times in this thesis and may not derive from Q1 directly if at all.⁵²⁰ In each of these cases the First Quarto’s influence is uncertain: as in many case studies in this thesis, each one could feasibly have occurred had the text never been rediscovered.

The only incontrovertible uses of Q1 lines come in Turner’s 1.3 when Laertes is admonishing Ophelia for spending too much time with Hamlet. Turner inserts two pairs of lines from the equivalent Q1 scene. The first (‘I see Prince Hamlet makes a show of love: / Beware Ophelia, do not trust his vows.’ Q1 3.3-4) follows on from the Q2/F line ‘For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour’ (Q2 1.3.5; F 1.3.5 reads ‘favours’) and modifies the meaning slightly. Rather than directly accusing Hamlet of ‘trifling’ his favour, the Laertes of Turner’s production is ambiguous: the ‘show of love’ may or may not be sincere. The second pair, coming six lines later in Turner’s production, make Laertes’s meaning even clearer: ‘Perhaps he loves you now, and now his tongue / speaks from his heart, but yet take heed’ (Q1 3.5-6). Laertes, then, is acknowledging that Hamlet may well be in love with Ophelia, particularly as he then speaks the Q2/F line ‘His greatness weighed, his will is not his own’

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

⁵²⁰ See Chapters Two and Three.

(Q2 1.3.18). Laertes is no longer giving a warning against the two problems of loving a prince and loving a potentially false lover; now his warning is concentrated solely on the dangers of loving a prince who ‘may not, as unvalued persons do / Choose for himself’ (Q2 1.3.18-19; Turner amends Q2’s ‘Carve’ to ‘Choose’). This rewriting of the scene with the First Quarto coincides with Turner’s cutting of Laertes’s warnings that Ophelia should not her ‘chaste treasure open’ (Q2 1.3.30). Coinciding with her stated feminist approach to the play, Turner here demonstrates a use of the First Quarto not seen before in the thesis: while several previous directors used lines from Q1 for clarity or to help reorganise the structure, Turner is the first to adopt the First Quarto for the sake of redeeming Ophelia.

The final echo of Q1 is structural and by far the most publicly contested aspect of her production. By the time of the production’s official opening, Turner had placed the ‘To be’ soliloquy in its First Quarto location, but this was not her first choice; instead it was the compromise position she reached after something of a commotion in the media. In the 2014 interview, Turner indicated that she was toying with the idea of opening the show with ‘To be’, an act that would provide ample support for any wishing to accuse her of providing an instant-gratification *Hamlet*. Following a discussion of her other intentions for reordering the text, I asked her how she would respond to the accusation that she was ‘dumbing down’ Shakespeare. She responded that the ‘allegation is not likely to be one of dumbing down, it’s likely to be one of play god with [the text]’.⁵²¹ She argued that

no-one’s going to notice my deft replotting – if it’s deft, and if my production backs it up then the sensation will be this is what Shakespeare wrote. [...] I won’t get hammered for that at all. I’ll get hammered if I put to be or not to be at the top of the play.⁵²²

⁵²¹ Turner, Interview with the author.

⁵²² Ibid.

When the previews opened a year later, it became clear that she had indeed decided to open her *Hamlet* with 'To be'. Her predictions, as might be expected, were proved right.

Just as with the publication of Arden³, BBC Radio 4's Today Programme was again the site for a public debate over authenticity and ownership of *Hamlet*. On 6 August 2015, James Naughtie once again introduced the latest debate, as follows:

Now the queue in the Barbican in the City of London will be forming again this morning with people hoping to get a ticket to see Benedict Cumberbatch as Hamlet. The first preview was last night. The formal opening night isn't for nearly three weeks but for the first time, at least in living memory, I think, *The Times* has broken the convention that newspapers review a play at the same time. Such was the interest, it said, that it simply wasn't going to wait. The review is not a good one. Kate Maltby is the paper's theatre critic and she's with us. We're also joined by Irene Ellis, who was also in the audience. She's a TV production student who's never actually seen a production of *Hamlet* before but she rather likes Benedict Cumberbatch[.]⁵²³

The student Ellis proves to be an alarmingly accurate match of Turner's description of the 'nineteen-year-old Shakespeare virgin' mentioned above for whom she was editing the text. In fact, in another indication of the way the internet is reshaping the theatrical experience, and to the evident horror of Naughtie, Ellis says that:

It was obviously my first, kind of, experience with *Hamlet*. [...] I had done a few kind of like sixty-second YouTube video things. [O]n YouTube there was a Lego version [...] so I knew what I was kind of going in to.⁵²⁴

⁵²³ *Today Programme*, BBC Radio 4, 6 August 2015.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*

Ellis says that she ‘really enjoyed it’ and ‘loved the [...] concept they were going for’.⁵²⁵ If Ellis is taken to represent the young audience Turner was targeting, the intentions she expressed in 2014 were clearly fulfilled.

Turner’s other prediction, of a critical ‘hammering’, is also fulfilled, as demonstrated by the Radio 4 interview’s other contributor, theatre critic Maltby. Maltby is particularly unimpressed by the relocation of ‘To be’, arguing that the soliloquy is:

normally in the middle of the play and it’s his low point. There is, to use very basic terms, just a character journey. [...] they’ve taken that speech and made it the opening scene [...] And not repeated it so we never get it again at its appropriate emotional moment. [...] Instead Benedict Cumberbatch walks out to his fans [...] and gives his showbiz number and then we never get it again in its proper place.⁵²⁶

Rather than considering the dramatic effectiveness of Turner’s choice, or even the complex subversion of both celebrity and elite culture it produces by showing all its cultural capital upfront, Maltby retreats to a rather old-fashioned notion of Hamlet’s ‘character journey’: the soliloquy should come at the ‘appropriate emotional moment’ in the middle in the play, ‘its proper place’. Naughtie suggests that:

you can’t just say because something’s been yanked out of its place and put in a different place that [it] is necessarily wrong. I mean we’ve had some really very radical restagings of Shakespeare in the last thirty years some of which have worked some of which haven’t but that in itself doesn’t necessarily mean –⁵²⁷

Maltby interrupts, agreeing: ‘No of course it doesn’t’.⁵²⁸ She does not necessarily rule out reordering or playing with other aspects of *Hamlet*; she does, however, refuse to accept that Turner has the right to place this particular soliloquy at the beginning as ‘it feels like *Hamlet*

⁵²⁵ Ibid.

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

⁵²⁷ Ibid.

⁵²⁸ Ibid.

by numbers'.⁵²⁹ As with numerous other reviewers seen in this thesis, Maltby has a clear image in her mind of the kind of *Hamlet* she wants to see; she sees this dramatic reordering of the text as a fundamental challenge to her notional *Hamlet*, a challenge that must be rejected.

In addition to Maltby's piece in *The Times*, three other critics broke convention and published newspaper reviews early. Unsurprisingly, all mention the 'To be' opening; more unexpected, however, is the fact that Maltby is the only of the early reviewers to condemn it. Jan Moir for *The Daily Mail* indicates that it is a 'surprise', but does not comment on its impact either way.⁵³⁰ Similarly, Serena Davis in *The Daily Telegraph* notes that it opens the play and that 'Shakespeare novices may not realise' Turner has rearranged the soliloquies because 'the devastating keynotes of the plot are all present and correct.'⁵³¹ Dominic Cavendish, also for *The Telegraph*, calls it the 'first shock that director Lyndsey Turner springs on us', but again does not comment on its effect.⁵³² Following the criticism in *The Times* and on the radio, a number of commentators spoke out to find fault with Maltby's position and to defend Turner, but the decision was made to find a more conservative solution. Exactly who initiated this decision is not clear; in any case the compromise was to relocate the soliloquy away from the beginning, but not to its Q2/F place. Instead it took up its Q1 location.⁵³³

In fact, following the official opening, even relocated to the end of Act 2 Scene 2, the soliloquy continued to dominate the reviews. *The Guardian*'s Michael Billington expresses gladness that it has been restructured, while Dominic Cavendish feels the opposite: 'Actually, of all the many decisions to muck about with the text that was the most intriguing and

⁵²⁹ Ibid.

⁵³⁰ Jan Moir, *The Daily Mail*, 6 August 2015.

⁵³¹ Serena Davis, *The Daily Telegraph*, 6 August 2015.

⁵³² Dominic Cavendish, *The Daily Telegraph*, 6 August 2015.

⁵³³ John Tiffany, 'Hamlet at the Barbican: don't judge a play until press night', *The Guardian* <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/09/benedict-cumberbatch-hamlet-barbican-review-wrong>> [accessed 4 August 2017]; Matthew Hemley, 'The Times and Daily Mail panned for Hamlet review protocol breach', *The Stage* <<https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2015/times-daily-mail-panned-hamlet-review-protocol-breach/>> [accessed 4 August 2017].

thought-provoking one.’⁵³⁴ Paul Taylor writes that ‘The “To be, or not to be” soliloquy that he prematurely delivered at this point in the early previews has been restored to Act 3, though ahead of where it usually comes.’⁵³⁵ Susannah Clapp for *The Observer* notes that ‘The speech is now delivered well into the action, though a little earlier than usual’, and Michael Arditti is particularly unimpressed:

Her disrespect for Shakespeare is manifest in her pointless realigning of the text. After protests at previews, the “To be or not to be” soliloquy has been returned to the body of the play – but not of course to its rightful place.⁵³⁶

The general sense of these reviews is that they are glad Turner relocated the soliloquy away from the beginning, but a bit disappointed that she still did not put it back in its ‘rightful place’. She has not got it right, just less wrong. Others criticise her for other textual alterations: Quentin Letts for *The Daily Mail* writes that Turner ‘has still fiddled around with the opening and with the order of other scenes’, while Sarah Hemming for *The Financial Times* writes of ‘rough cuts and strange bits of rewriting’.⁵³⁷ Evidently, Turner’s right to edit the text is not accepted by the reviewers.

It is worth noting that Turner had attempted to head off these criticisms in the pages of the text’s programme, though it clearly had limited effect. The first essay of the programme, written by *The Telegraph*’s former Arts Editor Sarah Crompton, bears clear resonances of Elaine Peake’s defence of Trevor Nunn’s editing in his 2004 Old Vic production. Eleven years after Peake, Crompton makes a similar argument as she declares that the play’s

richness arguably lies in its imperfections, the room it gives for interpretation and debate. Even the text is provisional. The first printed version – the first Quarto,

⁵³⁴ Michael Billington, *The Guardian*, 26 August 2015; Dominic Cavendish, *The Daily Telegraph*.

⁵³⁵ Paul Taylor, *The Independent*, 26 August 2015. It is actually 2.2 in Turner’s text.

⁵³⁶ Susannah Clapp, *The Observer*, 30 August 2015; Michael Arditti, *The Sunday Express*, 30 August 2015.

⁵³⁷ Quentin Letts, *The Daily Mail*, 26 August 2015; Sarah Hemming, *The Financial Times*, 28 August 2015.

published in 1603, two years after it was written – is short and contains such gems as ‘To be or not to be. Aye, there’s the point.’ The second Quarto, possibly based on Shakespeare’s manuscript, is the most comprehensive; the First Folio, published in 1623, makes some cuts, including Hamlet’s ‘How all occasions...’ soliloquy.

So directors are forced to make choices.⁵³⁸

Turner was of course absolutely aware of the risks she was taking textually; the programme attempts to defend her in advance from criticism for the choices she made. The logic of the programme, in arguing that a director *must* ‘make choices’ since ‘the text is provisional’ claims a right to edit which is founded on the variability of the original texts themselves. Turner’s licence to edit, Crompton argues, is warranted by the differences between all three texts, but perhaps especially by the text with that disruptive, unsettling alternative version of ‘To be’.

As with previous productions, the arguments presented in the programme are largely ignored by the majority of theatre critics. The only reviewer to take this claim of textual licence into consideration is actually Kate Maltby, the *Times* critic who had been at the centre of the debate around ‘To be’ in the first place. Following the Radio 4 interview she herself came in for sharp criticism. Once the fiery aftermath of her original embargo-breaking review had died down, she wrote a more considered follow-up piece after the production officially opened:

When I reviewed Benedict Cumberbatch in the first performance of this production, I labelled ‘indefensible’ the decision to jerk ‘To be or not to be’ from its emotional home in Act III, replacing Shakespeare’s original opening scene on Elsinore’s battlements. As it is, the authorial text of *Hamlet* has long been contested.

⁵³⁸ *Hamlet* 2015 Barbican Programme, private copy.

Lyndsey Turner's production uses the second quarto, including one great soliloquy lost by the First Folio. Some things work, some things don't. Just as Turner is to be applauded for her sensitivity to the military metaphors more present in this 1604 text, she was foolhardy to butcher it further in this otherwise conservative staging, which lacks the experimentalism that could make such risks exciting.⁵³⁹

Maltby here takes the time to show her knowledge of the textual debates, to match Crompton's credentials. She shifts her condemnation from the complicated issue of Turner's textual decisions to more straightforward dramatic concerns and by doing so reclaims her damaged authority as a critic. She comes close to accepting Turner's right as a director to edit the text, but immediately follows her concession with biting criticism of Turner's 'conservative' staging. Beneath everything lies a tacit acceptance that Turner is empowered to edit the text after all, an acceptance of the programme's claim of license borne of Q1.

At the beginning of this chapter I suggested that Turner's production is simultaneously an anomaly within and a microcosm of this thesis. This is demonstrated by a number of things: the approach Turner took to Q1, her vague understanding of the three texts, her limited inclusion of Q1 lines, and perhaps most of all, the critics' horror at some changes and silence at others. The hullabaloo about the relocation of 'To be' acts as a reminder that a pluralistic approach to *Hamlet's* text is very rarely accepted. Even as this thesis has demonstrated that the attitude to Q1 of both editors and theatre makers has undergone a transformation across the past thirty years, a radical, attention-grabbing restructuring of the *Hamlet* text does not go down particularly well with the critical reviewer. Turner made numerous other textual emendations that were actually much more radical than her relocation of 'To be' – interpolating lines from ten other Shakespeare plays – but as she predicted they went unnoticed. She had no particular agenda for Q1, either to suppress it or to 'reform' it –

⁵³⁹ Kate Maltby, *The Times*, 26 August 2015.

she did not ‘give a shit’ about the text one way or the other. Her inclusion of actual lines from the First Quarto was limited to a small handful of instances; instead she used the text’s licence to edit the text more radically, making visible changes as well incorporating other Shakespeare lines into her play without anyone noticing.

Andrzej Lukowski, writing in *Time Out* slightly later than his fellow reviewers, memorably summarised his view of the preceding media debacle: ‘As Shakespeare probably wouldn’t have put it, there’s been a right load of old bollocks written about Lyndsey Turner’s production of “Hamlet”’.⁵⁴⁰ Lukowski felt his fellow reviewers had worked themselves into a frenzy, breaking press embargoes over changes to the text which were not ultimately that important. If in 2015 Q1 was still far from accepted universally as a legitimate text in performance, Turner demonstrated that a director can commit worse textual crimes than using a line from the First Quarto. Indeed, across the period studied in this thesis, as the New Bibliographical condemnation of the Q1 text was increasingly challenged, the First Quarto became more and more the nexus for a series of debates about authenticity, performance and the place of Shakespeare in modern theatre. In 1980 Q1 was marginalised to the extent that its influence was barely perceptible in the texts around performance; by 2015 it was still marginalised, but it was playing a far more significant role, finding its way into promptbooks and informing debates around a director’s right to edit texts for performance.

Conclusion

This thesis has traced the influence of Q1 on the texts accompanying key *Hamlet* productions across a thirty-five-year period. It has charted a persistent rise in this influence across the period in both the frequency and variety of the First Quarto’s use. Yet this was by no means a

⁵⁴⁰ Andrzej Lukowski, *Time Out London*, 1 September 2015.

straightforward upwards trajectory; while some directors incorporate substantial sections of the First Quarto into their promptbooks, others, as we have seen, completely reject the text. It is noteworthy that none of the productions examined actually succeed at wholly avoiding the First Quarto's influence: even those directors who seem particularly unwilling to engage with Q1 invariably do actually include some echoes of the text, consciously or not. In the introduction I suggested that the text's impact can be categorised into nine approaches. Several of these are evident in Turner's *Hamlet*: the programme presents a defence of Turner's editing that is ultimately dependant on the differences between Q1 and Q2/F. Furthermore, her prompt text uses the Q1 location of 'To be' and incorporates echoes of the First Quarto, though again this is not necessarily a conscious inclusion. Yet in Turner's production we can discern a tenth use, additional to the nine previously identified: she employs the text as a tool to aid a wider editing process with expressly feminist elements.

Underlying much of the thesis are questions about academic and creative authority, and about the proliferation of a web-based knowledge economy. Technological developments and shifting approaches to editorial theory have brought about immense changes to how the script for a production of *Hamlet* is prepared. In a sense, the changes in Q1's textual integration that I have charted are merely symptoms of these wider transformations. With the rapid and continuing expansion of the internet and its reach into everyday life, the days of a photocopied scholarly *Hamlet* edition serving as promptbook are all but gone. A free online text, whether it is the Moby or the Wooster Group or indeed one of the myriad other editions readily available online, is convenient and cost effective for any director to access, edit and disseminate. The scholarly editor therefore no longer has such an immediate textual influence on those who prepare and perform a script.

One obvious result of this change is that directors, as editors, have more control over the text they present. It is significantly easier for such directors as Doran and Turner to create

their own intricately crafted texts, weaving together the three texts and inserting lines of their own devising or from other sources. This simply facilitates a process that has actually been happening for centuries. The First Quarto has always presented a particularly imposing challenge to the myth of Shakespearean textual purity. With the advances in technology, this challenge has become all the more potent. So too, as the critical reaction to Turner's production perhaps indicates, has the backlash to such a challenge. Yet recent developments suggest there is no turning back. In 2018, three years after the end point of this thesis, the Factory Theatre applied a characteristically experimental approach to another iconic Shakespeare text, this time *Macbeth*. 'We want you to play the Witches', announces the Factory's March 2018 promotional email; below there is a link to the 'Witches Text', which the audience is invited to learn and join in with. The text is – predictably – an edited extract from the Moby.

Whether or not mainstream companies follow the Factory's lead in its experimental use of online and community texts, the First Quarto is set to inspire a new generation of theatre makers. In the coming decades directors will surely continue to incorporate small parts into their promptbooks and more fringe directors will stage the text to celebrate its challenge to elite culture. In 2016, the year following the end point of this thesis, the First Quarto was again performed in London, at the Cockpit Theatre.⁵⁴¹ Indeed, the regularity with which the First Quarto is staged has been increasing, with productions in the past decade taking place in the United States, the United Kingdom and non-anglophone countries.⁵⁴² These productions indicate the increased popularity and accessibility of the text; in many ways this is reminiscent of the Victorian moment in the 1870s and 80s when Q1 was popular

⁵⁴¹ See 'Hamlet', *The Cockpit* <http://www.thecockpit.org.uk/show/hamlet_1> [accessed 17 September 2017].

⁵⁴² For a recent British production, see *ibid*; for an American production, see Horacio Sierra, 'Hamlet: The Bad Ass Quarto, Uncut by William Shakespeare (review)' *Theatre Journal*, 65, 2, (May 2013), 283-284; for a production of Q1 staged in South Korea (in Korean) see 'Hamlet Q1', *MIT Global Shakespeares* <<http://globalshakespeares.mit.edu/hamlet-q1-lee-hyonu-2009/>> [accessed 23 April 2018].

enough to be the target of satire in popular magazines such as *Punch*. If Pollard crushed this popularity with his damning label ‘bad’, the shadow of that judgement still persists over a century later, perhaps especially for theatre reviewers. The First Quarto is unlikely fully to shake off Pollard’s convenient label any time soon, but some directors are embracing it, adopting such inventive names as the ‘Bad Ass Quarto’;⁵⁴³

The renewed interest in the text which has arisen in the past three decades also looks likely to continue and develop in academic spheres. As I suggested in the introduction, researchers have recently been considering the First Quarto without focusing solely on its origins. My thesis fits within this framework and, with its extensive primary research in theatrical archives, represents a significant addition to the existing body of knowledge. Yet the thesis also finds its place within another scholarly field. In January 2018, just as this thesis was being examined, The Shakespeare Institute advertised a PhD position in collaboration with the RSC titled ‘Cutting Shakespeare: promptbook practice in Stratford and beyond’.⁵⁴⁴ Similarly, Nora Williams’s recent PhD thesis at Exeter explores the way *The Changeling* has been edited for performance in Britain since 1961.⁵⁴⁵ These works contribute to what is emerging as an increasingly popular academic approach combining the history of the book with the history of performance. My thesis contributes to this broader field, as well as fitting within the more specific class of studies on Q1 that are unconcerned with its origins.

Going forward, it may be unlikely that the full Q1 text will be performed on any of the London or Stratford main stages that have been the focus of this study. Nor will it enjoy the kind of renaissance through popular satire that it saw in the late nineteenth century – it is hard to imagine some modern iteration of W. S. Gilbert parodying the First Quarto. It does,

⁵⁴³ Sierra, ‘Hamlet: The Bad Ass Quarto, Uncut by William Shakespeare (review)’.

⁵⁴⁴ ‘Cutting Shakespeare: promptbook practice in Stratford and beyond’, *University of Birmingham* <<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/funding/Cutting-Shakespeare-promptbook-practice-in-Stratford-and-beyond.aspx>> [accessed 25 April 2018].

⁵⁴⁵ Nora Williams, ‘Between Performances, Texts, and Editions: *The Changeling*’ (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Exeter, 2016).

however, seem unlikely that it will once again fall into obscurity, though of course much of this text's history has been unlikely: its first descent into obscurity sometime in the seventeenth century, its twin rediscoveries in a 'closet in Burton' and in a student's possession in Ireland, its second descent into a new obscurity at the beginning of the twentieth century, and its 'reformation' by the turn of the twenty-first. Whatever happens in the future, for the moment academics will keep studying Q1 in new and varying ways, and directors and other theatre professionals are likely to continue to address and engage with it, if not always in the promptbook then at least in the other texts surrounding a production: the theatre programme or the education pack or the newspaper review. It will never be an obligation for the theatre director to engage with Q1, but it is becoming harder to avoid. Whether it is seen as an uncanny double, a theatrical curiosity or a textual monstrosity, the 'new (old) Play' will continue to exert an influence on the texts around performances of *Hamlet* – it will persist as the intriguing, disturbing alternative to the play at the heart of the English dramatic and literary canon.

Word Count: 70,016

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Appendix A

Table 1: Index of Case Studies

Date	Company	Director	Hamlet	Text
1980	RSC	John Barton	Michael Pennington	Penguin
1985	Orange Tree	Sam Walters	Peter Guinness	Weiner**
1989	RSC	Ron Daniels	Mark Rylance	Penguin
1989	National Theatre	Richard Eyre	Daniel Day-Lewis	Arden2
1999-2000	Red Shift	Jonathan Holloway	Peter Collins	Holderness and Loughrey*
2000	Globe	Giles Block	Mark Rylance	Cambridge
2000	Globe	Alan Cox ('Co-ordinator')	James Wallace	Lost*
2000	National Theatre	John Caird	Simon Russell Beale	Arden2
2004	Old Vic	Trevor Nunn	Ben Wishaw	Arden2
2004	RSC	Michael Boyd	Toby Stephens	Penguin
2006-2012	Factory Theatre	Tim Carroll	Various	Online Moby text
2008	RSC	Gregory Doran	David Tennant	Cambridge/Arden3?***
2010	National Theatre	Nicholas Hytner	Rory Kinnear	Arden2
2011-2016	Globe	Dominic Dromgoole	Various	Online Moby text
2011	White Bear	Imogen Bond	Jamie Mathewman	Arden3*
2011	Young Vic	Ian Rickson	Michael Sheen	Online Moby text
2015	Barbican	Lyndsey Turner	Benedict Cumberbatch	Online Wooster Group three-text Hamlet

* Q1 Production

** Provenance uncertain

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWS

The following contains extracts from a series of interviews I conducted for research purposes in 2014. I hold the recordings. All interviews took place in London. I provide extracts in chronological order.

John Caird, 14 July 2014

John Caird: So how do you mean in performance because not many people with any kind of wisdom would like to perform the first Quarto?

Scott Shepherd: Well that's the point, isn't it? So a lot of editions actually incorporate little bits of the First Quarto here and there, and performances occasionally –

JC: Well there was one at the Young Vic wasn't there. They did the whole thing. Was it Mark Rylance? Somebody did the whole thing as a performance. Q1?

SS: Q1? Yes Red Shift –

JC: Was it Red Shift?

SS: – directed by Jonathan Holloway.

JC: Oh that's right.

SS: *Hamlet First Cut*. I was going to ask about that. So did you go s-

JC: No I didn't go see it. I would rather die than see it.

[...]

SS: How much would you say that academia or academics influences your work?

JC: A lot in the sense that I read a lot and I suppose academia is responsible for the collective wisdom in all the footnotes in every edition that one has ever read.

[...]

There's certainly evidence that it was professionally altered for reasons of performance, whether for touring or that it needed to be shortened for whatever reason. [...] The way that the second quarto was rushed out to cover the first quarto – and there's plenty of evidence to say that it was mistrusted at the time – I mean we even know which actor – it was Marcellus wasn't it – who it's almost certainly was the guilty party, and maybe also the actor playing Reynaldo?

SS: Voltemand I think.

JC: Ah yes Voltemar as he's called in, in

[...]

I think it's a mistake to go through Q1 and sort of cherry pick little bits of stuff that might sound interesting. I mean the source is so suspect

[...]

Because the trail of evidence is so clear and because I know actors so well I would just automatically have too much respect for Will and his work to trust an actor.

Jonathan Holloway, 19 August 2014

Scott Shepherd: My first question to you is how did you decide to do the First Quarto rather than the other texts?

Jonathan Holloway: I think that theatre making, particularly within the context of touring, is always a marriage of ambition, aspiration and practicality.

[...]

I think that touring requires very robust work. I mean, ok you have a good day where you travel to the theatre of Winchester, you pitch up in the afternoon, the staff are helpful, the show's lit, you take a break, you then do then performance, you're spending three nights

there so you don't have to worry about pulling the set out at the end of the evening – that's all fine and everybody feels like it's good to be alive. On a bad day, you can be booked into Darlington Arts Centre, you're leaving from London, from Hammersmith at 7 o'clock in the morning, you drive up, you hit fog, there's a pile-up on the A1, you're behind it, you have to get a taxi at £150 to come twenty miles down to pick up the cast to send them ahead in the hope that the set's going to get there. It does get there but it doesn't get there until 4 in the afternoon. Everybody is sweating blood to get the show up by 8 o'clock and nobody's thinking about what the performance is going to be. So that's a not-good day and that's an actual example. So what you need is a show that will support you under any circumstances.

[...]

You need something that's robust. And I always chose to do Shakespeare and his contemporaries in very robust productions. Also there's just a time factor. If your show goes up any earlier than 7.30 people in the regions can't get there because they may be having to drive 35 miles to the theatre, so 7.30 is the earliest you can start. And if you did the fourth quarto or whatever, people would be leaving at quarter to 10, 10 o'clock and you've still got a 35-mile drive home and work in the morning, so you simply can't do that.

[...]

The First Quarto appealed to me because it's short. It also has novelty value because it doesn't get done that frequently and also because some of the characters have funny names. And because there's something also quite thrilling about sitting in an audience and Hamlet says 'To be or not to be – aye there's the point' and people in the audience tut because they think the actor's got the line wrong. That's quite sort of entertaining. [Laughs] There's a certain amount of mythology about the fact that it's the text as was remembered by a couple of the actors who were in it and consequently, although there's vast chunks missing from it

probably, at the same time it has the energy of performance about it, so it's kind of quite close to actually what it was like to go and see the play.

[...]

The reasons were legion. It's an easy play to sell to venues. It's even easier when you tell them how long it lasts and the fact that it's this peculiar version which is variously referred to as the 'bastard text' and so on. That in itself is an incentive to do it.

Imogen Bond, 10 October 2014

If you just write down what you can remember, then the narrative drive wouldn't fit, it wouldn't work. So I think a really clever writer has got their hands on it and gone ok – it's almost like they've taken the 1623 middle-sized version and gone, 'Ok well we need to do this in 75 minutes and so we do this, we do this, we do this we do this, we get all the story, we get all the fun, we lose a bit of the meandering. That works much better.' I really hope – I have this sort of little fantasy in my head that Shakespeare preferred that version, and that it was him that did the cutting of it. Because it seems to me it's got a very clever hand on it.

Sam Walters, 10 November 2014

Sam Walters: It was in the late sixties. I couldn't find a copy when I wanted it and I eventually got this [points to his edition] sent from America and that's the copy that I used. I couldn't buy one in this country. It just didn't exist.

[...]

Now they're all over the bloody place.

[...]

‘I’m a bit of textual purist. I think having decided to do a text that was impure I probably stuck to it’

[...]

I seem to remember there are sentences that don’t work. And I said, ‘Well this doesn’t make sense,’ and he [McGuinness] said, ‘Well I’ll make it make sense.’

Scott Shepherd: And you didn’t change them?

SW: No, no, no. No I didn’t change anything.

[...]

No I wouldn’t have changed anything.

[...]

So, I didn’t. No, I tend to be, as a director, boringly – oh look, there’s a cut!

[...]

I think I just thought, “I don’t understand what that means.”

[...]

I may have just thought, ‘Oh well he’s said all this.’

Lyndsey Turner, 16 November 2014

LT: I started with what you might call a comparative analysis. And a system of highlighting what’s in Q2 that isn’t in Q1 what’s in F that is later cut from Q. I just wanted to get to know all three of these possibilities simultaneously. Then I’m using two ‘book’ books. One of them is the RSC edition. And I’m using that often as a resource to look at punctuation. Because it’s pretty fine I think in terms of where actors breathe and how punctuation creates intent or meaning and then when I’m getting really stuck because I don’t know what a word means or an expression means, I’m going into the Arden. So I’m using kind of Arden for footnotes –

yeah Arden for footnotes, RSC for punctuation and tips. But what I did was I created a big word document, that was effectively Q2 and that's been my base camp.

[...]

[Gesturing towards Arden3 Q2 edition] My friend who I'm working with is using that so we've actually got two sets of Arden notes between us.

[...]

Well I spoke to a fellow-director who's directed a bit of Shakespeare but never Hamlet. And she said if you start to make decisions about the punctuation, you're actually starting to make decisions about lines and about meaning and about intention. So her advice was take control of, take command of the punctuation of the text and you've directed a fifth of the play already and so that led me to think well I'd need to see all the ranges of the punctuation and because it's quite an intimidating job trying to make a performance draft, I thought I'll start on something very very small, and very very nerdy. And I'll just look at the difference, I'll read out the difference between saying 'so-and-so comma so-and-so' and 'so and so so and so' and that way you start to know every line and say, 'Actually what does it mean? How do I want to hear that?'

SS: Right, so you've extended further than just punctuation, though, because I'm assuming that you're actually choosing between the lines in Q1, Q2 and F?

LT: I am, yeah, and then, so I'd say first process was get to know F, Q1 and Q2 on a largely technical level: punctuation, what's added, what's omitted, what word changes from one to the other. So that took a good long while to make one Word version to rule them all.

[...]

I'm in absolutely no doubt that I'm making this for a nineteen-year-old Shakespeare virgin, so I've got a very, very clear audience in mind. And it's not the scholars and it's not the academics. It's a nineteen-year-old from Hackney who's never seen this play before. And

that nineteen-year-old from Hackney watches an awful lot of HBO drama, and all the big boxsets and the Aaron Sorkin stuff and really likes the film *The Social Network* so the expectation for that audience member is that if somebody says, 'I've got an idea, let's hide behind a thing and wait until Ophelia comes,' they want to see it straight away. They want a scene to go by and then see it.

[...]

SS: And what would you say to the accusation – and I'm sure it will be made – that you're dumbing down the text?

LT: I'm not sure there is a congruence between somebody replotting the play and it being dumbed down. Now I've told you where the impulse has come from and I've told you about my target audience member but I don't see any precedent or congruity between a director or editor trying to swap the order around and dumbing down. The allegation is not likely to be one of dumbing down, it's likely to be one of play god with.

[...]

It won't be because of my replotting. No-one will notice my rewriting. But they would notice if I put 'To be or not to be' at the start of the piece. So I'm aware that in terms of the textual – in the league table of textual infidelity, or the climes of textual infidelity, no-one's going to notice my deft replotting if it's deft, and if my production backs it up, then the sensation will be this is what Shakespeare wrote. What I mean by that is that if there's an elegant visual picture that takes us from 'the play's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king' and then suddenly we see a bunch of people setting up for the theatre and him with his – put it this way: if he goes 'The play's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king' and he begins to write and around him swirls the stage managers setting up a play and then he gives it to an actor and he says 'no speak the speech I pray you', what the production's done

is in its fluidity has given you the sensation that that's what Shakespeare wrote. I won't get hammered for that at all. I'll get hammered if I put to be or not to be at the top of the play.

[...]

SS: What do you know about the textual history of *Hamlet*?

LT: Very little.

[...]

I'm aware that every director who directs this play will at some point need to work out which play they're directing.

[...]

SS: How do you feel about using parts of the First Quarto, or about using large parts of it?

[...]

Really for me it's not an exercise about bad bits – I'm absolutely not in conversation with the history of the manuscripts or the academic conversation around badness or goodness of quartos. I don't give a shit. I'm just a theatre maker who's got a very clear idea of what this *Hamlet* should be so when I see a line that does it loads I keep that line and when I see a line that doesn't do it at all, I bin that line.