De-composition in Popular Elizabethan Playtexts: A Revalidation of the Multiple Versions of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*

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Recomposition and De-composition in Playtexts and Folk Texts

When Grimm's folktales returned to the folk, they tended to become purified and in many ways have again approached the abstract style that was weakened by Wilhelm Grimm. According to the Swiss folklorist Max Lüthi (1986:110-11), a rendition of the *Cinderella* tale narrated by a North German farm worker "restores the sort of progression of clearly defined elements (*Steigerung*) that strives for clear and simple visibility and that had become effaced in Grimm's mistier, more poetical phrasing . . . in oral tradition it corrects itself."

The aim of this article is to establish some premises for comparing the transmission of playtexts of the early modern stage with the transmission of folk material. My central question is whether playtexts and ballad and tale texts "de-compose" in similar ways, and, if they do, whether we may then predict a similar "goal product" that can only be achieved through transmission. The detailed comparison of traditionalized ballads and Elizabethan playtexts is still a relatively uncharted field of inquiry, and this article thus simultaneously revisits and supplements the few observations published in this field so far.

In the quotation above, referring to the traditional folktale *Cinderella*, Lüthi stresses the power of oral tradition to correct, simplify, and make visible the narrative aspects that aesthetic/authorial composition complicates or obscures in a recorded text. The final product of transmission Lüthi called the *Zielform*,[1] meaning "goal form." He saw the notion of the *Zielform* as relating both to the transmission and form of folk tales and folk epic, and his research, most of which was carried out in the 1960s and 1970s, assumes that under the right auspices a given story will transform according to certain expected (and hence predictable) corrective "laws" as it evolves and multiplies into different versions. During this process the tale may be *zurechterzählt*, "told into shape," or possibly *zerzählt*, meaning "dis-told," or "told out of shape." Either way, the mutation process that a given story undergoes in tradition is seen to be positive and necessary to the formal survival of that story.

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[1] The German plural is formed by adding –e/–en: "*Zielforme/formen*," depending on grammatical case. I have however opted for the anglicized plural "*Zielforms*" where appropriate.

Cecil Sharp's view of the evolutionary adaptability of the traditional folk ballad was similar (1923:38):

> In the evolution of species of the animal and vegetable worlds, those variations will be preserved which are of advantage to their possessors in the competition for existence. In the evolution of folk [songs] . . . the corresponding principle of selection is the taste of the community. Those . . . variations, which appeal to the community, will be perpetuated, as against those which attract the individual only.

By using examples of variant versions of traditionalized English broadside ballads alongside the multiple-text Shakespearean plays *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*, I hope to illustrate how a similar selective mechanism can be detected in the transmission of early modern playtexts. I also want to illustrate how the formative importance of transmission is made apparent in such texts through the generation of certain identifiable stylo-structural features. Given that I shall be referring recurrently to the terms "transmission" and "tradition" in this article I should like clarify from the start what I mean by those terms in relation to popular stage plays. By the *transmission* of playtexts, I mean the long-term interaction between stage-performance and print distribution over time, in the sense described by Adam Fox (2000:5). *Tradition*, then, is defined as the equally time-dependent accumulation of identifiable textual witnesses (extant and lost) produced by transmission. Thus recordings of the Hamlet story in various playtexts formats (octavo, quarto, folio), along with related forms such as plots, parts, and play summaries in table books and diaries, all belong to the tradition of *Hamlet*, as do ballads of the kind referred to as "residuals" by Bruce R. Smith.

In "Shakespeare's Residuals," published recently in a collection of essays on *Shakespeare and Elizabethan Popular Culture*, Smith argues that there is a sustained relationship of cultural residuality between Elizabethan stage plays and ballads, suggesting that plays and ballads enter into a reciprocal living tradition where the repeat performances of, particularly, broadside ballads is comparable to the dissemination processes of the Elizabethan stage (2006:193). Smith's viewpoints appear corroborated by Fox (2000); however, it is not necessary to shift media from play to ballad to experience the mechanism of residualism as he defines it. Such residualism becomes apparent even within Shakespeare's own canon whenever a play has been fortunate enough to survive for long enough in a sustained performance/print tradition. In the multiple-text plays, and in particular in the short texts usually known as "bad quartos," we thus have evidence of plays behaving according to the mechanics and aesthetics of the popular ballad in several significant and predictable ways, while still retaining the form of stage play.

Transmission and Biological Metaphors

Biological metaphors of selection and survival continue to be crop up in the study of folk material—from the studies of Vladimir Propp (1968) to Smith (1999; 2006)—and so ought to perhaps also be relevant when considering the transmission of early modern playtexts (or indeed

any texts determined by transmission). The biological metaphor central to this article is the notion of the *de-composing* narrative/story/text, a notion I want to pursue in tandem with Lüthi's theory of the *goal form* and with reference to Smith's "residuals."

One way to illustrate the relevance of the de-composition metaphor is the striking analogue of the de-composition of the body-text seen below. The so-called cadaver tomb (also known as "double-decker tomb") depicted here is the fifteenth-century tomb of Bishop Henry Chichele at Canterbury Cathedral, Kent, United Kingdom.[2] As the ballad scholar Thomas Pettitt has already expressed elsewhere,[3] this type of tomb presents a striking working metaphor for the time-determined, organically reduced narrative, where the full body-form is shown in conjunction with the reduced bare and essential "skeletal" form below:

The cadaver tomb of Henry Chichele in
Canterbury Cathedral, United Kingdom

While Pettitt has previously employed this simile, the resurrection tomb pictured on the next page (belonging to Thomas Spryng of Lavenham, Norfolk, United Kingdom, and dated 1486) is included here for the first time. This model shows the deceased casting aside his shroud, rising, and growing in size again, and so suggesting a possible extended metaphor for the continuation of transmission. I am going to elaborate further on this suggestion later.

What becomes very clear through the cadaver tomb metaphor is the reduction of the fuller version of a narrative into eventually only the bone structure of that narrative; what Lüthi would call the *Zielform*, or goal form. Simultaneously, the de-composition of the body-text stresses the narrative's part in a larger, organic context of cyclical de- *and* re-composition, through the ongoing *activity* of de-composition (cf. worms/rot; a cadaver is a de-compos*ing* corpus).

Combined with the resurrection tombs, which unite the shrouds and skeletons with resurrection imagery where the dead body rises again at the last trumpet and regains flesh and

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[2] The image is reproduced here by permission of the National Monument Record.

[3] Private correspondence.

former size, we see how the skeletal story, perhaps after a period of lying dormant, is capable of re-entering living tradition: [4]

I believe this compound metaphor is compatible with Smith's argument of residuality, in the sense that ballads were seen to re-form out of Shakespeare's plays while those plays were still in transmission. These resized/reduced forms may have been disseminated via a different medium, namely the sung ballad, but were nevertheless part of the de- and recomposition of the commercial scripts that were play narratives.[5] There is even the possibility that the pared-down ballad versions grew primarily out of already reduced play versions, versions like those preserved in some short, "bad" quartos. If this were the case, the resurrection tomb simile would be particularly relevant to our appreciation of the co-relationship between Elizabethan plays and ballads.

Bearing these analogues in mind, we can now proceed to the main objective of the present experiment, that is, to analyze the so-called "bad" quartos as examples of the most *immediate* Shakespearean residuals. It goes for these forms, as for traditional ballads, that only certain subject matter and structural features appear to survive as they de-compose and move towards their respective "goal forms."

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[4] This illustration is reproduced with the kind permission of the Hon. Secretary of the Monumental Brass Society: http://www.mbs-brasses.co.uk.

[5] Like early modern stage plays, ballad topics might be characterized as historical or pastoral, but particularly popular were sensational "news," "murder," and "hanging" ballads (most often broadsides). Alternatively, ballad subjects could coincide with what was presented on the popular stage. Examples of Elizabethan para-literary ballad subjects are: Arden of Faversham, Titus Andronicus, Doctor Faustus, King Lear, Romeo and Juliet, The Merchant of Venice, Hamlet, The Blind Beggar of Bethnall Green, Patient Grissel, and so forth. See "Old Ballads" in Dicey and Marshall 1764; Cappell and Ebsworth 1871-99; Rollins 1929-32; Child 1882-98; and Sharp 1923.

Applying the "Broadside ballad test" to the "bad" Elizabethan playtexts

In order to carry out a stylo-structural comparison of playtexts with traditionalized ballad texts, we need, of course, playtexts that survive in several versions. Next, it is beneficial to know which play-version is closer to the initial (sometimes dubiously referred to as the "original") version and which versions further removed. In the printed broadside ballads we often have a specific date for the "original" text; particularly, of course, in the case of news and/or murder ballads. In such cases we can thus establish from external evidence that later versions recorded from oral tradition are indeed products of transmission. But there is internal evidence too: transmitted ballad texts will quite often be marked by repetition, formulaic epithets, local additions, omissions, and narrative compression, and while the presence of such stylo-structural features may vary, we recognize them as characteristic of transmitted ballad narratives (for example, Anderson et al. 1982:7). The dating of the early modern playtexts is much harder. Using external evidence we can attempt to establish chronologies based on entries in the Stationer's Register and printed publication data, but such dating methods do not often establish which quarto version of a play is derivative (in relation to an "original" version), or indeed *how* derivative a playtext is. Locating internal evidence, like repetition, formulaic epithets, local additions, omissions, and narrative compression, in the style and structure of a playtext may therefore be one way of telling that such a text has been through an oral-memorial transmission process.[6] Moreover, locating a high presence of such features might indicate a long (or, at least, intense) career-in-transmission.

The transmission of broadside ballads provides an almost ideal medium for illustrating how interpenetrations across oral, printed, and scribal traditions contribute to the production, dissemination, and reception of early commercial texts. Frequently originating in printed form, broadsides would be orally sung by ballad-sellers, and subsequently purchased, over-heard, memorized, or even copied in manuscript form by audiences representing a wide range of social classes and evincing various degrees of literacy. In the transmission of the broadsides, the media of speech, script, and print seem to blend seamlessly, as Adam Fox (2000:5) points out:

> Then as now, as song or a story, an expression or a piece of news could migrate promiscuously between these three vehicles of transmission as it circulated around the country, throughout society, and over time. There is no necessary antithesis between oral and literate forms of communication and preservation, the one did not have to destroy or undermine the other. If anything the written word tended to augment the spoken, reinventing it and making it anew, propagating its contents, heightening its exposure, and ensuring its continued vitality, albeit sometimes in different forms.

Importantly, prior to re-use, these "stories for singing" were not "traditional" per se, although potentially they could become so. Similar to the Elizabethan playwrights' manuscripts, some of them started out as individuated, written "versions" on similar topics—or "original" reworkings of traditional material already in existence. While some of the broadsides represent rehashed

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[6] See also Pettitt 2001:416-17.

versions of already traditional material, this particular kind of ballad, like the stories told on stage in the popular Elizabethan playhouses, is dependent on print for its proliferation and continued life. Print thus ensured the ballad's continued existence by moving the ballad narrative from oral tradition into print only to allow it to pass back into oral tradition once again.

It may be seen from the extant multiple-text ballads in print that a broadside behaves according to the aesthetics of the "real" folk ballad (oral tradition) only if it survives in transmission long enough. It might not be traditional in the sense that it was handed down from generation to generation by private singers, who learn and perform the words of a song and structure it by means of what Albert Lord and Milman Parry call "formulaic composing," yet when it enters oral tradition it nonetheless attains a form marked by repetition, formulaic epithets, local additions, omissions, and narrative compression. It has become a "ballad" through tradition.[7] Similarly, one might argue that the short quartos achieve their independent forms ("goal forms") only through entering tradition, as they too become marked by repetition, formulaic epithets, local additions, omissions, and narrative compression.

In an article first published in 1996, Thomas Pettitt analyzes the ballad tradition of *Maria Martin*, a narrative broadside that has gained traditional ballad status through plentiful oral renditions, many of which were recorded; and where repetitious patterning is clearly visible. This is an example of the initial broadside version, composed by a "ballad hack" and printed in 1828, within a year of the events described in the song. It is compared to a derivative version recorded from oral tradition as sung by Robert Feast at Ely in 1911:[8]

1828. Verses 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12	**1911.** Verses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
I went into her father's house	I went into her father's house
The 18th day of May	On the eighteenth day of May
And said my dear Maria	I said He's come my dearest Maria
We will fix a wedding day	We'll fix the wedding day.
If you'll meet me at **the Red Barn**	If you'll meet me at **the Red Barn**
As sure as I have life	**Floor**
I will take you to Ipswich town	As sure as you're alive
And there make you my wife	I'll take you down to Ipswich Town
	And make you my dear bride
I then went home and fetched my gun	He straight went home and fetched his gun
my pickaxe and my spade	His pickaxe and his spade,
I went unto the **Red Barn**	He went unto **the Red Barn Floor**
And I dug her grave	and he dug poor Maria's grave

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[7] For further corroboration of this argument, see Andersen et al. 1982:2, 4, 5.

[8] The broadside version was first printed by James Catnach in 1828 and sold 1,116,000 copies. The example is quoted in Andersen et al. 1982:77-83 and in Pettitt 2001:417. Another oral version, collected from Joseph Taylor of Lincolnshire in 1908, retains only verses 1, 2, and 7.

With her heart so light she thought no harm	This poor girl she thought no harm
To meet me she did go	But to meet him she did go
I murdered her **all in the barn**	She went unto **the Red Barn Floor**
And laid her body down	And he laid her body low
(. . .)	
Her mother's mind being sore disturbed	Her mother dreamed three dreams one night
She dreamed a dream she saw	She ne'er could get no rest
Her **daughter she lay murdered**	She dreamed **she saw her daughter dear**
Beneath the Red Barn floor	**Lay** bleeding at the breast
She sent the father to the Barn	Her father went into the barn
Where he the ground did thrust	And up the boards he took
And **there he found his daughter**	There **he saw his daughter dear**
Lay mingling with the dust	**Lay** mingled in the dust.

Here we notice the repetitious patterns that have arisen, the omission of initial verses, along with verses eight, nine, and ten of the broadside text, and also, remarkably, the scene of the crime, that is "the barn," has become terminologically homogenized, or streamlined, as "the red barn floor."

Another example, quoted below, is the traditional ballad *House Carpenter* (also known as *James Harris* or *The Daemon Lover*). Recorded versions of the song abound. It survives in Child as #243A-H, and appears to have its origin in an early broadside entered in the Stationers' Register February 21, 1657, called *A Warning for Married Women*.[9] In this instance, for obvious reasons, we are less sure of chronology. However, it is established that "text one" is the version given in Child as #243F (i.e., recorded pre-1884) and that "text three" represents a Canadian version, recorded from oral tradition in 1961, as sung by the folksinger LaRena Clark.[10] Text two is an intermediary English version.[11]

Text 1.	Text 2.	Text 3.
"O where have you been,	Well met, well met,	"Well met, well met,

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[9] The full title of the broadside is *A Warning for Married Women, being an example of Mrs Jane Reynolds (a West-country woman), born near Plymouth, who, having plighted her troth to a Seaman, was afterwards married to a Carpenter, and at last carried away by a Spirit, the manner how shall presently be recited. To a West-country tune called "The Fair Maid of Bristol," "Bateman" or "John True."* Initials of a possible "author" ("L. P.") are on a copy of the broadside in the Euing Collection. They are also to be found in the sale catalog of one Richard Herber's library, ca. 1832, and may stand for "Lawrence Price," a well-known seventeenth-century "ballad hack." See Holloway 1971:#377. The text has some similarities to the nineteenth- and twentieth-century "Well met, well met" variants. Thus verses 22-25 feasibly are the origin of subsequent versions' opening verses.

[10] Fowke 1973:186-87, no. 81 as sung by Larena Clark, Toronto, 1961.

[11] This text is listed on Lesley Nelson's electronic database of Child Ballads as an "English version." No source or singer is given, but the version contains elements from Child #243B and F. See http://www.contemplator.com/child/carpentereng. html/.

my long, long love,
This long seven years and mair?"
O I'm come to seek my
former vows
Ye granted me before.
 (plus verses 2,3)
I might hae had a **king's
daughter,**
Far, far beyond the sea;
"I might have had a **king's
daughter**,
Had it not been for love o thee."

If ye might have had a **king's
daughter,**
Yer sel ye had to blame;
Ye might have taken **the king's
daughter,**
For ye kend that I was nane.

(. . . 6)

I have seven ships upon the sea
The eighth brought me to land
With **four-and-twenty** bold
mariners,
And music on every hand."

She has taken up her **two little
babes**,
Kissd them baith cheek and chin:
"O fair ye weel, my ain **two
babes**,
For I'll never see you again."

(. . . 9, 10)

They had not saild a league, a
league,
A league but barely three,
Until she espied his cloven foot,

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my own true love
Well met, well met, cried he
I've just returned from the
salt, salt sea
And it's all for the love of thee
O I could have married the
king's daughter dear
And she would have married me
But I have refused the
crown of gold
And it's all for the sake of thee

If you **could have married the
king's
daughter dear**
I'm sure you are to blame
For I am married to the house
carpenter
And he is a fine young man

 (. . . verses 4,5)

I've **six** ships sailing on the
salt, salt sea
A-sailing from dry land
And a hundred and **twenty**
jolly young men
Shall be at thy command

She picked up her poor wee **babe**
And kisses gave him three
Saying stay right here with the
house carpenter
And keep him good company

They had not been at sea
two weeks
I'm sure it was not three
When this poor maid began to

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my own true love
And very well met," said he.
"I have just returned from the
salt, salt sea,
And it's all for the sake of thee.
I could have married a
queen's daughter,
And she would have married me,
"But I refused a crown of gold,
And it's all for the sake of thee."

If you **could have married** a
queen's daughter,
Then she **should have married**
thee,
For me, young man, you have
came too late,
For I've married a house
carpenter."
(. . . verses 4, 5)

I have **seven** ships at sea
And seven more in port,
And a hundred and **twenty-four
jolly, jolly** boys,
And they all will wait on thee."

She called then her **two
pretty babes**
And **she** kissed them most
tenderly,
Saying, 'Stay at home,
my **two pretty babes'**
And bear your own father
company.'

She had not sailed on sea
two weeks,
I'm sure not sailed on three,
Till here she sat in her

And she wept right bitterlie.

O hold your tongue of your **weeping**, says he,
"Of your **weeping** now let me be;
I will shew you how the lilies grow
On the banks of Italy."

weep
And she wept most bitterly
O do you weep for your gold, he said
Your houses, your land, or your store?
Or do you weep for your house carpenter
That you never shall see anymore

new husband's cabin,
Weeping most bitterly.
 "Oh, do you weep for gold ?" he said,
"Or do you weep for fear?
Or do you weep for your house carpenter
That you left **when you came here**?"

I do not weep for my gold, she said
My houses, my land or my store
But I do weep for my poor wee babe
That I never shall see anymore

I do not weep for gold," she said,
Nor do I weep for fear,
But I do weep for my two pretty babes
That I left **when I came here."**

They had not been at sea three weeks
I'm sure it was not four
When in their ship there sprang a leak
And she sank to rise no more

She had not sailed on sea three weeks,
I'm sure not sailed on four,
Till overboard her fair body she threw
And her weeping was heard no more.

O what hills are yon, yon pleasant hills,
That the sun shines sweetly on?"
"O you are the hills of heaven,'
he said,
"Where you will never win."

What hills, what hills are those, my love
That are so bright and free
Those are the hill of Heaven, my love
But not for you and me

Her curse did attend a sea sailor's life,
Her curse did attend a sailor's life,
For the robbing of a house carpenter,
And stealing away his wife

"O whaten a mountain is yon," she said,
"All so dreary wi frost and snow?"
"O yon is the mountain of hell," he cried,
"Where you and I will go."
(. . .15)

What hills, what hills, are those, my love
That are so dark and low
Those are the hills of Hell, my love
Where you and I must go

Neither Text 1 nor Text 2 above represents an "original" version of *House Carpenter/The Demon Lover*, and both contain (to some degree) some of the phenomena expected to

accumulate in tradition. The late Text 3, however, distinctly shows a very high degree of streamlining/patterning of phraseology, the generation of balances and triads for framing conceptual patterns, new small-scale repetition, and in this case alternative final verses. The economy of Text 3 is also noticeable in the "loss" of verses compared to Text 1's 15 and Text 2's 13. Compared with Text 1, and on the basis of the stylo-structural tendencies evinced by the *Maria Martin* example where dates are known, one would thus conclude that the latter text is almost certainly derivative and, moreover, likely to be further removed in tradition than Text 2.

Examples of condensation and increased patterning are multitudinous in studies of transmitted ballad texts, but similar lessons could be drawn from Middle English romances, late medieval mummers' plays, mystery plays and *gestes* (McGillivray 1990; Halvorsen 1977). With Pettitt's study of the A text of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* and the "bad" Octavo of *The Massacre at Paris* (2003a:15, 20, 28), some evidence is already provided that a similar accumulation of traditional, "balladic" features has happened in some "bad" Elizabethan playtexts. Taken one step further, these texts might even be defensible as specimens of nearly realized "goal forms" of earlier, somehow more authorial, versions.

Of the surviving Shakespearean multiple-text plays, the texts of *Romeo and Juliet* (written ca. 1595, texts: 1597, 1599, 1623) and *Hamlet* (written ca. 1600, texts: 1603, 1604-5, 1623) are particularly apt for this kind of analysis. First, both plays survive in *three* substantive English versions: a first quarto, a second quarto, and a folio equivalent, but just as importantly both plays exist in seventeenth-century German derivatives, making up a total of four closely related texts that can be placed in discrete narrative traditions. For *Hamlet*, writing, performance, and recording/publication stretches from ca. 1600 to 1781, including the text of *Der Bestrafte Brudermord*,[12] while the immediate tradition of *Romeo and Juliet* covers a time span from ca. 1595–1640, including the version *Romius und Julietta*.[13] In terms of the extant multiple-text plays dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this constitutes particularly good evidence of stylo-structural adaptability over long periods of time.[14] Or, as a folklorist might say of a ballad, the plays provide suitably long careers-in-tradition.

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[12] The text may be consulted in Cohn 1865/1971.

[13] The analysis excludes literary versions such as Arthur Brooke's epic poem, prior/parallel literary versions, and the anonymous Latin play *Romius et Juliet,* possibly by John Lyly.

[14] The fact that there are four closely related yet differing versions distinguishes *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* from the remaining Shakespearean multi-text cases: *2* and *3 Henry VI / Contention, True Tragedy, Henry V, Merry Wives of Windsor, Richard III* (*Titus Andronicus* and *The Taming of the/a Shrew*, for which there are also German versions, have shorter traditions and less versions), and the three non-Shakespearean cases: Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, Greene's *Orlando Furioso*, and Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*. Some 31 additional playtexts are listed by Laurie E. Maguire (1996) in the category of "suspect texts," which unfortunately survive in only one edition. While she traces "memorial reconstruction" as a corrupting factor, most of the derivative texts she discusses make excellent check cases on the contrasting theory that the generation of certain "balladic" features compresses and optimizes the play as narrative. It remains unclear why so many texts studied by Maguire are reclassified as "not memorially reconstructed."

The Tests

The stylistic phenomena common to the performative genres of the popular ballad and the popular play can very easily be identified, and have already been mentioned in passing above. They include simple verbal repetition and simple verbal formulae, large-scale structural patterns (frames, balances, triads), dramatic formulae, transposition of text segments, telescoping, omission, and topical additions. These are, not surprisingly, largely the same features that were examined by the Shakespearean New Bibliographers—W. W. Greg, Robert McKerrow, Alfred Hart, G. I. Duthie, Harry Hoppe et al.—as tokens of the memorial transmission theory, and revisited by Laurie E. Maguire in her influential bibliographical study *Shakespearean Suspect Texts* (1996).

By narrowing definitions for some of the above-mentioned phenomena, Maguire tried to single out the features that would indicate *only* oral-memorial transmission in playtexts (and so rule out authorial revision). Methodologically this is what any philologically or stylistically inclined scholar should be aiming for, but I nevertheless believe Maguire makes some mistakes.[15] First, she "under-simplifies" the marker "internal repetition," which in her book is defined as a run of lines showing distinctive vocabulary. Where the work of Greg (1955), Hart (1942), Duthie (1941), and Hoppe (1948) and several studies in traditional folk material had allowed repetition of simple single words and phrases, Maguire insists that, in order to qualify as related to memory/orality, instances of "internal repetition" in playtexts must show length and distinctive vocabulary in order to qualify as oral-memorially determined features (164,168-69).[16] This results in the rather baffling denial of the presence of repetition and verbal formulae in texts like Q1 *Hamlet* (255) and Q1 *Romeo and Juliet* (301), the former of which abounds in simple verbal repetition, while both texts clearly include the latter symptom.

Maguire's work does respond to the "oral debt" of the short versions (she mentions, for instance, Pettitt's work in the field, recognizing that repetition may be a "compositional quiddity of a residually oral culture" (117), but her approach to "repetition" as a stylo-structural marker is by no means obvious. Her study, for instance, tentatively adopts the traditional folk ballad as an analogue to Elizabethan playtext derivation, but not, in fact, the stylistic research achieved in the study of folklore on the style-marker "repetition."

Counter to Maguire's definition, it is probably the case that the more mechanical and functional the repetition (that is, the less distinctive and the more uninteresting), the more likely it is to be an oral-memorial symptom; hence both small-scale *and* large-scale reiteration should be

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[15] Maguire's procedures are similarly queried by Gurr (1999:85).

[16] The same definition is applied to "external echoes": "a run of lines plus distinctive vocabulary" (164). By excluding small-scale echoes, says Maguire, "[t]his distinction provides an important test for memory . . ." (164), but an external echo of any length is arguably a phenomenon where authorial idiosyncrasy, stylistic imitation by one playwright of contemporary famous playwrights, and actors' memorial recollection of lines from other plays could be causative. Unlike "internal repetition," a stricter definition of "external echoes" may be merited (1) to bypass mere resemblance of subject matter if one wants to advocate authorial attribution, and (2) to possibly distinguish between actors' unintentional import of external matter.

considered.[17] When examining repetition in early modern playtexts I therefore retain Harry Hoppe's definition of "internal repetition" as "words, phrases, or passages that are used more than once" (1948:128). All other things being equal, Maguire's general dismissal of the validity of simple repetition as a symptom of oral-memorial reconstruction (and hence oral transmission [170-71]) in early modern playtexts remains surprising.

Now, if Maguire had more explicitly disqualified the feature on the grounds that it crosses over with potentially authorial/rhetorical repetition, it would have been a different matter. The repetition of unique words or phrases is in fact a problematic style-marker exactly because it crosses over between oral-memorial and authorial composition markers. Indeed, which is the oral and which the authorial repetition? Is it even possible that the two species of repetition could be intermixing in a kind of strong variant of Albert Lord's formulaic composition theory (2000), where author-playwrights avail themselves pre-hoc of oral formulae when composing commercial scripts destined for oral-memorial presentation? At worst, this makes none of these repetitious formulae source-specific and, at best, certainly indicates that one has to be extremely careful about basing conclusions concerning a text's provenance exclusively on this style-marker.

Does Maguire underestimate the value of ballad studies as an appropriate analogue for the stylistic study of "bad" playtexts? In certain respects I think she does. She points out two fundamental objections to comparing ballad transmission with playtext transmission. Her first objection is that the traditional ballad is structurally dependent on repetitive formulae, whereas the renaissance playtext "is not"; her second objection is that ballads are given to more frequent performance than plays, over a longer career-in-tradition (125 ff.). The following analysis at least renders her verdict relative (if not void).

Another potential oversight by Maguire is her construing the value of the structural marker "transposition" (a feature found in many of the "bad" texts; considerably in Q1 *Hamlet*, though less so in the *Romeo and Juliet* texts) as positive evidence that a text has been orally-memorially transmitted. According to Murray McGillivray, whose work on oral-memorially transmitted English Romances is indicative of consensus in the field, transpositions are solid evidence that a work was memorized in its entirety at some point (1990:5):

> Memorial transfer, the movement of material from one part of a text to another part, which is physically remote, but which is liable to confusion with it because of similarities in situation, content, or language, is a very secure indication that the entire text in which it occurs has at some stage of its transmission been committed to memory.

Based on the above examples, it is clearly important to keep re-assessing the collection of stylo-structural markers that can indicate that a playtext has been transmitted. To the above selection of style markers derived from Shakespearean bibliography (which is perhaps always going to be biased towards *literary* tradition), I suggest adding the following conceptual structure markers

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[17] The fact that small-scale formulae and verbal inertia may equally derive from the cross-canonical "dramaturgical principle" or a scribe working on an actor's part (Maguire 1996:168-69) far from refutes the role of oral tradition in the transmission of the short texts. Dramaturgical principle and the preparing of a stage document do not reflect particularly literary dimensions of Elizabethan playwrighting.

summarized from Max Lüthi's work on the morphology of the oral-memorially transmitted folktale (1967; 1982):

1. The relative "non-importance" of the author as opposed to "Logos" and structure.
2. Importance of an inner necessity in narrator (actor)/and audience.
3. Importance of an inner necessity in the "story," that is, the plot.
4. Memorial transmission is not so much the reason why the tale transforms, as it is the necessary vessel for the transformation to take place, and the final form to be achieved.
5. Goal striving or orientation.
6. Narrative and dramatic logic and clarity.
7. Abstractness, depthlessness, circumstantial material avoided.
8. Patterning.
9. Isolation of events and characters.

Other stylo-structural features found in transmitted folk texts were summarized by the Danish folklorist Axel Olrik as the "Epic Laws of Folk Narrative" (1909/1965). Some of these stylistic features are in operation in the "bad" Elizabethan playtexts as well, and are therefore listed below (The relevant "laws" are emphasized in boldface type):

1 and 2   The Law of Opening and The Law of Ending: There are no abrupt beginnings or ends.

3   **The Law of Repetition: Every time there is a striking scene in a narrative, and continuity permits, the scene is repeated.** There is simple verbal repetition and intensifying incremental repetition. The *Sage* (tale, epic) cannot attain its fullest form with Internal Repetition.

4   **The Law of Three:** Most common number to occur in structures of folk narrative. Subsides in realistic literature. The law of three reigns supreme in purely oral versions.

5   The Law of Four (Indic tales).

6 and 7   **The Law of Two-to-a-Scene:** Only two people appear on the stage at one time. Interaction between three or more characters is avoided. Characters made to be silent/fall asleep if "on-stage." **The Law of Contrast:** Folk narrative is always polarized: good vs. evil, small vs. large, old vs. young.

8   The Law of Twins.

9   The Law of Initial and Final Position: Whenever a series of persons or things occur, the principal one will come first. Center of gravity of a narrative always lies in the

end. Combined with the Law of Three, triads are established, with focus on the last increment.

10   Single-strandedness. Folk narrative never goes back to fill in missing details.

11   **The Law of Patterning: Two people and two situations of the same sort are not as different, but as similar as possible. The superfluous is repressed and the rest stands out salient and striking.**

12   **Tableaux Scenes: Striking set scenes that appear formulaic.**

13   **Logic and Unity of Plot: Scenes are only there if they have an influence upon the plot. Each narrative element works within it so as to create an event, the possibility of which the listener had seen right from the beginning and never lost sight of.**

14   **Law of Epic Unity (*Transposition*): Several narrative elements are grouped together in order to best illuminate the relationships between characters/events.**

15   **Law of Concentration on the Leading Character.**

Some Examples of Predictable De-composition in the Playtexts

Following in the footsteps of Maguire, I have re-collated verbal and structural data for omission, repetition, formulae, telescoping, transposition, and addition across the *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet* texts.[18] To these were added frequency counts for some of Olrik's "Epic Laws" in combination with the narrative formalist theories of Max Lüthi (particularly the elements pertaining to what Lüthi calls the *Zielform*). The decision was made to only show examples of omission, repetition, and transposition here, as these features are at the core of the processes involved in the balladic re- and de-composition of the playtexts.

(a) Omission and Zielform

Let us start by looking at the length of the shorter quarto texts, focussing on "narrative economy" across the different versions of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*. First, it is apt to state that the short Quarto of *Romeo and Juliet*, with its 2232 lines, is about 25% shorter than the Q2/F1 versions, which both run close to 3000 lines; and that Q1 *Hamlet* at 2155 lines has been reduced by approximately 1745 lines compared with the longest Q2 version (3800 lines) and by approximately 1515 compared with the Folio text. The surviving seventeenth-century German

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[18] I count comparative frequencies in all the early substantive versions of a play, whereas Maguire quantifies the stylo-structural features in the short (suspect) versions only.

versions are even shorter than the Qs. It is also significant that the verbal variation witnessed when comparing the different versions of the plays promotes not only verbal economy, but also new (potentially more logical) narrative structures.

Olrik formulates his law of "Two to a Scene" in folk tales and legends as follows: "Two is the maximum number of characters who appear at one time . . . . The interaction of three or more characters, which is so popular in literary drama, is not allowed in folk narrative" (1909/1965:134-35). He thus posits that, by featuring only two—often antagonistic—characters or themes in one setting, the folk narrator by restricting his focus keeps it clear, and no impeding "noise" disturbs the audience's perception.

In Q1 *Romeo and Juliet* we see a "Two-to-a-scene" reduction in crucial scenes (and stage directions) such as: Q2/F1: "Enter Mercutio, Benvolio and men," which in Q1 becomes: "Enter Benvolio and Mercutio" or Q2/F1: "Enter Prince, olde Montague, Capulet, their wives and all," which in Q1 becomes: "Enter the Prince and Capulet's wife."

In the German derivative *Romio und Julietta* 33.3% of scenes in fact have a two-character focus. Even in cases where three characters are on stage (seven scenes), lines are often distributed between only two. This mechanism means that Lady Capulet is not present in *Romio* 1.2 (Q2 1.3); Montague, Lady Montague "and all" are not present in *Romio* 4.1/2/3[post-fight] (Q2 3.1); and most notably, that Old Montague (and Pages) have vanished from the final scene (Q2 5.3.290ff). Interestingly, Lady Montague is considered superfluous from the start (a rudimentary possibility in Q1, visible in stage directions), and never in fact appears in the play. Combined with what happens in act five, this shows a move to fade out the Montagues altogether—seemingly highlighting the societal standing of Juliet's family in direct relation to that of the Prince (*Fürst*). A different, but no less powerful contrast is achieved.

In Q1 *Hamlet* 15 scenes out of 49 have thus been reduced to a two-character focus (that is, 30.6% of scenes): 1, 7, 11, 13, 14, 16, 26, 28, 30, 39 (Ofelia's First Mad Sc.), 42, 43 (Horatio and the Queen), 44 (The King and Leartes [*sic*] plotting), 45 (The Graveyard Sc.), and 49. In the later German derivative, *Der Bestrafte Brudermord* 17 scenes out of 40 are reduced to a two-character focus (that is, 42.5%): 1.1, 1.2 (one of the two is the ghost), 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.2, 3.3, 3.11, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5.

In the short Q1 *Romeo and Juliet*, an example of what I would call the *Zielforming* of a single source element appears in a minute addition to the final and climactic act five: "Mount: Dread Sovereigne, my wife is dead to night / And yong Benvolio is deceased too . . ." (5.3.212). Now there is nothing explicit in the Q2 or Folio versions of the play that hints that Benvolio too must die. In keeping with Lüthi's theory, however, transmission would reinforce given themes and situations through heightened symmetry and patterning. With Benvolio's death an accentuation of "the tragedy of the young" is achieved. Jay L. Halio has commented on this addition, tracing its origin mainly to intentional theatrical adaptation by actors and/or an author (1995:143). That is, the death of the character Benvolio serves as a deft explanation to the actor Benvolio's disappearance from the stage for the remaining duration of the play (along with other characters such as Lady Capulet and the Nurse, who do not re-enter after this point).

Halio is right to note the practical origin of this change; it cannot be less important that the text itself (or rather its "story/plot") and seems to trigger the addition by striving towards the "symbolic final picture" (Lüthi 1969:173) of the extinction of absolutely everybody of note. It is

documented that oral tradition happens to accentuate specific conceptual situations, such as death, disease, courtship, and marriage in traditional folk narrative. Folklorists have found this to be the case especially with "death scenes" in the ballads (Andersen et al. 1982:58), but it seems that the same tendency is traceable in derivative Elizabethan playtexts as well. The oral-formulaic emphasis on extinction in Q1 *Romeo* is thus mirrored in the German derivative *Romius und Julietta*, which shows similar tendencies, and in Q1 *Hamlet* in the fencing scene mentioned above.

In the German derivative *Romio und Julietta* the narrative reformation involves the lament for the death of all *three* young lovers in the final scene, and the addition of laments for Paris and the excision of old Montague in these scenes create a triad structure, which again emphasizes that this is wholly and exclusively a tragedy of the younger generation.

Indeed, the final tableau scene (5.3.290ff) brings about closure between the older generation: the *Fürst*, Capulet and the *Pater* (notice there is no Montague/retinue), in rhyming couplets, linking the themes of youth, love, and death. Here *all three* dead youths are lamented—not just Romio and Julietta—in a strange exonerating-cum-redemptive speech by the Friar (5.8.337-44):

> Die Fäller der Menschen seindt wunderbahr. Wie leicht die Jugend genaygt zu fellen, ist weltkündig, darumb haben die fäller Rumio, Paris vnd Julieta ins grab gelegt, Herr Graff Capulet Was hier geschehen, ist nicht mehr zu endern, er lege ab seine Schmertzen vnd denckhe: Was hier der Himmel nimbt das kan er widergeben, wir müssen sein bedacht dort vor das ewig leben.

> "Human destiny is mysterious. It is known throughout the world how youth is prone to error; this is the reason why Romeo, Paris, and Juliet have all been laid in the grave. Master Count Capulet, what has happened here can no longer be changed. Lay off your pain and resign yourself thus: what the Heavens take can no more be given back. We must bethink ouselves and think upon eternal life hereafter." [my translation]

Hereafter Capulet pronounces: ". . . seind alle drey gefallen, Die Liebe hat die Schuld" ("all three have died, love is to blame"). Interestingly, nowhere after this is Romio mentioned explicitly. Instead, Capulet commits only Paris to Juliet's tomb. If nothing else, this is logical considering Old Capulet's wish to marry his daughter to Paris rather than Romio.

Q1 *Hamlet* in its present state exhibits perhaps only elementary character reduction. The *Brudermord* version, however, has become extremely streamlined with its general and stable two- and three-character foci, achieved through continental scene division. Approximately half of the scenes in the German playtext feature only two characters, while one-third have "three to a scene."

The First Folio characters of Rosincrance and Guildensterne are wholly excised in *Brudermord* and substituted for by two much less connotative agents in the shape of two royal servants. Fortinbras too is absent, though he is mentioned in a small reference toward the end of the version; and finally, a much less significant agent, namely a "Corporal of the Guard" listed in the *Dramatis Personae* of *Der Bestrafte Brudermord* has vanished.

The operation of restrictive "oral" laws in the "bad" texts to some degree adds a narrative sense of logic to the many attempts by Shakespearean theater historians, from Robert Burkhart (1975) via David Bradley (1992) to Scott McMillin (1992), at establishing just how few players were needed for performance of early modern plays. The above observations suggest that we are not dealing with plays randomly and crudely cut for reduced-cast performance on tour; Q1 *Hamlet* having been squeezed down to a minimum of 11 players[19] (*Brudermord* demanding no "larger speaking cast than five men and two women" [Hibbard 1987:375]). In effect, the observations suggest that certain characters in certain scenes (different ones in the two *Hamlet* derivatives) have proven unimportant to the progression of the plot and thus been excised through transmission.

Laurie Maguire, in her study of "suspect" texts (1996), unfortunately does not explore sustained functional omission as a symptomatic feature of popular playtexts. Literary historian Simon Williams does, but in his brief synopses of the German playtexts of *Brudermord* and *Romio und Julietta* adopts a clearly negative view of the part literary/part oral "skeletalization" of the derivatives (1990:43). Maguire maintains that in a great many "suspect" texts excision is as likely to derive from "scribal or compositorial eye skip," deliberate abridgement, and/or censorship (1996:191) as from oral/memorial transmission. In disagreement with Maguire's view, it has been thoroughly documented in the study of folklore that oral-memorial rendition is structurally *dependent* on omission; similarly, it is recognized how consistently certain elements are more readily omitted than others (Andersen et al. 1982:114; Lüthi 1967:160). In other words, a mechanics of omission is evident and necessary in oral, traditionalized literatures, irrespective of the identification of deliberate abridgers or methods of abridgement. Perhaps then, in opposition to a prior generation of Shakespearean text scholars (many of whom, from Greg to Kirschbaum, link omission generically with "bad memory" (Kirschbaum 1945:705, n. 17), one ought to consider omission as a more or less unavoidable functional effect, necessitated by the "story" or "plot" of the playtext once it enters tradition. A long career-in-tradition might facilitate much verbal and narrative economy, whereas a less orally exposed text will retain a longer, relatively more complex plot.

(b) Repetition and Repetitious Patterns

Below follow some examples of structural recomposition patterns (repetition) in Q1 *Hamlet* compared to the Folio version, and in Q1 *Romeo and Juliet* compared to the Q2 version. Examples of repetition in the German derivative texts are also included:

Hamlet, F1

1.4.68   *Ham.* "It waues me forth againe; **Ile follow it**."

1.4.79   *Ham.* "It wafts me still; goe on, **Ile follow thee**."

1.4.86   *Ham.* "I say away, goe on, **Ile follow thee**."

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[19] In his edition of *The First Quarto of Hamlet*, Albert B. Weiner (1962:xi) suggests, "[N]ot more than twelve actors . . . could easily produce Q1." Robert Burkhart (1975:98) counts a cast of 13.

Hamlet, **Q1**

459 *Ham.* "Still I am called, go on, **ile follow thee**."

465 *Ham.* "Go on, **ile follow thee**."

471 *Ham.* "Away I say, go on, **ile follow thee**."

Hamlet, **F1**

1.5.186   *Ham.* ". . . **Let us goe in together**."

1.5.190   *Ham.* "**Nay, come let's goe together**."

Hamlet, **Q1**

643 *Ham.* "**Nay come lett's go together**."

647 *Ham.* "**Nay come lett's go together**."

But balances are one thing. Studies of transmitted folk material suggest that there is also a significant tendency to triplicate segments in orally transmitted narrative. However, this phenomenon, described by Olrik as the "Law of Three,"[20] emerges clearly in the popular plays only as we only shift the focus from sheer verbal reduplication to more elaborate conceptual patterns. Correspondingly, one finds, as did Olrik in Law 11, "[T]wo people or situations of the same sort are not as different as possible, but as similar as possible" (1909/1965:137).

This is a specimen of some newly generated triads, in order to prove the operation of the "Law of Three" in Q1 *Hamlet*:

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[20] "The repetition is almost always tied to the number three" (Olrik 1909/1965:133).

Hamlet, F1	*Hamlet*, Q1
2.2.86 "My Liege, and Madam, to expostulate . . ."	776 "**Now** my Lord, touching the yong Prince Hamlet."
2.2.100 "And **now** remaines / That we find out the cause of this effect."	778 "**Now** to know the cause of this effect . . ."
	784 "**Now** to the Prince."
	836 ". . . **I** there's the point."
3.1.55 ". . . that is the question . . ."	837 ". . . **I** all."
3.1.64 " . . . **I**, there's the rub . . ."	838 ". . . **I**, mary there it goes."
3.1.18 "And there did seem to be in him a kinde of **joy**"	1173 "Yet was he something inclined to **mirth** . . . "
3.1.27 ". . . drive his purpose on / To these **delights**"	1178 ". . . seeke still to increase his **mirth**."
3.1.24 ". . . and it doth much content me / To heare him so inclined"	1187 "It joyes me at the soule / He is inclin'd to any kinde of **mirth**"
-	-
4.3.12 "Where **the dead body** is bestow'd my Lord, / We cannot get from him."	1626 ". . . we can by no means know of him where **the body** is."
4.3.16 "Now Hamlet, where's Polonius?"	1627 ". . . where is **this** dead **body**?"
4.3.32 "Where is Polonius?"	1640 ". . . where is **this body**?"
-	-
5.2.283 ". . . **Here's** to thy health."	2155 "**Here Hamlet**, the King doth drink a health to thee"
5.2.288 "**Here's** a Napkin, rub thy browes."	2156 "**Here Hamlet**, take my napkin, wipe thy face"
52.289 "The Queene carowses to thy fortune, Hamlet."	2160 "**Here Hamlet,** thy mother drinkes to thee"

Another relevant example of formulaic patterning in Q1 *Hamlet* is the triad of traps established through the three consecutive siftings of Hamlet, achieved through the recomposed early position of "To be or not to be" / "Nunnery Scene" in the Q1 version) and the counter-trap (Hamlet's playlet "The Mousetrap"). Seen in conjunction, these create a causative pattern. Furthermore, each time a trap is set off the conceptual pattern is joined by a verbal formulaic signal: the repetition of "See where he comes/ See there he is" (Hamlet's "counter-trap" is contrastively signaled via Hamlet's ear: "Harke, they are coming").

F1 Hamlet		**Q1 Hamlet**	
Pol.'s first plan	2.2.162. Pol. "At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him"	*Cor.'s 1st plan*	822. Cor. "Mary good my lord thus…there let Ofelia, walke…" (unit 6)
1st trap	2.2.168. Queen **"But looke where sadly the poore** wretch comes reading" (Fishmonger sc)	*1st trap*	829. King. . "…**Seewhere he comes….** poring vppon a booke" (Nunnery sc. /unit 7)
2nd trap	2.2.220. Pol. "You seeke my Lord Hamlet; **see there he is.**" (Ros & Gldst. with Hamlet.)	*2nd trap*	928. Cor. "I'll myselfe go and feele him. **See where he comes.**" (Fishmonger sc./ unit 8)
3rd trap	3.1.54 Pol. **"I heare him coming,** let's withdraw…" (Nunnery sc.)	*3rd trap*	963. Cor. "You seeke Prince Hamlet, **see, there he is.**" (R & G with Hamlet / unit 9)
counter-trap	3.2.90. Ham. "They are **coming** to the Play: I must be idle…" (Play sc.)	*counter-trap*	1273. Ham. "**Harke, they come.**" (Play sc. / unit 13)

Beyond this example, the Q1 Nunnery Scene (Q1:859-923) probably provides the most striking example of patterned incremental repetition in the whole of the first quarto. Its compressed configuration resembles a canonical litany, where the choral interchange is divided between Hamlet and Ofelia [*sic*]. As illustrated in the chart below, each of his "to a Nunnery goe" commands—the phrase recurs *eight* times, now with identical wording[21]—is answered by the desperate Ofelia with four, not the original two, semantically similar pleas to the Heavenly

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[21] F1 *Hamlet* uses variant expressions such as "get thee to a nunnery" / "goe thy ways to a nunnery," and "to a nunnry go." See F1:3.1.89-161.

powers.[22] The graphic lines highlight the incremental repetition:

	F1		**Q1**	
Ham.	**Get thee to a Nunnerie**	Ham.	**Go to a Nunnery goe,**	
	. . . crawling betweene Heuen and Earth,		. . . crawling between heauen and earth?	
			To a Nunnery goe,	
	we are arrant knaues all, beleeue none of vs,		we are arrant knaues all, Beleeue none of vs,	
	goe thy wayes to a Nunnery		**to a Nunnery goe,**	
	-	Ofe.	**O heauens secure him!**	
	Where's your father?	Ham.	Wher's thy father?	
Oph.	At home, my lord	Ofe.	At home my lord	
Ham.	Let the doors be shut vpon him,	Ham.	For Gods sake let the doors be shut on him	
	that he may play the foole no way but in's owne house. Farewell.		He may play foole no where But in his Owne house:	
			to a Nunnery goe.	
Oph.	**O helpe him you sweet heauens**	Ofe.	**Help him God**	
Ham.	If thou doest Marry . . .	Ham.	it thou dost marry, . . .	
	Get thee to a Nunnery, Go, farewell.		**. . . to a Nunnery goe.**	
		Ofe.	**Alas, what change is this?**	
	Or if thou wilt needs Marry...	Ham.	But if thou wilt needs marry . . .	
	To a Nunnery go, and quickly too, farewell.		**.... to a Nunnery goe.**	
Oph.	**O Heauenly powers, restore him.**	Ofe.	**Pray God restore him.**	
Ham.	I haue heard of your pratlings . . .	Ham.	Nay, I haue heard of your paintings . . .	
	. . . shall keep as they are:		. . . shall keepe as they are, **to a Nunnery goe,**	
	to a Nunnery, go.		**To a Nunnery goe.**	
Oph.	**O what a Noble minde is heere o'rethrowne?**	Ofe.	**Great God heauen, What a quicke change is this?**	

This is beyond doubt the closest a scene in Q1 *Hamlet* gets to realizing its verbal and conceptual *Zielform*.

Even though Q1 *Hamlet* contains a good deal of harmonized or patterned repetition, the element must be granted greater prominence in the *Brudermord*, which in transmission has generated five binary patterns, eleven triads, and three larger patterns of four, five, and twelve

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[22] Pettitt (2001:422) has previously juxtaposed the Nunnery Scenes of *Q2* and *Q1 Hamlet*.

incremental stages respectively. From this vast stock, these are some of the most impressive examples, all of which are of an incremental nature:

> 3.11.20 "hernach **wollen wir** essen und trinken /
> 3.11.21   und denn **wollen wir** tanzen"
> 3.11.22 "Ach, wie **wir wollen** uns lustig machen"

> 4.1.36   ". . . so **will ichs gern** erdulden . . . "
> 4.1.37-8 ". . . **will ich** euch **gerne** verzeihen"
> ". . . hernach **will ich gerne** sterben"

> 4.5.18-21 / 5.3.6-9 / 5.5.6-10:
> "**Ihr sollt** mit **Rapieren fechten**, und der von euch beyden **die ersten** drey Stösse bekommt, soll ein weiss neapolitanisch Pferd gewonnen haben."

> "Ihr sollt zusammen in Rapieren fechten, und wer den andern die ersten zwei Stösse anbringen wird, der **soll ein weiss neapolitanisch Pferd gewonnen haben**."

> "**Ihr sollt** mit ihm in **Rapieren fechten**, und welcher von Euch beyden **die ersten** drey **Stösse** bekommen wird, der **soll ein weiss neapolitanisch Pferd** mit Sattelzeug und allem Zubehör **gewonnen haben**."

> 5.3.22 ". . . **nun** ist eine grosse Hitze"
> 5.3.24 "**nun** ists nicht recht kalt. . . "
> 5.3.25 ". . . **nun** eben recht temperiert"
> 5.3.29 "**nun**, kommt Horatio . . . "
> 3.10.50 "**Nun**, Ihro Majest't welches sind denn/ die rechten, . . ."
> 3.10.52 ". . . **Nun**, die Götter wollen euch begleiten, . . ."
> 3.10.55 "**Nun** Adieu, Frau Mutter!"
> 3.10.59 "**Nun** so fahrt wohl, . . ."
> 3.10.61 "**Nun**, Ihr noblen Quantchen, . . ."

While ballad studies attest to "death formulae" in traditional narrative songs, *Der Bestrafte Brudermord* offers its own formulaic approach to death, exemplified in the similar responses to death by different characters throughout the play.

First we hear Corambus: "O Weh, Prinz, was tut Ihr!" (*BB*:3.5.20). Then, in the final act: Leonhardus: "O wehe, ich habe einen tödlichen Stoss!" (*BB*:5.6.26), who is followed by the Queen: "O wehe, ich sterbe!" (*BB*:5.6.51), the King: "O wehe, ich empfange meinen bösen Lohn!" (*BB*:5.6.55), and finally Hamlet: "Ach, o weh, ich sterbe!" (*BB*:5.6.83).

Before listing the larger and incremental patterns in Q1 *Romeo and Juliet*, it is worth noting the frequent multiplication of particular formulaic interjections such as "I," "nay," "why," or "well" in the Q1 text. Another category is that of "copy cats," which produce statements where repetition supplants an original Q2/F1 term at the expense of context/formal logic.

Compare, for instance, Q2/F1: "Turn <u>giddie</u> and be <u>holp</u> with backward turning," which in Q1:2.1.82 reads: "turn <u>backward</u> and be holp with <u>backward</u> turning"; or alternatively the transformation of Q2/F1: "I would kill <u>thee</u> with too much cherishing" into Q1: "I would kill <u>thee</u> with too much cherishing <u>thee</u>."

The following is an example of the multiplication of interjections in *Romeo and Juliet*:

Q2	Q1
1.1.21 "And 'tis known I am a pretty peece of flesh"	1.1.21 "<u>**nay**</u>, thou shalt see I am a tall peece of flesh"
1.1.30 "**Nay**, They must take it sense that feele it"	1.1.30 "<u>**Nay**</u>, let them take it in sense that feele it"
1.1.32 "Fear me not . . ."	1.1.32 "<u>**Nay**</u>, feare not me, I warrant thee"
1.1.44 "Let us take the law of our sides…"	1.1.44 "<u>**Nay**</u>, let us haue the law on our side"
	1.3.59 "<u>**Well**</u> goe thy waies . . ."
1.3.59 "Peace, I haue done . . ."	1.3.69 "<u>**Well**</u> girl, the noble Countie seekes thee for his wife . . ."
1.3.69 " **Well**, think of marriage now, . . ."	1.3.96 "<u>**Well**</u> Iuliet, how like you of Paris' loue.
1.4.9 "What say you, can you loue the gentle-man"	

The Q1 *Romeo and Juliet* text also contains a fair number of binary incremental patterns, a regular feature in traditionalized ballads, created throughout the play; the following is only a small excerpt:

Romeo and Juliet, **Q2/F1**	*Romeo and Juliet,* **Q1**
1.4.92-94	1.4.94 / 92
"This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs, that . . ."	"<u>**This is that Mab**</u> that makes maids lie on their backes . . ."
"This is that very **Mab** that plats the manes of Horses . . ."	<u>**This is that**</u> verie <u>**Mab**</u> that plats the manes of Horses . . ."
2.5.18/19/38	
". . . o **hony Nurse what newes**? / Now good **sweet Nurse** . . ."	2.5.18 / 38
". . . Let me be satisfied is it good or 'bad'. . . "	". . . <u>**Tell me sweet Nurse**</u>, <u>**what says**</u> my Loue?"
	"But <u>**tell me sweet Nurse**</u>, <u>**what says**</u> Romeo?"
	3.1.64 / 68
3.1.64 / 68	"<u>**Romeo, the hate I beare to thee**</u> cannot afford"
"*Romeo*, the **loue I beare thee** cannot afford . . ."	"<u>**Tibalt, the loue I beare to thee**</u>, doth excuse"
"Tybalt, the reason that I haue to loue thee . . ."	3.4.23 / 27
	"<u>**Wee'le make no great a doe**</u>, a friend or two, or so . . ."
3.4.23 / 27	
"**Well, keepe no great ado**, a friend or two . . ."	"Some half a dozen friends and <u>**make no great adoe**</u>."
"Therefore weele haue some doozen friends . . ."	

5.3.27 / 40

"And do not **interrupt** me in my course . . . "

"**I will be gone**, Sir, and not trouble ye."

5.3.27 / 40

"So get thee **gone and trouble me** no more"

"Well, I'll be **gone and not trouble you**"

And here follows a specimen of the newly generated triplicate patterns, as a demonstration of operation of "The Law of Three" in Q1 *Romeo and Juliet:*

Q2/F1

Q1

1.1.105 / 6

"You Capulet shall goe along with me, / And Montague **come** you this afternoone"

1.1.105 / 6:

"**Come** Capulet **come** you along with me, and Montague, **come** you this afternoone"

2.2.173 / 74 / 75

"Let me **stand** here till thou remember it"

"I shall forget to haue thee still **stand** there"

"And Ile forget to haue thee **stay**, to haue thee still forget"

2.2.173 / 74 / 75

"Let me **stay here** till you remember it . . ."

"I shall forget to haue thee till **stay here** . . ."

"And **I'le stay** still to haue thee still forget"

4.5.19 / 25 / 43

"Look, look, o heavy day."

". . . out alas shes cold . . . "

"**Accust, unhappie, wretched day** . . . "

4.5.19 / 26 / 42

"**Accust**, unhappy, **miserable time** . . . "

"**Accursed time**, **unfortunate** olde **man**…"

"**Accurst, unhappy miserable man** . . . "

Larger patterns than these include the multi-stage incremental patterns and the framing of scenes by verbal trigger expressions. Below are shown specimens of both:

Q2/F1

1.1.45/47/49/50/52/54

"I will bite my thumb at them"

-

"do you bite your thumb at us sir"

"**I do bite my thumbe** sir"

"**Do you bite your thumb** at us sir"

" . . . I do **not bite my thumbe** at you sir:

But **I bite my thumbe** sir."

Q1

1.1.45/46/47/49/50/52/54:

"As I goe by **ile bite my thumbe**"

". . . goe thou by and bite thy thumbe"

"doo you bite your thumbe at us?"

"**I bite my thumbe**."

"**I bite my thumbe**, is the law on our side"

"**I bite my thumbe**"

2.5.19/38/47/67

" . . . o hony Nurse, what newes?"

" . . . Let me be satisfied is it good or 'bad'?"

"**What sayes** he of our Marriage. . . "

" . . . Come **what saies** Romeo?"

2.5.19/38/47/67

"**What sayes** my Loue?"

" . . . **what sayes** *Romeo*?"

" . . . tell me **what sayes** he to our marriage?"

"**What sayes** my Lord, my Loue, my Romeo?"

3.1.94/105/111

"**A plague a both houses**. I am sped "-

"I am peppered, I warrant . . . , **a plague a both your houses**"

". . . Or I shall faint, **a plague a both your houses**"

3.1.94/101/106/115

". . . **A poxe on your houses**"

"**A poxe of your houses**, I am fairly drest . . ."

". . . you shall finde me a graue man. **A poxe of your houses**."

"Benvolio, lend me thy hand, **a poxe of your houses**"

2.4.110 / 231

"**My fan Peter** . . . "/

"Before and apace . . . "

2.4.110 / 232

"**Peter**, prethee **giue mee my fan**."/

"**Peter take my fan**, and goe before"

3.5.191/197

"Looke too't , thinke on't, **I doe not vse to iest**"

"Trus't too's, bethinke you, **ile not be forsworne**"

3.5.191/197

"Looke to it, thinke ont, **I doe not vse to iest**"

"Think ont, looke toot, **I do not vse to iest**"

4.4.2/22

-

"**The Countie will be here** with musicke straight . . . "

4.4.2/21

"**The Countie will be heere** immediately"

"**The Countie will be here** with musicke straight"

None of the Q1 formations listed above are present in the Folio or "good" quarto versions, but if we believe that plays behave like transmitted ballads these may have arisen as a result of transmission.

The derivative *Romius und Julietta* version is particularly bountiful in small-scale adverbial insertions such as "Ach," "Ey," "O," and "ja, ja." A range of recurrent expressions is also detectable from entrance/exit and news formulae ("Ich bring Neue Zeitung") to an "oh wehe, ich sterbe" death formula, applicable to Tibold and Paris. As seen in other English suspect texts, there is a predilection for epithets too, notably "Herr . . . , " but also "Sohn Romio," "Vetter Tiboldt/Romio," and "Tochter Juliet" occur.

There are at least 20 instances of simple, verbal reiteration of the "come, come" variety. Binary patterns include, for example, 1.1.110/14: "Graff, das guete Vornehmen . . . " / "Graff, ich will Eurer Meinung . . ." ; 1.3.18/20: "So sein Sie aber würdig alle Ehre von meinen Hause zu nehmen" / "So wird Graff Paris würdig sein all Ehre zu ersetzen"; 5.3.84/92 "Ach liebster Herr und Gemal" / "Ach liebster Herr und Gemal."

Examples of triads are 2.3.51/58/87 "O Himmel was höre ich" / "Was höre ich" / "O Himmel was höre ich"; 2.4.10/12/26: "Rueff ihn doch" / "ich will ihn rueffen" / "ich mue_s ihn noch einmal rueffen." Larger patterns include "5.3.174/78/80/82: "Julietta Todt"; 1.4.40/44/48/52/57/59/64: "Lad ein . . . "; 2.1.18/22 and 2.3.3/12/21: "Mascara tanzen . . .," and 4.3.14/19/26/33: "Gnädigster Herr und Fürst."

It should be noted that the first three acts of Q1 *Romeo and Juliet* are extremely similar to the equivalent Q2/F1 passages, with very few minute alterations. It is only beyond act three that

the stylistic features discussed above (omission, repetition, and transposition) become more frequent and pronounced. This is also the case in the text of Q1 *Hamlet*, and to some in extent in the remaining Shakespearean "bad" texts. Short of going back to the "tired memorial reporter" theory, as suggested by, for instance, Katherine O. Irace (1994:186), some observations of similar mechanics in traditional folk song and tales should be taken into account (Lord 2000:17 [emphasis mine]):

> The instability of the audience requires a marked degree of concentration on the part of the singer in order that he may sing at all: it also tests to the utmost his dramatic ability and his narrative skill in keeping the audience as attentive as possible. But *it is the length of a song which is most affected by the audience's restlessness.* The singer begins to tell his tale. If he is fortunate, he may find it possible to sing until he is tired without interruptions from the audience. . . . If his listeners are propitious and his mood heightened by their interest, he may *lengthen his tale,* savoring each descriptive passage. . . . It is more likely that . . . his audience is not receptive, [. . .] hence he will *shorten his song.* Or if he misjudges he may simply never finish the song [. . .]. *One can say that the length of the song depends upon the audience.*

The fact that the original five "bad quartos" are all short, and less literally reproduced after acts one and two (noted for *Hamlet*, *Romeo*, *Henry V*), may mirror the above observations. If we accept that the "suspect" Elizabethan playtexts represent theatrically exposed versions, they may very likely reflect audience participation, expectation, and, above all, receptiveness to the degree that play length and structure have been gradually adjusted in response to circumstances similar to those described by Lord. In other words, the tendency towards what Olrik and Lord call "front-weight," that is, the verbally tighter initial acts, witnessed in the popular Elizabethan playtexts with variation increasing in the middle and final acts, may be attributable to the principles of oral-memorial tradition.

Some Conclusions

The majority of the above-mentioned, hypothetically oral-memorial or "balladic" style markers are prominently represented in Q1 *Hamlet,* with some markers even more prominently present in the German derivative *Der Bestrafte Brudermord*. In the case of Q1 *Romeo and Juliet*, mainly repetition and omission stand out, while, for instance, no significant transpositions are detectable in this version.

From comparing the relatively high frequencies of "oral-memorial" style-markers in Q1 *Hamlet* with those (relatively low counts) of Q1 *Romeo and Juliet* it could be postulated that Q1 *Romeo* has either not had a long career-in-tradition, or has recently been re-scripted (influenced by literary tradition), or both. The German derivative *Romio und Julietta* similarly contains large sections of reformed material probably derived from literary tradition (a translation of Q2?), but simultaneously exhibits some of the oral-memorial symptoms to a remarkably high degree.

I would like to argue that the textual stylistic variance between the two "bad" Quarto

cases discussed here indicates different stages in dramatic transmission in the tradition of each particular play, the presumption being that the more marked the above "balladic" parameters, the more intense the transmission history behind the version. On these premises, Q1 *Romeo* would be ranked as less orally/memorially influenced, that is, less traditionalized than Q1 *Hamlet*. Or in less neutral terms Q1 Romeo would qualify as a rather "good" "bad" text.

Transpositions of segments from one part of a scene to another within the same scene, or indeed from one act of the play to another, takes place in both Q1 *Romeo and Juliet* on a minor scale, and to a much more significant degree in Q1 *Hamlet*. Here I refer back to a quotation from McGillivray's study, *Memorization in the Transmission of Middle English Romances* already quoted above (1990:5): "Memorial transfer, the movement of material from one part of a text to another part, which is physically remote, but which is liable to confusion with it because of similarities in situation, content, or language, is a very secure indication that the entire text in which it occurs has at some stage of its transmission been committed to memory."

What has not been granted much consideration in the present article is the addition of extra material during transmission. Transmitted folk material indeed rarely permits expansiveness, and neither do transmitted early modern playtexts. Q1 *Romeo and Juliet*, Q1 *Hamlet*, and the two German derivatives do add material, but where this happens it is always in conjunction with subtractions and repetitious patterning, resulting in new (and more logical) conceptual structures, bringing about in what one might call "local" or internal *Zielforms*.

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