

RE-EDITING NON-SHAKESPEARE FOR THE MODERN  
READER: THE MURDER OF MUTIUS IN *TITUS ANDRONICUS*

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It has long been suspected that *Titus Andronicus* is a co-authored play, though it has never been edited as one. A century and more of attribution scholarship has determined that George Peele is the author of the long opening scene of the play, but no recent editor of the play has treated the issue of co-authorship seriously and edited the opening scene with Peelean, rather than Shakespearean, parallels in mind. However, all editors of the play must confront the many difficult editorial cruces in the scene, not least those involving staging. One particularly troublesome passage involves Titus's killing of his son, Mutius. Building upon evidence for Peele's authorship of the opening scene, Brian Boyd proposed that this murder was a late addition by Peele after Shakespeare had written the rest of the play. This essay challenges Boyd's late addition theory, offers new evidence about Shakespeare's light revision of the opening scene, and provides an account about how these issues impact upon editorial decision-making.

George Peele's co-authorship of *Titus Andronicus* is now well established among Shakespeare scholars and has not been seriously contested since the late 1990s.<sup>1</sup> But it was not ever thus. In 1984, in *Re-Editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader*, Stanley Wells described how he chose to edit the opening scene of *Titus Andronicus* as a 'basis for a pragmatic examination of the editor's problems in dealing with stage directions in collateral texts' (meaning variants in stage directions between the first quarto text and the First Folio). He selected this scene because 'it offers particular difficulties in understanding and visualizing the staging'.<sup>2</sup> Wells treated the play as though written entirely by Shakespeare, in keeping with the mainstream critical consensus of his generation. But long before 1984 evidence had been offered in support of Peele's co-authorship.<sup>3</sup>

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1 As Brian Vickers notes, 'Over the last eighty years scholars have applied, by my count, twenty-one separate tests to the play, each of which has confirmed the presence of a co-author [. . .] Surely this quantity of independent tests, mutually confirming each other, will now be enough to gain Peele recognition as co-author of "The Most Lamentable Romaine Tragedy of *Titus Andronicus*"' (*Shakespeare, Co-Author* (Oxford, 2002), 243.)

2 Stanley Wells, *Re-Editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader* (Oxford, 1984), 82. It is worth observing that the essays in Wells's book were based on lectures he presented at the Folger Library in 1983, thus pre-dating the publication of the Oxford *Complete Works* and *Textual Companion* by a number of years.

3 See Chapter 3 of Vickers' *Shakespeare, Co-Author* for an overview of twentieth century scholarship, some of the most important of which include: T. M. Parrott, 'Shakespeare's

And since 1984 several further convincing arguments have been made for Peele's authorship of at least the long opening scene.<sup>4</sup> In the 1987 *Textual Companion* to the Oxford *Complete Works*, Gary Taylor wrote that 'the [Peelean] parallels suggest that the first scene was written by either Peele or an imitator of Peele' (115). The 2005 Second Edition of the Oxford *Complete Works* includes 'with George Peele' on its title-page for the play but reprints Wells' earlier edition of the play.

Jonathan Bate, as editor of the landmark 1995 Arden Third Series edition of the play, chose largely to skim over the issue of Peele's co-authorship, commenting that 'the problem with all arguments based on verbal parallels is that imitation is as likely as authorship'.<sup>5</sup> Bate did not engage with any of the evidence that pointed towards Peele's authorship of the opening scene. Nor did he address Taylor's additional point about the actual likelihood of Peelean imitation in the *Textual Companion*: 'it is harder to explain why such [Peelean] parallels should concentrate so heavily in part of the play'. Twelve years later, in his introduction to *Titus* in the 2007 RSC *Complete Works*, Bate acknowledged that 'modern scholarship has persuasively demonstrated' that the play was 'begun' by Peele. Nevertheless, in the Norton third edition (2015) the play's textual editor, Catherine Silverstone, never mentions George Peele in her 'Textual Introduction' (499-500), while Katherine Eisaman Maus's introduction to the play (reproduced from the first Norton edition) pays only lip service to the issue of co-authorship, noting (within parentheses) that 'some scholars argue' the play was written with 'the help of George Peele'. That is, Silverstone never discusses how (or if) co-authorship impacted upon her editing of the play, and Eisaman Maus never mentions which parts of the play might have been written by (the helpful) Peele.

It is not my purpose here to assault an editorial tradition with hindsight. Rather I want to observe the simple fact that *Titus Andronicus* has never been edited as a co-authored play, and that the long opening scene of the play has never been

Revision of "Titus Andronicus", *MLR* 14 (1919), 25-33; P. W. Timberlake, *The Feminine Ending in English Blank Verse* (Menasha, WI, 1931), 114-18; John Dover Wilson (ed.), *Titus Andronicus* (Cambridge, 1948), 27; R. F. Hill, 'The Composition of *Titus Andronicus*', *Shakespeare Survey*, 10 (1957), 60-70; MacDonald. P. Jackson, *Studies in Attribution: Middleton and Shakespeare*, Salzburg Studies in English Literature 75 (Salzburg, 1979), 151-4; Marina Tarlinskaja, *Shakespeare's Verse: Iambic Pentameter and the Poet's Idiosyncrasies* (New York, NY, 1987); and Gary Taylor, 'The Canon and Chronology of Shakespeare's Plays' in Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, with John Jowett and William Montgomery, *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (Oxford, 1987), 114-15.

4 See Macdonald P. Jackson, 'Stage Directions and Speech Headings in Act 1 of *Titus Andronicus* Q (1594): Shakespeare or Peele?', *Studies in Bibliography* 49 (1996), 134-48 and 'Shakespeare's Brothers and Peele's Brethren: *Titus Andronicus* again', *Notes and Queries*, 242 (1997), 494-5; Brian Boyd, 'Mutius: An Obstacle Removed in *Titus Andronicus*', *RES*, 55, 219 (2004), 196-209; Brian Vickers' own tests in Chapter 3 of *Shakespeare, Co-Author* (2002), 219-240; Stefan D. Keller, 'Shakespeare's Rhetorical Fingerprint: *Titus Andronicus*', *English Studies*, 84, 2003, 2, 105-18; and Marina Tarlinskaja, *Shakespeare and the Versification of English Drama, 1561-1642* (Farnham and Burlington, VT, 2014), 117-122

5 Jonathan Bate (ed.), *Titus Andronicus* (London, 1995), 81. This idea, that imitation is undistinguishable from genuine authorship, has recently been shown to be a fallacy. See Gary Taylor and John V. Nance, 'Imitation or collaboration: Marlowe and the Early Shakespeare Canon', *Shakespeare Survey*, 68 (2015), 32-47.

edited as though written by Peele. The *RSC* edition, while (at least) noting Peele's likely authorship of the opening scene (or 1.1 and 2.1 in their Folio-based text), demonstrates little interest in the co-author. Bate's single play edition was lavishly praised for its attention to issues of performance, but these exact issues are complicated by the conditions of the play's co-authorship. And Alan Hughes's 1994 claim that the stagecraft of *Titus* is 'beyond the powers' of early contemporary dramatists is not only subjective but also unfounded. (Even a cursory examination of the stagecraft of *The Battle of Alcazar*, *The Spanish Tragedy* or *Doctor Faustus* should have given him pause for thought.<sup>6</sup>) Wells's chapter offers an acute analysis of thirty-eight editorial cruces in the play's opening scene, but he then suggests emendations based in part upon Shakespearean parallels. In the present article, adopting the mandate set out by Wells's essay, I offer an account of editing certain passages from the long opening scene of *Titus Andronicus* with Peele's linguistic preferences and dramaturgical practices in mind. In particular, I focus upon the passage involving the murder of Mutius, discussing and challenging the theory that this represents a late interpolation in the text underlying Q1.

## I. Editing Peele: Minor Emendations

Let us begin, quite literally, with a '*Flourish*'. The opening stage directions for the three quartos and the Folio are substantively similar, except that the Folio adds a '*Flourish*', thereby recording a musical cue for the sound of trumpets. But this cue, while apt to the moment in performance and of practical use (quietening the playgoers in preparation for performance), is unlikely to have been included in the copy written by Peele. A '*flourish*' is included as a stage direction only once in his extant complete plays: '*Alarum a charge after long skirmishe assault florishe*' in *Edward I* (sig. I4<sup>v</sup>). This strongly suggests, but does not prove, that the direction was added for performance to accompany the arrival onstage ('*aloft*', specifically, in the quartos and Folio) of the Tribunes and Senators; supplying an editor with new evidence of a conclusion one would reach independently. The rival parties below then use drums, the percussion instrument typically associated with military action. It is a subtle use of distinct musical cues, but one that was later introduced for performance and unlikely to be authorial. An editor producing a single-text edition of Q1 has then a choice of whether or not to introduce this un-Peelean musical cue.

Knowledge of Peele's authorship can also help inform how we make editorial decisions about certain words. Some emendations or modernizations are already obvious and authorship does not affect editorial decisions. But, for example, let us consider Q1's 'Though change of war hath wrought this change of chear' (TLN

<sup>6</sup> Each of these plays includes stagecraft arguably more demanding than *Titus*. For example, the presenter and foreshadowing dumbshow in *Alcazar*, the arbour scene and (multi-lingual) play-within-the-play in *Spanish Tragedy* and the several processions and conjurings in *Faustus*.

310).<sup>7</sup> The repetition of ‘change’ in this line raises suspicion of some form of error in transmission. Only once, in *Edward I*, does Peele use ‘change’ as a noun followed by a possessive prepositional phrase:

I neuer red but Englishmen exceld,  
For change of rare deuises euery way. *Edward I* (sig. B1<sup>r</sup>)

The second quarto changes the first ‘change’ to ‘chance’, so the line becomes ‘Though chance of war hath wrought this change of cheer’ (Q2 *Titus*). This is convincing because ‘chance’ and war’ is a much more common association (and collocation) in Peele’s works: ‘Resolu’d yee see: but see the chance of warre, / Knowst thou a traitor and thou seest his head’ and ‘Lluellen, calst thou this the chance of warre? / Bad for vs all pardie, but worse for him’ (*Edward I*, sig. D3<sup>r</sup>). Similarly in *Alcazar*, ‘My Lord, such chance as wilfull warre affords’(sig. F1<sup>v</sup>).<sup>8</sup> So ‘chance of war’ is a phrase Peele commonly uses.<sup>9</sup> A compositor could have easily mistaken the two words, ‘chance’ and ‘change’ or perhaps anticipated the latter usage and caught the second ‘change’ from the same line and inserted it incorrectly.

## II. Peelean Revision (1): The Murder of Mutius

The revision theory for the murder of Mutius is a different kind of textual problem. John Dover Wilson first observed the incongruous nature of the Mutius murder and burial, suggesting that these episodes were interpolated at a later stage in the composition of the opening act. Wells accepted Wilson’s theory in preparing his edition of the play, but stressed that such revision must have taken place during composition rather than after.<sup>10</sup> Jonathan Bate, and, most ardently, Brian Boyd have both supported and expanded upon the revision theory, using it

<sup>7</sup> All through-line numbering is to Malone Society edition of Q1 *Titus Andronicus*, eds. Thomas L. Berger and Barbara Mowat (Oxford, 2003). All Act-Scene-line references to the works of Shakespeare are taken from the Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett, and William Montgomery (eds), *Complete Works*, second edition (Oxford, 2005).

<sup>8</sup> See also in *Troublesome Reign*, a play of disputed authorship:

‘He on his part will trie the chance of warre,  
And if his words inferre assured truth’  
*Troublesome Reign* (sig. C1<sup>v</sup>)

‘Haue patience Madame, this is chance of warre:  
He may be ransom’d, we reuenge his wrong’  
*Troublesome Reign* (sig. E4<sup>r</sup>)

Also in *Troublesome Reign*, note ‘Inflicting change of tortures on their soules’ (sig. F4<sup>r</sup>).

<sup>9</sup> Indeed, this exact phrase ‘chance of war’ is common in the period, occurring some two hundred times in over one hundred texts printed between 1576 and 1642 (*EBO*). Among early plays, the phrase occurs in Robert Wilson’s *The Cobbler’s Prophecy* (printed 1594), Christopher Marlowe’s *Edward II* (printed 1594) and (twice) in the anonymous *Lochrine* (printed 1595–1596).

<sup>10</sup> Wells, *Re-Editing*, 101

as a means to explain the overall confusion in stage action (entrances, exits, use of above and below space, etc.). The theory of revision seems plausible because this murder is never referred to elsewhere in the play outside these two sections. Brian Boyd argues that ‘Peele added the Mutius passages [...] without Shakespeare directing him to, and without Shakespeare being aware of the additions while he was writing *his* portion of the play’.<sup>11</sup> Lending further support Brian Vickers writes generally about the block composition of the opening scene, and how ‘this sensational reverse [the murder of Mutius] is completely unprepared for, and poorly motivated’.<sup>12</sup> In this section, I will aim to complete two tasks:

- (1) Test the ‘late revision’ hypothesis for the Mutius passages by attempting to ‘reconstruct’ what the pre-revised text may have looked like.
- (2) Discuss how these findings impact upon how editors approach the text.

Although the second task is dependent upon the results for the first, these tasks need to be separated logically. Any modern edition of *Titus Andronicus* begins with the complete extant text of Q1, not a shorter reconstructed version that omits the Mutius passages. Boyd may describe Mutius as ‘an obstacle removed’, but this plucky and unlucky character remains irremovable for editors. A final caveat is that we should admit that any ‘reconstructed’ text based upon extant ‘revised’ text is necessarily conjectural: the possibility always remains that additional material was cut when the play was revised. Such material is irrevocably lost.

The greatest difficulty editors encounter with the opening scene of *Titus* is its paucity of stage directions. Over the four pertinent pages of Q1 for the Mutius murder (sigs. B2<sup>v</sup>-B4<sup>r</sup>) there is a solitary stage direction to help explicate the stage business: ‘*Enter aloft the Emperour with Tamora and her two / sonnes and Aron the moore.*’ on sig. B3<sup>v</sup>. The Folio text adds two new stage directions. On the left column of Folio sig. CC5<sup>r</sup> (after Q1 TLN 279) the direction ‘*A long Flourish till they come downe.*’ On the right column, the Folio adds a marginal direction of ‘*He kills him.*’ (opposite Q1 TLN 339). The latter reveals stage action that is already obvious from the quarto (‘you haue slaine your sonne’, TLN 341), and need not detain us here. The former is more complicated. The emptying of the above stage space in the Folio (if ‘*they*’ equals ‘all’) seems to indicate that Saturninus and Bassianus were in the ‘*aloft*’ space. This corresponds with the earlier Q/F direction ‘*They* [meaning the quarrelsome brothers] *goe vp into the Senate house*’ (Q1 TLN 96). Once they descend, presumably with the Senators and Tribunes, including Marcus, on the main stage we find: Saturninus; Bassianus; Marcus; Tribunes (2+); Senators (2+); Titus; Lavinia; Titus’ four sons: Lucius, Quintus, Martius and Mutius; Tamora; Chiron; Demetrius; Aaron; Guards for Goths and Aaron?

11 Boyd, ‘Mutius’, 206

12 Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare Co-Author*, 456. (For Vickers’ discussion of the scene’s block composition, see 458-9.)

Let us begin by accepting that the Folio text is representative of at least some contemporary performances of the play before 1622–1623 (when the text was set). In doing so, as per the Folio, there are now at least seventeen characters on the main stage before the Mutius passages. We can now turn exclusively to Q1, which is otherwise substantively similar to F.

A hectic sequence of action unfolds. In order, Saturninus, the tribunes, and the senators are cued to exit ('Romans let vs goe', TLN 319), the prisoners are released ('we set our prisoners free', TLN 320) while all the while drum and trumpet sound. Those guarding the Goths and Aaron may or may not leave. The music presumably ceases and another sequence of action begins. Bassianus, who must be standing relatively close to Lavinia, addresses Titus, and lays out his claim for Titus' daughter as his bride. Titus, Marcus, Bassianus and Lucius all interact, leading to Titus labelling the others as 'traitors' and asking 'where is the Emperours gard?' (i.e. possibly, but not necessarily, those guards who may have left the stage after releasing the Goths and Aaron). Saturninus responds to Titus's shout to 'my lord' about 'treason', but appears not to have seen what occurred (i.e. he asks 'by whom?'). Thereafter, Bassianus responds to and answers Saturninus' question ('By him'). Mutius tells his brothers to escort Lavinia and Bassianus 'away'. Titus tells 'my Lord' to 'follow' but no-one responds. Titus confronts and kills Mutius. Lucius 'returns' hearing Mutius' dying words, and confronts an unremorseful Titus. Saturninus, the Goths and Aaron appear 'aloft' and Saturninus addresses Titus.

Let us now put the revision theory to the test. The simplest way to do this is to cut those passages Boyd identifies as additions and see if what we have left is intelligible. This tactic is not without flaws. As we know, passages may be added to play manuscripts in several different ways: for example, the additions take the form of inserted slips of paper in the manuscript of Middleton's *The Lady's Tragedy* or *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (British Library Lansdowne 807, 1611), whereas in the manuscript for *The Book of Sir Thomas More* (British Library Harley 7368) an addition pasted over (and thus obliterated) the material it replaced. Nevertheless, as this is a helpful way to commence our investigation, let us begin with the working assumption that if suspect material is removed, the residue will be coherent.

We will start with the murder of Mutius before turning to the burial. Here is an unedited marked-up transcript of the murder passage from Q1, with the cuts Boyd suggests:

[*Saturninus.*] *Lauinia* you are not displeasde with this.  
*Lauinia.* Not I my Lord, sith true Nobilitie,  
 Warrants these words in Princely curtesie.  
*Saturnine.* Thanks sweete *Lauinia*, Romans let vs goe,  
 Raunsomles here we set our prisoners free,  
 Proclaime our Honours Lords with Trumpe and Drum.  
*Bassianus.* Lord *Titus* by your leaue, this maid is mine.  
*Titus.* How sir, are you in earnest then my Lord?

*Bascianus.* I Noble *Titus* and resolute withall,  
 To doo my selfe this reason and this right.  
*Marcus.* *Suum cuique* is our Romane iustce,  
 This Prince in iustice ceazeth but his owne.  
*Lucius.* And that he will, and shall if *Lucius* liue.  
*Titus.* Traitors auaunt, where is the Emperours gard?  
 Treason my Lord, *Lauinia* is surprizde.  
*Saturnine.* Surprizde, by whom?  
*Bascianus.* By him that iustly may,  
 Beare his betrothde from all the world away.

[CUT]

*Titus.* Follow my Lord, and Ile soone bring her backe.

[CUT]

*Enter aloft the Emperour with Tamora and her two  
 sonnes and Aron the moore.*

*Emperour.* No *Titus*, no, the Emperour needes her not,

One immediate problem with Boyd's 'unrevised' form is the exchange between Titus and Saturninus. Titus says 'Follow my Lord and Ile soone bring her backe' (TLN 336). But Saturninus does not respond, and instead must leave the stage before re-appearing aloft, now accompanied by Tamora, Chiron, Demetrius and Aaron. Only then does he respond. But that move to the above space would take time, and what would be happening all the while on the stage below? Titus awaits an answer alone after everyone else has left the stage. It seems implausible to imagine that Titus could tell Saturninus to 'Follow' once he sees the Emperor in the above space with the Goths and Aaron. (The obvious riposte, of course, is that the stage direction itself might belong to Peele's revision, which we will consider below.)

Let us now consider another reconstruction of the 'original draft' of *Titus sans Mutius*. As an appendix to his 'Re-editing' essay, Wells suggested the following:

[*Saturnine.*] Thanks sweete *Lauinia*, Romans let vs goe,  
 Raunsomles here we set our prisoners free,  
 Proclaime our Honours Lords with Trumpe and Drum.  
 [*Exeunt Saturninus, Tamora, Demetrius, Chiron and Aron the Moore.*]  
*Bassianus.* Lord *Titus* by your leaue, this maid is mine.  
*Titus.* How, sir, are you in earnest then my Lord?  
*Bascianus.* I Noble *Titus* and resolute withall,  
 To doo my selfe this reason and this right.  
*Marcus.* *Suum [cuique]* is our Romane iustce,  
 This Prince in iustice ceazeth but his owne.  
*Lucius.* And that he will, and shall if *Lucius* liue.  
*Titus.* Traitors auaunt, where is the Emperours gard?  
*Enter aloft the Emperour with Tamora and her two sonnes and Aron the moore.*  
 Treason my Lord, *Lauinia* is surprizde.  
*Saturnine.* Surprizde, by whom?  
*Bascianus.* By him that iustly may,  
 Beare his betrothde from all the world away.  
 [*Exeunt Bassianus, Marcus, Lauinia, and the sonnes of Titus.*]

*Titus.* Follow my Lord, and Ile soone bring her backe.  
*Emperour.* No, *Titus*, no[.]

Wells's 'conjectural reconstruction' is more radical than it at first appears. Two added stage directions help clarify some of the stage movement, but not all. For example, who is Saturnine addressing when he says 'Romans let vs goe' if he subsequently exits with the Goths and Aaron? (Are they now considered 'Roman' or is this an address to other Romans (Tribunes, Senators?) not noted by Wells in his exit direction?) Wells does not simply move the '*Enter aloft*' direction back eighteen lines, but also inserts it mid-speech for Titus between 'gard?' and 'Treason'. The stage action retains the curious business about Titus telling 'my Lord' to follow; if he means Saturninus, it seems odd that he would ask someone in the above space to follow him.

Let us now test the later revision theory with the burial scene. As we will recall, Titus is deeply offended by Saturninus's sudden betrothal to Tamora. Saturninus and Tamora exchange loving words; Titus says these are 'rasors to [his] wounded hart' (TLN 364). As Boyd notes in making his case for late revision, 'Titus winces at Saturninus' reproach [...] not for the killing, which Saturninus somehow has not seen, but for the abduction of Lavinia'.<sup>13</sup> Everyone but Titus then leaves the stage: Tamora, Saturninus *et al.* from aloft, and the Andronici and others below. Titus soliloquizes about his misfortune, and then, three lines later, the Andronici re-enter, presumably carrying the body of Mutius who they later bury. So, following Boyd, let us cut the entire burial scene from the entrance of the sons, 'O *Titus* see: O see what thou hast done / In a bad quarrell slaine a vertuous sonne' until their exit after this sequence:

No man shed teares for Noble *Mutius*,  
 He liues in fame, that dide in veres cause.  
*Exit all but Marcus and Titus.* (TLN 447-9)

Wells's reconstruction of the material also substantively follows what we have provided below. We must retain the entrance of Marcus since he speaks next in the reconstructed text. The passage now looks like this:

*Sat.* Ascend faire Queene: Pantheon Lords accompany  
 Your Noble Emperour and his louelie Bride,  
 Sent by the Heauens for Prince *Saturnine*,  
 Whose wisdome hath her Fortune conquered,  
 There shall wee consummate our spousall rites.  
*Exeunt Omnes.*  
*Titus.* I am not bid to wait vpon this bride,

<sup>13</sup> Brian Boyd, 'Mutius', 196n. It could, I suppose, be protested that Titus' lack of feeling is how Peele characterises him; he coldly tells Tamora to 'patient [her]self' when she begs for Alarbus' life and in a matter-of-fact way explains why her child must be sacrificed. The absence of any mention of Mutius in Shakespeare's part of the play is unusual but hardly unprecedented in early Shakespearean collaborative plays. In a reverse situation, there is no mention made of the Countess in the non-Shakespearean parts of *Edward III* though she dominates the Shakespearean scenes.



*Titus* when wert thou wont to walke alone,  
Dishonoured thus and challenged of wrongs.

*Enter Marcus and Titus sonnes.*

[CUT]

*Marcus.* My Lord to step out of these dririe dumps,  
How comes it that the subtile Queene of *Gothes*,  
Is of a sodaine thus aduaunc'd in Rome.

*Titus.* I know not *Marcus*, but I know it is.  
(VVhether by deuse or no, the heauens can tell.)  
Is shee not then beholding to the man,  
That brought her for this high good turne so farre.

<i>Enter the Emperour, Tamora</i>	}}{	<i>Enter at the other doore</i>
<i>and her two sonnes, with the</i>	}}{	<i>Bascianus and Lauinia,</i>
<i>Moore at one doore.</i>	}}{	<i>with others.</i>

*Saturnine.* So *Bascianus*, you haue plaid your prize,  
God giue you ioy sir of your gallant Bride.

Without the burial scene, Marcus exits with everyone else, having witnessed the betrothal of Saturninus and Tamora, but then re-enters three lines later to ask his brother to explicate what he has just seen. The expression 'dririe dumps' is confusing with or without the murder and burial. The idea that filicide is something to be, so to speak, stepped out of quickly, seems absurdly unsympathetic. But if we cut the burial scene, then Marcus's advice and subsequent question seems equally if not more absurd. Marcus sees that Titus is upset by what has occurred, and suggests they try to 'step outside of these dririe dumps'. But then he attempts to do so by bringing up the exact same topic about which Titus has just been drearily soliloquizing: his 'waiting upon' Tamora and the dishonour he feels. Marcus of course does not know what Titus has just said, but it must be obvious that he is miserable about what has just occurred. There are only two possibilities that I can see to support the revision theory in this instance. Either 'My lord [. . .] dumps' is Peele's clumsy (and insensitive) way of connecting new with existing material. Perhaps Peele thinks it an ironic 'bad joke' moment, though elsewhere the opening scene is solemnly humourless. Or additional existing material has been deleted/replaced that makes better sense of why Marcus would feel compelled to attempt to distract Titus from 'dririe dumps' by asking him about Tamora (perhaps a speech about Lavinia or his sons' support for Bassianus?)

Again my larger point is that removing the 'obstacle' of Mutius creates additional problems for hypothesizing the contents of an earlier unrevised version of Peele's script. The Mutius murder and burial may jar, may seem unanticipated, may not be mentioned again elsewhere in the play, but once removed, it is difficult to reconcile what is left behind into a coherent script. That is not to say that the Mutius scenes cannot constitute later revisions. They might well be, and Wells, Boyd, and others are right to observe how incongruous the action seems. But it is difficult to support such a theory based upon the evidence of obvious discontinuities in the material that remains once the Mutius passages are omitted. If the

Mutius scenes do represent later revisions, Peele went to further lengths than previously assumed to integrate the Mutius material into the script and may have been forced to delete material to accommodate these episodes. We will return to Mutius below.

### III. Peelean Revision (2): The Sacrifice of Alarbus

Two sons die in the opening scene, Alarbus and Mutius, producing a symmetry typical of Peele's writing.<sup>14</sup> We have seen that the murder of Mutius is suspected to be a product of revision; some have suspected that the sacrifice of Alarbus also represents a change in plan in Peele's working draft. Wells 'conjectural reconstruction' cut the sacrifice of Alarbus as well as Mutius murder and burial. As Wells rightly noted, the implications of the sacrificial action are well integrated into the play as it sets in motion the revenge plot. But is it possible that Peele never initially intended to dramatize the sequence surrounding the sacrifice?<sup>15</sup> This theory is prompted by two incongruities in the text. The first is that there is no entrance cue for Alarbus at (TLN 107-8) though her '*two sonnes* Chiron *and* Demetrius' are explicitly recorded. Omitted entrance directions occur frequently in early modern drama, but there are two errors here: an omitted entrance and the specific number of sons recorded as entering. Alarbus is only named explicitly when he exits with '*Titus sonnes*' (at TLN 171). The second incongruity is the celebrated 'at this day' crux:

and at this day,  
 To the monument of that *Andronicus*,  
 Done sacrifice of expiation,  
 And slaine the Noblest prisoner of the *Gothes*. (TLN 61-4)

The performance issue is that these lines appear to pre-emptively reveal action (the sacrifice of Alarbus, Tamora's eldest son) that has not yet occurred. Some editors have suggested that the Alarbus episode is interpolated and these lines should be deleted. And, seeming to lend support to this theory, the three-and-a-half-line passage is excised from the second quarto. Let us hypothesize that Peele completed an entire draft of the opening scene and then later decided to add the Alarbus material. In this hypothesized draft, these lines are present and necessarily describe action that Peele has no intention of staging. Thus, if we cut the entire Alarbus episode, stretching from the action from Lucius' demand to 'Giue us the prowdest prisoner' to the direction for Titus's response to the Lucius's discussion of the 'lopt' limbs of Alarbus, it would read like this (with the quarto TLN recorded):

This theory is attractive. The sequence of action is well integrated. Titus addresses the opened tomb and then the coffin is laid inside. Tamora's third son need not be named in the direction because Alarbus never enters.

14 See A. M. Sampley, 'Plot Structure in Peele's Plays as a Test of Authorship', *PMLA* 51 (1936), 689-701, and Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, 449-73

15 See Boyd, 'Mutius', 207-8.

Saturninus, Bassianus and others could be present for this short sequence without their silent presence being jarring in any way.

Make way to lay them by their brethren.	129
<i>They open the Tombe.</i>	130
[Titus] There greet in silence as the dead are wont,	131
And sleep in peace, slaine in your Countries warres:	132
O sacred receptacle of my ioyes,	133
Sweet Cell of vertue and Nobilitie,	134
How many sonnes hast thou of mine in store,	135
That thou wilt neuer render to me more.	136
<i>Sound Trumpets, and lay the Coffin in the Tombe.</i>	193
In peace and honour rest you here my sonnes,	194

Does ‘at this day’ then represent Peele’s first intention and should it be deleted or, as other editors have conjectured, is ‘at this day’ a compositor’s misreading for ‘as this day’, ‘on this day’, ‘at this door’, etc.? If we accept the first theory—that is accept that the Alarbus material is a later interpolation and accept that the reading in the quarto is correct and thereby should be omitted—there is a problem previously unobserved. It is not simply that the three and a half lines pre-empt action that has not yet occurred. It pre-empts action that cannot plausibly have yet occurred. The Captain enters to tell the ‘Romaines make way, the good *Andronicus* [. . .] is returnd’ (TLN 98-101). But Titus, who enters ceremonially, cannot have just returned with his sons, living and dead, the Goth prisoners, and Aaron, if earlier ‘this day’ the Andronici have ‘done sacrifice of expiation’ at the ‘Monument to the *Andronicity*’. Marcus earlier says that Titus is ‘accited home’ (TLN 53) and that no ‘Nobler man’ etc. ‘Liues [. . .] within the Cittie Walls’ (TLN 52). A reader sympathetic to the late interpolation theory might argue that this means Titus is already in Rome. But it seems much more plausible that Titus returns directly from the wars with his sons and prisoners in tow, rather than suspecting that he has earlier been to the same site of the Andronici tomb to oversee a sacrifice but neglected to bury his sons at that time. On the grounds of the late revision/addition theory, these three and a half lines cannot be omitted as an unintentionally retained rejected intention because they suppose a sequence of action that is implausible even if one omits the Alarbus episode (that as a corollary of the late addition theory must be expendable).

Let us now pursue another form of revision: of intent rather than text. What if Peele changes his mind in the midst of writing this scene and decides to include the Alarbus material? In this case, the sacrifice is not a late interpolation but rather a change in direction for the scene. The preceding inconsistencies could then be explained as the result of Peele’s neglect in cohering earlier contradictory material about when Titus arrived back in Rome. But if so, when could this change in vision for the scene occur? It seems unlikely to be later than ‘That thou wilt neuer

render to me more' (TLN 136), because if we omit the 'expendable' Alarbus episode then we must also suppose a sequence of action whereby Tamora does not speak until TLN 379, after she has been made Empress (a passage of 274 lines onstage after omitting the fifty-seven-line sacrifice passage, or 262 lines if we also omit the murder of Mutius). It just seems dramatically implausible that Tamora could be given nothing to say before she is betrothed to Saturninus. (Unlike, for example, Aaron who is conspicuously silent until everyone else exits.) The opposition between the submissive Lavinia and assertive Tamora is central to the opening scene. If we accept this, then the latest plausible moment for the change in direction is the line before the Alarbus episode begins; this hypothesized switch in direction occurs sequentially and not as a later addition. There is an odd circularity to this theory: additional unanticipated material is introduced at the moment when we would anticipate the placement of more material; a hypothesized switch in vision is only proven by the switch in vision itself and inconsistencies are only explained by how they are inconsistent with the hypothesized switch in vision.

In summary, it is theoretically possible though dramatically implausible that both (a) 'at this day' is correct and should have been deleted and (b) that the Alarbus episode is a late addition to the scene, representing a revision of an original draft. Much more plausible is that Peele changes his vision for the scene in the course of writing and is unaware of (or neglects to correct) the earlier inconsistencies this creates. Not an addition in the traditional sense, therefore, but rather an additional intention for this scene. But most plausible is that the problematic 'at this day' reading includes an error, and that Peele, for whatever reason, elects not to provide an entrance direction for Alarbus or to count him among Tamora's sons. Alarbus is a silent part and the character enters only to leave again; the parts of Chiron and Demetrius are to be fully fleshed out in the play.

If an editor wishes to retain the three and a half lines, as I would, 'at this door' helps make good sense of that which follows and supposes an easy misreading: 'dore' misread as 'daie' and subsequently regularized as 'day'.<sup>16</sup> It is much easier to believe that 'at this day' is a misreading for 'at this door', indicating the stage space that will subsequently be used for the tomb.<sup>17</sup> Omitting these (un-emended) lines as a supposed by-product of authorial revision promotes a theory of later interpolation that imagines an early draft that beggars belief. Or, it supposes a sudden change in direction in Peele's vision for the scene. Or, and we should always admit this, it supposes that other irrecoverable material from the original draft was deleted and replaced that would have harmonized the discordances of the

16 Peele uses the spelling 'dore' for 'door' regularly. In *David and Bethsabe*, for instance, Peele never uses the spelling 'door' or 'doore', but uses 'dore(s)' six times. The opening stage direction in *Titus Andronicus* includes 'at one dore'; the spelling 'doore' occurs at TLN 335 and twice in the stage direction at TLN 456-8.

17 Other conjectures include 'as this day' (Bolton), which supposes an even easier misreading but is syntactically strained: 'as this day' would have to be glossed 'as later on this day' which clashes in tense with 'Done sacrifice' which indicates past action. John Jowett conjectures 'at that day' (private communication).

hypothesized original draft (with could include other Tamora material, also deleted). An editor is therefore faced with a choice: cut material and explain this by conjecturing that the Alarbus episode is ‘added’ material in some sense, or explain away the copy and seek to only make minor emendations to errors that could have occurred in the transmission of the text. The emendation of ‘day’ to ‘door’ seems to me to offer the easiest solution, but it may not be the correct one.<sup>18</sup> However, I would rather make a minimal intervention that supposes an easy error to avoid a contradiction, than to cut three and a half lines in support of any of the other problematic conjectures about the process of composition.

#### IV. ‘Revision’ and the Editorial Response

Identifying evidence of revision in any work of literature affects how that work is edited. In *Titus* we have the more complicated case of possible revision. In ways, this seems like an editorial godsend: if the editor finds something that might be odd and contradictory in the control text she or he can explain it away as most likely a by-product of possible later revision. But, as we will see, a theory of revision has not always helped editors explain away the incongruities in *Titus*. I will focus primarily on two important late twentieth-century editions of the play that pay careful attention to matters of staging: Wells’s 1986 edition for the *Complete Works* (supplemented by his discussion of the opening scene in *Re-editing Shakespeare*) and Bate’s 1995 Arden Third Edition. In what follows, I will attempt (but perhaps not always succeed) to avoid placing expectations of naturalism upon issues of performance and character. It is a misapprehension that what seems illogical on paper cannot be communicable in performance. The magic of the theatre is a suspension of disbelief, not a teasing out of impossibilities and inconsistencies. Similarly, but separately, it would be unfair and misleading to demand that an early modern play quarto is an exemplar of clarity regarding issues of staging. The opening scene of *Titus* could be, and indeed has been, staged in many different ways. My goal here is not to propose that there is only one way in which this scene could be staged—obviously, there are many—but rather to examine how editors have employed the revision theory to respond to the issues surrounding staging in this passage.

After Saturninus commands the sounding of ‘Trumpe and Drum’, there is an editorial tradition ‘following Rowe’s wording and Capell’s placing’, as Wells reports, to ‘insert the following stage direction’: ‘*Flourish. Saturninus courts Tamora in a dumb show.*’ This editorial direction attempts to (a) make sense of why Saturninus seems oblivious to the abduction happening onstage, and (b) give some stage-time for Saturninus and Tamora to become acquainted. R. B. McKerrow, in an unpublished edition of the play, suggested that Saturninus asks

<sup>18</sup> Incidentally, it would be much easier for Marcus to gesture towards a ‘door’ if he was standing on the main stage rather than above. But we cannot read anything into this; Peele may or may not be thinking about the sequence of action in performance.

‘by whom?’ from offstage (where he is with Tamora and all the others who have left the stage). Wells opted for a different solution. He cut the following passage:

[*Titus.*] Treason my Lord, *Lavinia* is surprizde.  
*Saturnine.* Surprizde, by whom?  
*Bassianus.* By him that iustly may,  
 Beare his betrothde from all the world away. (TLN 330-3)

Wells argued that that Saturninus, Tamora, her sons, and Moor, do not re-appear until after the murder is completed. So, in Wells (*Modern Spelling* edition), it appeared thus:

TITUS

Traitors, avaunt! Where is the Emperor’s guard?

MUTIUS

Brothers, help to convey her hence away[.] (1.1.283-4)

(Wells made another significant intervention in this passage, to which we will turn presently.) Bate did not follow Wells’s lead, opting instead to retain the exchange. Surprisingly, he decided to reject the ‘Let us go’ cue, and in his edition no-one exits after ‘Trumpe and Drum’. In other words, in Bate’s edition, seventeen plus characters remain onstage. These include the Emperor’s guard, who are clearly missing later in the same Q/F passage (Titus asks ‘where is the Emperours gard?’). Discussing the ‘let us go’ crux, Bate insists that ‘surely [Saturninus]’ latter two lines, not his first one [i.e. ‘let us go’], that carry the implied’ stage direction. So, Bate argues that one call for action, the freeing of the prisoners and the sounding of trumpet and drum’, counteracts the other. He proposes—by way of an argument for a ‘split-stage effect’ (horizontal, not upper-lower)—that Saturninus does not see what has occurred because ‘he has been overseeing the release of the Goths and then showing courtesy to Tamora’.<sup>19</sup> Essentially this is a reworking of the dumb-show idea originating with Rowe, but Bate does not actually add anything directly to his modernized text to help the reader interpret what is happening here. Instead the reader must turn to Bate’s annotation at the bottom of the page to explicate the action.

As the passage continues, Mutius tells his brothers to ‘conuay [*Lavinia*] hence away’ (TLN 334). He says he will guard the exit—‘this doore’—by drawing ‘his sword’ (TLN 335). So, presumably thereafter, Bassianus, *Lavinia*, Quintus and Lucius exit. In any case, at least two ‘Brothers’ (plural) leave with their sister and Bassianus (TLN 334). Marcus, who had defended Bassianus’ claim above, most likely follows too, but not necessarily.

Titus says ‘Follow my Lord, and Ile soone bring her backe.’ (TLN 336). To whom is Titus speaking? It must be Saturninus since he uses the same form of address, ‘my Lord’, at TLN 330. (It cannot be Bassianus who he also addresses as

<sup>19</sup> In a footnote, Bate appears to accept Rowe’s stage direction ‘*Saturninus courts Tamora in a dumb show*’, suggesting that ‘on Tamora’s release, Saturninus, in accordance with his promise at 270 [i.e. TLN 312], shows courtesy to her’.

‘my Lord’.) But who should Saturninus follow? Does it mean ‘follow me, Titus, right now, and you will see that I will get her back’? Or ‘follow someone else, and I will return soon with her’? No-one responds to the line. But, as many have noticed, there does seem to be a ready-made response to this line, ten lines (of speech) later, when Saturninus says, ‘No, Titus, no’ (TLN 349). It cannot be that the ‘No, Titus, no’ speech is misplaced because otherwise Titus would have no motivation to chase after Bassanius and Lavinia and thereby kill his son. (The reverse possibility is discussed below.)

Other editorial issues soon arise. Mutius bars Titus’ way and Titus kills him, while Mutius calls out ‘Helpe, Lucius, helpe’. Then Lucius enters again and reprimands his father. But does Lucius leave at this point? If so, does he bring Mutius’ body with him? If not, is the body left on the stage for the next forty-three lines (of speech) until Marcus and Titus’s sons enter to bury Mutius at TLN 392?

Next we observe this direction and speech:

*Enter aloft the Emperour with Tamora and her two  
sonnes and Aron the moore.*

*Emperour.* No Titus, no, the Emperour needes her not,  
Nor her, nor thee, nor any of thy stocke[.] (TLN 346-350)

Some more editorial issues present immediately: when did Saturninus leave to make this journey aloft? Or have time to speak with Tamora? And what question does the Emperor’s response ‘No, *Titus*, no’ answer? Wells attempted to solve these various issues by moving the ‘Follow my Lord’ line to before Saturninus’ ‘No, *Titus*, no’. Bate, on the other hand, proposes that Saturninus replies ‘belatedly’, noting that the ‘stage-action unfolds very rapidly’. That is, Bate supposes that a question can be answered ten lines later without losing intelligibility.

Wells’s solution—which anticipates Boyd’s argument that Mutius is an ‘obstacle’ to be ‘removed’—introduces its own problems. His version does not account for how Saturninus already knows about the abduction of Lavinia when he re-enters with Tamora at TLN 346. In Wells’s edition, Saturninus leaves after TLN 321 and does not return until TLN 346, yet somehow he intuitively knows that Lavinia has been absconded with (i.e. ‘no, the Emperour needes her not’). Bate’s solution is more frustratingly vague; his proposal for a ‘split-stage effect’ seems at first plausible though it is difficult to support from dramatic precedent.<sup>20</sup> The only (possibly) comparable scene in Peele is in *David and Bethsabe* (c. 1590; printed 1599) when David ‘sits *aboue*’ and watches Bethsabe (Bethsheba) bathing below (sig. B1<sup>v</sup>), an upper/lower divide. Bethsabe is in the discovery space—the Prologue ‘*drames a curtaine*’ to reveal her, so David must either watch her from

<sup>20</sup> One possible comparison might be found in Middleton’s *Women Beware Women*, with the chess scene below and the interactions between the Duke and Bianca above in 2.2. But this occurs in a play that long post-dates *Titus* (c. summer 1621; printed 1657), and the split-stage effect is above-below rather than horizontal. For the play’s date, see John Jowett’s entry in the ‘Canon and Chronology’ essay in Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (eds), *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), pp. 414-6.

above through a trapdoor (imagined or real) or some sort of non-naturalistic ‘*veving*’ occurs with David looking outwards in one direction and the discovery space giving the reverse angle of what he is presumed to be looking at. In early Shakespeare the only comparable example is the tents sequence in 5.5 of *Richard III* (1592; printed 1597), but there we must imagine events at two different locations rather than onstage action at the same site that is unseen by others present.

Wells and Bate thus offer different models of editorial intervention. Both editors are attempting to make the action intelligible in a passage that they believe was added late into the text. Fundamentally they seem to agree that the play must have been somehow performable, and that it is their responsibility to suggest to the reader how it could have been performed. Wells lays some blame at the compositor’s door, suggesting the passage is corrupted in the transmission from manuscript underlying text to the print. For Wells, certain lines were included which should have been cut, and a line was misplaced. Bate attempts to explain what he finds without intervening. If we accept, as Wells and Bate did, the theory that the Mutius passages are a later revision, we may then be tempted to adopt one of these editorial models in preparing a modern edition. We can:

- (a) take the Wells route of shifting text around, and even cutting some lines, to make the interpolated lines fit better with the rest of the passage. This solves most issues for the reader, and may even offer a best-case scenario of what the author(s) attempted to achieve in melding the earlier draft and the added passage.
- (b) take the Bate route of explaining away everything as we find it by assuming that one call for stage action counteracts another, and arguing for a split-stage effect.
- (c) abdicate any editorial responsibility, by identifying the Mutius scenes as a late interpolation and stating that this introduces staging difficulties which cannot be easily resolved.

But if we find fault with the later revision theory for the reasons I have outlined above, or at least feel dissatisfied by the difficulty attendant with removing this ‘obstacle’ because of what is left behind, then we might seek to approach the editing of the text in another way.

## V. How to Murder Mutius

In producing a modern edition of *Titus* there are two issues that need to be at first logically separated. Chronologically in the life of the text, the first is the possibility of later revision. If Peele did add new material, then he envisaged two separate versions of this scene, first without Mutius, second with Mutius. What has been passed down to editors and readers of the play is the latter version of *Titus Andronicus* with Mutius; this version, for all intents and purposes, is our last (and only) witness to his intentions for this sequence. We must, therefore, edit



the play with this version in mind. So, in essence, if we believe that the Mutius passages are a late interpolation, like Wells and Bate, we must be aware that we are editing two sequentially realized versions of the staging of this scene; the revision could have occurred just after Peele had completed his initial draft, or at a later stage. It could have been before Shakespeare wrote the rest of the play or after (as Boyd contends). In this article, however, we have cast doubt upon the revision theory, noting how difficult it is to remove the Mutius ‘obstacle’. But even if an editor clings to the revision theory, they must still attempt to edit the final version of the scene and accommodate that which contradicts it from the imagined earlier version, rather than vice versa; no editor would produce an edition of *Titus* that excludes the Mutius episode. It is not that the issue of possible revision is irrelevant for an editor, but rather that its importance lies in how an editor approaches the text rather than what they edit. An editor who believes that the Mutius passages are a late addition can rely upon this theory to explicate any textual incongruities; an editor who finds the late revision theory implausible must attempt to find another way to explicate the difficulties and contradictions of the murder scene (the burial episode poses no substantive problems).

The second editorial issue is how and when to incorporate material that is found only in the Folio text. All modern editions are primarily based upon the 1594 quarto. Any changes introduced in the 1623 Folio may reflect theatrical efforts to render the action intelligible in performance. The Folio text derives from a copy of Q3 that appears to have been annotated by reference to a theatrical manuscript. What we find in Q1, and hence Q2 and Q3, appears to display the play in a form that had not yet been readied for performance. That is, added directions in the Folio likely reflect a theatrical practice that may be at odds with how the author(s) envisaged the staging of the scene.

Without avowing for or against the later revision theory, I would suggest that there is one probable error of transmission in the Mutius passage. One line in particular seems misplaced in all three Quartos (and hence also the Folio). Following Wells’s lead, I think that ‘Follow my Lord, and Ile soone bring her backe’ should be moved and placed before Saturninus’s response. Despite Bate’s assertion, I have not found a single example of a delayed response such as this in the works of Peele, or indeed Shakespeare. So, adopting Wells’s emendation, I would be inclined to move Titus’s appeal to Saturninus to follow the Emperor’s entrance with Tamora above (with the quarto TLN recorded):

<i>Enter aloft the Emperour with Tamora and her two</i>	347
<i>sonnes and Aron the moore.</i>	348
<i>Titus.</i> Follow my Lord, and Ile soone bring her backe.	336
<i>Emperour.</i> No <i>Titus</i> , no, the Emperour needes her not,	349

Rather than the late revision theory—which was Wells’s premise for moving this line—there may another less complicated reason for making this emendation. Instead of an error caused by inserting the Mutius passage in the wrong place—this makes little sense because the preceding two lines are also by Mutius, so the inserted passage would have had to have been split in two—this is a plausible transposition error. After Peele composed this line, he continued writing the rest of the Mutius dialogue. Thereafter he may have recognised that this line by Titus—left unanswered as stands—would help initiate the exchange between aloft and below for this surprising turn of events (such plot twists are common in Peele’s plays). Peele may then have drawn a line to indicate that this single line should be moved to below, but this was either ignored or unseen by the copyist or compositor.

This emendation permits two possible stagings that use both the above and below space. First, the more conservative option. Saturninus descends to the mainstage with the others. For unknown reasons, he does not initially see Bassianus claim Lavinia. (Bate’s ‘split-stage’ effect offers one staging possibility for this.) Saturninus may or may not exit with Tamora after she and her party have been released. He may or may not re-enter upon hearing his name called. He may or may not call from offstage (as per McKerrow’s suggestion). In any case, he most likely exits or is unseen again after Bassianus answers his query, and the next time he is visible to the audience he enters in the above space with Tamora.

Second, Saturninus never descends to the mainstage with the others. The Quarto implies, or at least does not deny, this possibility, but Marcus and others who are required for the stage action must be on the main stage. Saturninus exits from above after Bassianus boldly answers his question ‘Surprizde, by whom?’ In an unexpected twist, Saturninus then re-appears above with Tamora. This version (a) gives him ‘time’ to fetch and ‘court’ Tamora who has exited below, and (b) explain how he knows what has happened to Lavinia. This staging creates a slight oddity in that Titus tells Saturninus to follow him even though the latter is in the above space.

In the *New Oxford Shakespeare* we adopt the more conservative option, noting marginally alternative staging options for performance. Although we cannot be certain that there is any authorial authority to the additions to the Folio text (although it is possible the additions follow a theatrical tradition suggested by the author), the inserted ‘*A long flourish till they come downe*’ at least represents a staging of the Peele-Shakespeare text from the period. This may or may not have been how Peele envisaged the staging of the scene, but this is how the Chamberlain’s/King’s Men interpreted the action to make it performable. And, after all, the stage direction’s presence in the Folio text may reflect a staging practice from the first performances when Peele and/or Shakespeare may have been involved. Our minor intervention does not explain (or attempt to explain) every oddity of this passage but it helps to make it more intelligible, and possibly alerts the reader to at least the partial intentions of Peele in completing his final draft of this episode that survives, whether or not he wrote it all at once.

## VI. Aloft Space and Shakespearean Revision

Thus far we have considered the likelihood of whether or not Peele revised his original composition. We have seen that a paucity of stage directions in the quarto, and added stage directions in the Folio, complicate our understanding of how the sequence of action was staged. Now I want to look again at the form of the stage directions in the opening scene of the quarto. The added Folio direction, '*A long Flourish till they come downe*', fundamentally affects the way in which we interpret the stage action surrounding the murder of Mutius. Without it, as per the quarto, there is no indication that Saturninus and Marcus (who offers the 'crown' to Titus) are above rather than below. Unless, that is, Marcus remains 'aloft' and Saturninus joins him above after he and Bassianus '*goe vp into the Senate House*'. So let us consider what staging is prescribed by the quarto text, and see how Peele's preferences elsewhere may affect how we interpret the stage action.

In the opening passage of the quarto we find this direction: '*Marcus Andronicus with the Crowne*.' This direction also serves as a speech prefix in all editions until Rowe adds a separate speech prefix for Marcus in his 1709 edition.<sup>21</sup> For editors, the principal textual issue is to decide whether or not this is also an entrance direction for Marcus. The reading may not be an entrance direction if Marcus is one of those unnamed 'Tribunes' who enter '*aloft*' in the opening stage direction, and Marcus could simply step forward at this point. Marcus is identified first as a Tribune and not as brother to Titus (TLN 76). At TLN 97 '*Enter a Captain*' is also centred and serves as a speech prefix, but the entrance direction is made explicit. Indeed, if we accept that '*Marcus Andronicus with the Crowne*' stands also for a speech prefix—that is, splitting the speaker '*Marcus Andronicus*' from the direction '*with the crown*'—the first six speech prefixes in the play are all centred in this way.<sup>22</sup>

21 By comparison, unprefixed speech occurs three times in passages attributed to Shakespeare in Q1 *Titus*: sig. D4<sup>r</sup> (2.3.192), sig. E1<sup>v</sup> (2.3.268), sig. E2<sup>f</sup> (2.4.11). The second of these '*Saturninus reads the letter*' provides information about both the stage direction and speaker.

22 In Shakespeare's plays, centred speech prefixes and/or stage directions serving as speech prefixes are much more rare. By comparison, in passages attributed to Shakespeare in Q1 *Titus*, the only use of centred speech prefixes occurs on sig. I2<sup>r</sup> (5.1.121–124), where the Compositor appears to be attempting to stretch the copy. The layout in Q1 may be telling about the manuscript underlying (at least) Peele's opening scene to the play. As Macdonald P. Jackson observes, 'Nowhere do we encounter [in Shakespeare's plays] such a combination of anomalies as in the opening scene of *Titus Andronicus*: (a) a series of centred speech headings, (b) entries (as of the Captain and Lavinia and possibly Marcus) that also substitute for speech headings and occur within the scene, and (c) uses of the formula "[. . .] *speaks*" or "they [. . .] *say*" introducing un-prefixed speeches' (138). Jackson further observes that stage directions followed by un-prefixed speech is a typical practice in Peele's plays, noting several examples in *Edward I*. Jackson notes further examples of such practices in three of Peele's other plays, *David and Bethsabe*, *Arraignement of Paris*, and *Battle of Alcazar*. In Shakespeare's plays, however, centred speech prefixes and/or stage directions serving as prefixes are much rarer. The evidence here suggests that such anomalous practices originate in Peele's own copy—that is, 'a pre-theatrical script in the author's (or authors') own hand'

The equivalent stage direction in the Folio reads ‘*Enter Marcus Andronicus aloft with the Crowne*’ which gives his location onstage and indicates that Marcus only enters at this point. However, Marcus begins his speech by noting how these ‘Princes [...] striue by factions and by friends [...] for Rule and Emperie’ (TLN 44-5), observing not only their opposition (which is obvious visibly) but also the reason for their hostility. It seems more logical to assume that he is responding to their opening gambits, and it makes good dramatic sense if the crown is visible from the beginning of the play. The added Folio direction ‘*Aloft*’ seems sensible because Saturninus and Bassianus ‘*goe vp into the Senate house*’ (TLN 96) after dismissing their followers. Presumably they enter so as to join the Tribunes and Senators who are already ‘*aloft*’ as the play’s opening stage direction declares. If so, it makes good sense that Marcus, with the crown (meaning he either holds the crown or is beside it), is also ‘*aloft*’. Wells thinks it ‘quite plausible that Marcus’ enters ‘*aloft*’ later than the other Tribunes, and finds support for the Folio reading since the quarto direction does not explicitly ‘deny the possibility’. But it is not certain that there is any authorial authority, in Peele’s case at least, for any additions to the Folio text; we do not know when such stage directions were added to the underlying manuscript. This is not to say that the Folio reading is not how the play was staged at any point in the play’s early performance history, but rather that this may not have been how the sequence of action was first envisaged.

Peele never includes a stage direction for ‘*aloft*’ in any of his other extant works, so the first entrance direction in ‘*Enter the Tribunes and Senatours aloft*’ is already anomalous in the writings of Peele.<sup>23</sup> Indeed the direction ‘*aloft*’ is unusual in any circumstance. A synonym for ‘above’, the direction is ‘seldom used’ in early modern drama but ‘the more usual term in the Shakespeare canon’ (Dessen and Thomson, 4). Peele does not tend to prescribe the use of the ‘above’ space. The ‘above’ space is observed twice in the ‘plot’ of *Battle of Alcazar*—that is, in a manuscript in preparation for performance—but nowhere in the 1594 quarto, a notoriously corrupt text that most scholars accept is a revised version of an autograph copy.<sup>24</sup> In printed texts of *The Arraignment of Paris*, *Battle of Alcazar*, and *The Old Wives Tale* there is not a single direction that calls unambiguously for the use of the upper stage space. An explicit call for the

(147). MacDonald P. Jackson, ‘Stage Directions and Speech Headings in Act 1 of *Titus Andronicus* Q (1594): Shakespeare or Peele?’, *Studies in Bibliography*, 49 (1996), 134-48.

23 Peele’s only use of ‘*aloft*’ to possibly denote a stage space occurs in dialogue in *Edward I*:

And see aloft Lluellens head,  
Empalled with a crowne of leads[.] (sig. K3<sup>v</sup>)

But the preceding entrance stage direction on sig. K3<sup>f</sup> suggests that the head is carried onto the main stage: ‘*Enter [...] with the Frier, the Nouice, the Harper, and Lluellens head on a speare.*’

24 See David Bradley, *From Text to Performance in the Elizabethan Theatre: Preparing the Play for the Stage* (Cambridge, 1992), *passim*. and Laurie Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts: The ‘Bad’ Quartos and their Contexts* (Cambridge, 1996), 80-3.

use of ‘*aboue*’ and ‘*beneath*’ space appears in *David and Bethsabe* (note again Peele’s uses of unprefixd speech):

*Assault, and they win the Tower, and Ioab speakes aboue.*

Thus haue we won the Tower, which we will keepe,  
Maugre the sonnes of Ammon, and of Syria.

*Enter Cusay beneath.* (sig. B4<sup>r</sup>)

And, as noted above, David also somehow watches Bethsabe from ‘*aboue*’ earlier in the play (sig. B1<sup>v</sup>). In *Edward I* we find a direction to note that characters enter to ‘*parle*’ on ‘*On the walles*’ (sig. D2<sup>v</sup>), which could reasonably be interpreted to mean the upper stage space. However, the full direction, with its call for six different characters suggests the lower stage space: ‘*On the walles enter Longshankes, Sussex, Mortimor, Daudid the Friar, M[e]redith holding Daudid by the collar, with a Dagger in his hande[.]*’ Dessen and Thomson record over forty uses of ‘*walls*’ in directions, but note that ‘*walls* had virtually become a technical term, usually used in the context of battle’ (245).<sup>25</sup> The point is not that Peele never uses the above space, but just that he is not typically inclined to and he never uses the Shakespearean direction ‘*aloft*’. Yet ‘*aloft*’ appears twice in the long opening scene in the quarto and there is another explicit direction for movement towards the upper stage space: ‘*The goe vp into the Senate House.*’

But this direction is itself also anomalous. I have not found ‘*go up into*’ used as a stage direction elsewhere in English drama 1576–1642 (*EEBO*). Two uses of the phrase in stage plays are, however, worth discussing. In Tourneur’s *Atheist’s Tragedy*, Cataplasma asks Levidulchia ‘*Will ‘t please your ladyship go up into the closet?*’ (4.1.63).<sup>26</sup> But the stage action is in a private indoors space, and they simply exit (with Sebastian) without later appearing above or calling from within. The other use of the phrase ‘*go up into*’ to prepare for stage movement is in *Julius Caesar*. Here is how it appears in the Folio (3.2.63–66.1):

25 Given the confusion over the staging of the opening scene, it may surprise readers to note that Peele can be extraordinarily prescriptive in his stage directions in other works. For example, consider the following entrance direction in *Edward I* (1593; STC 19535) where he is attentive to stage movement, costume, appearance:

*The Trumpets sound, and enter the traine, viz. his maimed Souldiers with headpeecees and Garlands on them, euery man with his red Crosse on his coate: the Ancient borne in a Chaire, his Garland and his plumes on his headpeece, his Ensigne in his hand. Enter after them Glocester and Mortimer bareheaded, & others as many as may be. Then Longshanks and his wife Elinor, Edmund Couchback, and Ione and Signior Moumfort the Earle of Leicesters prisoner, with Sailers and Souldiers, and Charles de Moumfort his brother.* (sig. A2<sup>v</sup>)

Or compare this direction in *The Arraignment of Paris* (1584; STC 19530), where Peele not only describes the appearance of the character (‘*foule croked*’) but also prescribes how to perform the silent action (‘*crabedly refuzeth*’):

*A foule croked Churle enters, & Thestilis a faire lasse wooeth him. he crabedly refuzeth her, and goethe out of place. She tarieth behinde.* (sig. C4<sup>v</sup>)

26 Citation from *The Atheist’s Tragedy*, ed. Brian Morris and Roma Gill (London, 1976).

1 Stay ho, and let vs heare *Mark Antony*.  
 3 Let him go vp into the publike Chaire,  
 Wee'l heare him: Noble *Antony* go vp.  
*Ant.* For *Brutus* sake, I am beholding to you.  
 4 What does he say of *Brutus*?

At the beginning of the scene, as per the Folio, Brutus enters ‘*and goes into the Pulpit*’. Some editions, including John Jowett’s edition for 1986 *Complete Works*, mark the pulpit as an above space. In this interpretation of the stage action—which seems justifiable given the only other option is to have a purpose-built and moveable ‘pulpit’ on the below stage—for Antony to ‘go vp into’ the pulpit he most likely exits the main stage and re-enters above to deliver his oration. That is, the phrase in *Julius Caesar* describes the exact stage movement implied by the stage direction in *Titus* as found in the Quarto.

The added Folio direction for Marcus, ‘*aloft*’, agrees with the other two uses of that characteristically Shakespearean direction in the first stage direction. It has never struck editors or critics as an unusual usage because it repeats the earlier direction found in the quarto text. Excluding *Titus*, ‘*aloft*’ is used as a stage direction seven times in the 1623 Folio:<sup>27</sup>

<i>Enter aloft the drunkard with attendants[.]</i>	<i>Taming of the Shrew</i> Induction 2.0.1
<i>Enter Generall aloft.</i>	1 <i>Henry VI</i> 4.2.2.2
<i>Enter Elianor aloft.</i>	2 <i>Henry VI</i> 1.4.12.2
<i>Enter Richard aloft, betweene two Bishops.</i>	<i>Richard III</i> 3.7.94.1
<i>Enter Romeo and Iuliet aloft.</i>	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> 3.5.0.1
<i>Enter Cleopatra, and her Maides aloft[.]</i>	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i> 4.16.0.1
<i>with Charmian &amp; Iras.</i>	
<i>They heaue Anthony aloft to Cleopatra.</i>	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i> 4.16.38.1

In the Folio copy of *Titus Andronicus*, ‘*aloft*’ is used three times within 300 lines. By comparison, across Shakespeare’s plays, as represented by the Folio, the stage direction for ‘above’ is only used three times (and the use in *All Is True* is in a scene written by Fletcher):

<i>Iessica aboue.</i>	<i>Merchant of Venice</i> 2.6.25.1
<i>The Presenters aboue speakes.</i>	<i>Taming of the Shrew</i> 1.1.246.1
<i>Enter the King, and Buts, at a Windowe aboue.</i>	<i>All Is True</i> 5.2.18.1

27 The 1986 Oxford *Complete Works* sometimes modifies stage directions in the Original Spelling text; act-scene-line numbers (from the Modern Spelling text) are provided for ease of cross-reference.

Moreover, if we complete a search for the specific direction ‘*Enter aloft*’ in plays printed between 1576 and 1642 (*EEBO*), the stage direction only occurs four times in three texts (barring duplication in quarto and Folio printings and excluding *Titus*):

*Enter aloft to cardes the Queene and Philocles.*

Gervase Markham, *The Dumb Knight* (1608), sig. H3<sup>v</sup>.

*Enter aloft Iulia, and Amada.*

*Enter aloft Borgias and the Senate.*

John Mason, *The Turk* (1610), sigs. B1<sup>r</sup>, B3<sup>r</sup>.

and, as we have seen,

*Enter aloft the drunkard with attendants[.]*

*Taming of the Shrew* Induction 2.0.1

Not only is the wording of this direction extremely rare, but also Shakespeare is the only person to use it in a play performed in the professional theatre in the Elizabethan period.

The anomalous use of Shakespeare’s preferred form ‘*aloft*’ in Peele’s part of the play and the *Julius Caesar* parallel for stage movement prescribed by ‘*goe vp into*’ creates some unexpected Shakespearean ‘noise’. This noise is of a different sort from additions in the Folio text. On the other hand, the manuscript underlying the first quarto is almost certainly autograph or an accurate transcription of some such manuscript. This seems especially true of Peele’s section of the play, as Jackson noted, which preserves: Peele’s distinctive preference for unprefixed speech and centred directions serving as speech prefixes; a permissive stage direction which is uniquely Peelean ‘*and others as many as can be*’. Also certain speaker parts in the Mutius burial passage are ambiguous ‘*Titus sonne speakes*’ (when there is more than one son present), which suggests the text has not been readied for performance. The stage directions in the first quarto are therefore more likely to have originated in the authorial manuscript than any other source: the quarto shows no signs of theatrical annotation and it is extremely unlikely that someone in John Danter’s printing shop added new directions or supplemented existing material. The interesting textual issue, then, is that the directions in the opening scene while substantially Peelean also appear to bear evidence of Shakespeare’s hand.

Without wishing to belabour the point, how we interpret these findings affects how we think about the scene’s authorship and the time-scheme for its composition. In terms of authorship, the opening scene in the quarto is either entirely Peelean or mostly Peelean. If the former, then Peele may have:

- (a) composed the first scene as found in the quarto before Shakespeare wrote his part of the play and

and

- (1) incongruities in the stage action in the text are casual *currente calamo* errors and not the product of revision
- (2) during composition, Peele rethought the stage action and added new with the original composition material that did not quite fit

(3) after completing a draft of the scene, Peele revised his original composition or

(b) revised the first scene after Shakespeare wrote his part of the play.

If the latter, and the opening scene is mostly but not entirely Peelean, the most likely candidate to have lightly revised the opening scene is Shakespeare. He may have done so with or without Peele's input or knowledge.

We will move from most conservative theory to most radical (although to suspect Peele's co-authorship was itself once considered radical). The most conservative explanation is that the directions discussed in the quarto reflect the autograph copy of the scene as written by Peele; that the Shakespearean 'noise' is merely coincidental and that Peele envisaged stage action split over two levels throughout his opening scene, but for one reason or another, did not adequately supply stage directions to explicate the action as it unfolds. Accepting this explanation, the reading as found in the quarto reflects the latest extant state of the text in Peele's hand. Another explanation is that Peele revised the staging in the play. He may have done so at the same time he added the Mutius material (if we accept that theory), but this need not necessarily be the case. In other words, Peele initially planned for stage action that made use entirely (or largely) of the below space, but later decided to divide the action between the upper and lower stage. He may have, for example, sought to revise the earlier staging to parallel the use of the aloft space in the Mutius passage: '*Enter aloft the Emperour with Tamora*'. Again, the reading in the quarto reflects the latest extant state of the text in Peele's hand, but the author has revised the material. The most radical interpretation is that Shakespeare revised some of the stage directions in what is substantively Peele's scene, creating a split-level effect and significantly altering the staging of the play.

A difficulty which all editors of *Titus* encounter is the uncertainty over the use of 'above' and 'below' space in this passage. But what if Peele never envisaged a Saturninus or anyone else 'above' version? Perhaps at the beginning of Peele's draft of the play, the Tribunes and Senators, including Marcus, enter below and stand between the factions. Saturninus and Bassianus simply exeunt rather than 'goe vp into the Senate House'. Titus refuses the empery as usual. Then, in this 'all below' option, what follows is the conservative staging option discussed above for the murder of Mutius, except that when Saturninus re-appears with the Goths and Aaron they are on the main stage rather than '*aloft*'.

The 'all below' theory may also explicate a later call for stage action that is typically ignored by editors. Once Saturninus makes his play for Tamora, he says:

Ascend faire Queene: Pantheon Lords accompany  
Your Noble Emperour and his louelie Bride,  
Sent by the Heauens for Prince *Saturnine*[.] (TLN 383-5)

Where must Tamora, accompanied by the lords, 'ascend' to if she is already in the '*aloft*' space, as per the quarto? Or could 'ascend' simply mean 'ascend' to the throne, leaving the Andronici to their funerary business? A related issue complicates this. Where are the lords who must accompany Saturninus and Tamora? Did they re-enter



below when Saturninus, the Goths and Aaron enter *'aloft'*? It seems implausible that they would be in the already crowded *'aloft'* space with the emperor and others. But if not how can they 'accompany' someone who is already *'aloft'*? Surely, the simpler interpretation is that Saturninus is below with the others (and the unnoted lords) and they enter to 'ascend' (but do not, since they re-enter below) or that 'ascend' just means 'become queen'; in either case the location of the lords is not a problem.

No modern edition could or would put this theory into practice. The extant quarto text clearly states that the *'aloft'* space is required. But, for the reasons given above, the use of the above space has a distinct Shakespearean flavour. The addition of *'aloft'* to existing stage directions would be easy; the *'goe vp into'* could replace a simple exit direction (if one was present). Further evidence, discussed below, suggests that Shakespeare and Peele did not work collaboratively but separately. Peele appears to have contributed nothing to Shakespeare's part of the play. But Shakespeare may have contributed to Peele's share. He may have touched up the stage directions in Peele's draft to allow for the use of the *'aloft'* space. In doing so, he may have unwittingly encouraged the confusion over the staging of the opening scene. This theory is less interesting for how it impacts upon our editing of the play, which we will leave here, than what it might tell us about the working relationship of Shakespeare and Peele.

## VII. Late Peele, Early Shakespeare

The date of composition for *Titus Andronicus* remains a vexing problem, but one pertinent to our discussion here. Henslowe's entry of 'titus & ondronicus' for a performance by Sussex's Men at the Rose on 24 January 1594 provides us with a *terminus ad quem* for the play's composition. But the title page for Q1 (1594) records that the play was performed by Derby's Men (also known as Strange's Men), Pembroke's Men, and Sussex's Men, suggesting a somewhat extended performance history. In the 'Canon and Chronology' essay for the *New Oxford Shakespeare*, Taylor and I observe a *possible* date range from 1584 to 1594, but our best guess is late 1589.<sup>28</sup> The closure of the theatres from late June 1592 through 1593 suggests a latest plausible date of early 1592 for composition (i.e., allowing time for performances by two separate companies before the closures in June). The large cast-size, a feature of pre-plague plays, also suggests 1592 or before. So, too, a convincing allusion to *Titus* ('imperiall Diademe' etc.) in *A Knack to Know a Knave* (performed 10 June 1592 and printed 1594) suggests an earlier date.<sup>29</sup> Re-dating *Titus Andronicus* to the 1580s impacts upon the way in which we think about the play's co-authorship. In late 1589 George Peele (*bap.*

28 For a fuller account of the play's date, see Rory Loughnane and Gary Taylor, 'The Canon and Chronology of Shakespeare's Works', *Shakespearean Authorship: A Companion to the New Oxford Shakespeare*, eds Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford, forthcoming).

29 Stanley Wells has argued that violence in *Titus* is less well integrated than the *Henry VI* plays and places it just after *Two Gentlemen of Verona* in the early works. See 'The Integration of Violence in *Titus Andronicus*', *Shakespearean Continuities: Essays in Honour of E. A. J. Honigmann*, ed. John Batchelor, Tom Cain and Claire Lamont (Basingstoke, 1997), 206–20. Martin Wiggins gives a date range of 1584–1594, with a best guess of 1592 (#928).

1556) was probably at most thirty-three years old. Shakespeare (*hap.* 26 April 1654) was probably twenty-five years old. As their respective ages make clear, it would be rash to accept a narrative that imagines Peele as the much older experienced hand to Shakespeare's subordinate naïf.<sup>30</sup> The period 1588–1592 is generally accepted as the time Peele wrote his four extant plays for the public theatres.<sup>31</sup> (Very few plays survive from the public playhouses from 1576–1587.) Over the same period Shakespeare likely writes or has a hand in at least five other plays: *Arden of Faversham*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Taming of the Shrew*, and versions of *2 Henry VI* and *3 Henry VI*.<sup>32</sup> In other words, although Peele had been writing since his days at Oxford in the early 1580s (Peele completed his studies in 1579 but only moved to London in 1581), both poets' writing careers for the public theatres appear to align in this period. That Peele's career ended soon after, while Shakespeare's began in earnest, tells us nothing about how we should view the nature of their working relationship at this moment in time. But we should also be duly cautious about the apparent alignment of the careers of Peele and Shakespeare in this period. We simply do not know when Peele began writing for the playhouses, or how many of his plays are lost. Nor for that matter do we know when Peele ceased writing for the playhouses.

Martin Wiggins' *Catalogue* suggests this chronology for Peele's play canon (plays for public playhouses in bold):

- 1582 *Iphigenia*<sup>33</sup>
- 1584 *Arraignment of Paris*
- 1585 *Hunting of Cupid* (extant as a fragment; possibly not a play)
- 1585 *Woolstone Dixie Pageant*
- 1588 ***The Turkish Muhammed* (lost; probably a public playhouse play)**
- 1588 ***Alcazar* (limits 1588-9)**
- 1588 *London Lord Mayor's Pageant*
- 1589 ***Troublesome Reign* (disputed attribution; limits 1587-91)**
- 1590 ***David and Bethsheba* (limits 1584-94)**
- 1591 ***Edward I* (limits 1590-93)**
- 1591 *Descensus Astraeae* (performed on 25 October 1591)
- 1592 ***The Old Wife's Tale* (limits 1588-95; 'extant text' may be 'that of a later adaptation')**
- 1595 *London Lord Mayor's Pageant* (Peele submitted a tender, but it may have been rejected)

30 Seven to eight years is not an entirely insignificant gap, of course. But, compare Shakespeare's own later experiences as the senior hand: a seventeen year age gap with Thomas Middleton (co-author of *Timon*) and a fifteen year age gap with John Fletcher (co-author of *All is True* and *Two Noble Kinsmen*).

31 His earlier extant play, *The Arraignment of Paris*, was performed before Elizabeth in *c.* 1581 and printed in 1584. There is, therefore, a significant gap between his early play for court performance and his next known plays, which are all for the public theatres. Presumably, several of Peele's works have been lost.

32 Or seven plays if we include an early version of *Hamlet*. See Terri Bourus, *Young Shakespeare's Young Hamlet: Print, Piracy, and Performance* (Basingstoke, 2014), *passim*.

33 Reid Barbour reports that Peele 'was consulted' in June 1583 'on the entertainment planned for the Oxford visit of Albertus Alasco, count palatine of Siradia, Poland'. Reid Barbour, 'Peele, George (*hap.* 1556, *d.* 1596)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004.

As Wiggins observes, *Arraignment of Paris* and *Alcazar* are both structured into five acts, indicative of their predating ‘commercial theatres’s abandonment of the five-act structure in *c.* 1590’ (vol. 3, 58). The act structure in *David and Bethsheba* is ambiguous, while *Edward I* and *Old Wife’s Tale* have none. These latter plays, as Wiggins suggests, may have been composed in 1591–1592. But as Wiggins’s dating limits also suggest, Peele’s latest play for the public playhouses could be as early as 1590 with *Edward I* (which would still allow for the new vogue in dispensing with five-act structures). Peele died in late 1596 (buried 9 November), at the age of forty having been refused patronage by William Cecil. His petition to Burghley—offered by his eldest daughter—complained of ill health and worse fortune.

But let us turn to *Titus* again. Weber and Pruitt have recently persuasively demonstrated that Shakespeare is the author of 4.1 (and not Peele as had been earlier proposed).<sup>34</sup> That finding alters how we might think about the initial process of composition for the play. If Peele had no hand in the play after the long opening scene, then there is no reason to assume that the play’s composition was a collaborative effort; rather, Shakespeare may have taken over the writing of the play from Peele. There are, of course, other examples of writers completing the first act and then abandoning it. For example, Nashe claimed that he only wrote the opening act of *The Isle of Dogs*, indicating that he had no control over what was added thereafter. It is possible that Peele and Shakespeare never worked in collaboration.

Because (a) *Titus* has been dated as late as 1594 (and Bate’s late date is anomalous in the history of editing/dating the play), and (b) Peele was thought to be the author of the opening scene and 4.1, it was easier to suppose that Peele and Shakespeare worked collaboratively to produce their blood-soaked tragedy. The 1594 narrative supposes that Shakespeare worked collaboratively with Peele at the end of the latter’s career. But if *Titus* (a) belongs to late 1589 (as we re-date it, with a latest plausible date of early 1592) and (b) can be divided cleanly between Peele’s opening share and Shakespeare’s contribution of the rest, we might be tempted to think of the process of composition in a new way.

The possible allusion to Shakespeare as an ‘vpstart Crow’ passage in *Groatsworth of Wit* (1592) is one of the most over-cited excerpts in all of theatre history. Just preceding it, we find a likely allusion to Peele, a ‘fellow’ scholar ‘about this Cittie’:

And thou no lesse deseruing than the other two [meaning Marlowe and probably Nashe], in some things rarer, in nothing inferiour; driuen (as my selfe) to extreme shifts, a litle haue I to say to thee: and were it not an idolatrous oth, I would sweare by sweet S. George, thou art vnworthy better hap, sith thou dependest on so meane a stay. (sig. F1<sup>v</sup>)

34 See William Weber, ‘Shakespeare After All?: The Authorship of *Titus Andronicus* 4.1 Reconsidered’, *Shakespeare Survey*, 67 (2014), 69–84, and Anna Pruitt, ‘Refining the LION Collocation Test: A Comparative Study of Authorship Test Results for *Titus Andronicus* 4.1’, in *Shakespearean Authorship* (Oxford, forthcoming). Pruitt’s essay establishes that Weber’s overall thesis is correct but expands significantly upon these findings.

The author (Greene?) warns of those ‘Puppets [. . .] that spake from our mouths, those Anticks garnisht in our colours’. He asks is it not ‘strange’ that these other writers ‘to whome they all haue beene beholding [. . .] bee both at once of them forsaken?’ He says ‘trust them not [. . .] beautified with our feathers’. Could the author be alluding, however obliquely, to Shakespeare’s use of Peele’s partial script? Or is it just, as most scholars have assumed, a tirade against Shakespeare and others ‘ape’-ing their style in an attempt to ‘imitate [their] past excellence’.<sup>35</sup> If we accept the allusion is to Peele, he is still spending his wit ‘in making plaies’ before September 1592 (entered in the Stationers’ Register on 20 September), but he is implored to stop and it is suggested that he has been ill-treated by others dramatists. If we accept the ‘vpstart Crow’ allusion is to Shakespeare, then it seems that the latter is being singled out specifically as someone who (at the least) borrowed from Peele or (at the worst) ripped him off in some way.

But in the context perhaps this is not all that odd really. It is now understood (or at least has been persuasively argued) that both Marlowe (*2 Henry VI*, *3 Henry VI*, *1 Henry VI*) and Nashe (*1 Henry VI*) had a hand in ‘Early Shakespeare’.<sup>36</sup> That is, the three authors alluded to before the ‘vpstart Crow’ passage from 1592 are all dramatists who have contributed in some way to performed plays that Shakespeare has also contributed to. Is the author of *Groatsworth of Wit*, we might speculate, complaining that Shakespeare’s reputation has been unfairly embellished by the under acknowledged work of others? Could he be alluding to *Titus*? In any case, Shakespeare’s dramatic career had begun in earnest, while Peele’s heyday had come and gone.

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35 For an alternative interpretation of the ‘upstart crow’, see Brian Vickers, “‘Upstart Crow’? The Myth of Shakespeare’s Plagiarism”, *RES*, forthcoming.

36 For division of authorship, see the entries for the three *Henry VI* plays in Loughnane and Taylor, ‘The Canon and Chronology of Shakespeare’s Works’ (Oxford, forthcoming).