

from *Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet": Texts, Contexts, and Interpretation*, ed. Jay Halio (Newark: U. of Delaware Press, 1995), 107-22

Q1 *Romeo and Juliet* and Elizabethan Theatrical Vocabulary

Alan C. Dessen

After many years of neglect, that sub-group of early printed texts of Shakespeare's plays once dismissed as "bad" quartos has moved closer to center stage. For generations scholars have drawn upon these shorter versions of *2 Henry VI*, *3 Henry VI*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Henry V*, *Hamlet*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in order to construct narratives about the origins, auspices, and distinctive features of the longer "good" versions; in fashioning their editions, moreover, editors have made selective use of distinctive material found in the shorter texts. When constructing narratives or editions or both, the failings of the "bad" version (in the spirit of Dogberry's "comparisons are odorous") then often become a foil to set off the virtues of the "good"--as evidenced by the frequent citation for comic relief of Q1 *Hamlet's* "To be, or not to be, I there's the point" (D4v).

Such a comparative approach may be unavoidable, for few readers familiar with the received version of *Romeo* or *Hamlet* can disremember distinctive and often highly prized elements so as to look afresh at the shorter first quartos.¹ Such comparisons, moreover, can be fruitful when they italicize distinctive features of either text. To use the "bad" version only as a springboard into a fuller understanding of the "good," however, is to blur or eclipse some valuable evidence--in particular, evidence about how these and other plays were staged in the 1590s and early 1600s.

My goal in this essay on *Romeo and Juliet* is, then, not to ignore totally the second or "good" quarto version printed in 1599, a text that rightly serves as the basis for today's editions, but still to focus primarily upon the evidence provided and the implicit strategies found in the much shorter first or "bad" quarto of 1597. My interest is generated in part by Q1's title page which announces that what is to follow is "An Excellent conceited Tragedie of Romeo and Iuliet. As it hath been often (with great

applause) plaid publicly, by the right Honourable the L. of *Hunsdon* his Seruants."² Admittedly, claims on title pages are comparable to the puffery found on dust jackets of books today. Nonetheless, given Q1's unusually informative and often distinctive stage directions, I, for one, give some weight to the statement "As it hath been often (with great applause) plaid publicly." I do not intend to explore the nature or auspices of the performances encapsulated in "often" (a matter of some significance to those scholars who explain Q1 as a version of a longer play that has been abridged for performance "on the road"); rather, I am concerned with this printed text as evidence about a performed version of this play somewhere, anywhere in the mid 1590s.

From a close look at Q1 as a theatrical document emerge several categories of onstage effects. First, for whatever reason this text provides more stage directions than normally found elsewhere and hence more details of various kinds.³ As a result, there are a number of Q1-only stage directions that clearly or probably do pertain to Q2, as when a Q1 signal makes explicit what is clearly implicit in Q2's dialogue. For example, "*Tibalt vnder Romeos arme thrusts Mercutio, in and flyes*" (F1v) spells out what a reader can infer from Mercutio's statement to Romeo in Q2 (where no such stage direction is to be found): "Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm" (3.1.100-1). Similarly, Q1 is much more specific than Q2 about actions and properties in 5.3, although most of these details *are* present implicitly in Q2: "*Enter Countie Paris and his Page with flowers and sweete water*"; "*Paris strewes the Tomb with flowers*"; "*Enter Romeo and Balthasar, with a torch, a mattocke, and a crow of yron*" (I4v); "*Romeo opens the tombe*" (K1r); "*Fryer stoops and lookes on the blood and weapons*" (K2r); "*She stabs herselfe and falles*" (K2v).

Other details specified in Q1 most likely do pertain as well to Q2. For example, in Q2 Balthasar's 5.1 appearance in Mantua to deliver news of Juliet's death to Romeo is signaled by "*Enter Romeos man*" (K4r), but the Q1 signal reads: "*Enter Balthasar his man booted*" (I3r). As I have noted elsewhere,⁴ stage boots and comparable accessories

(e.g., crops, riding cloaks, safeguards) are widely used in this period as onstage signifiers to denote a journey recently completed or about to be undertaken, often with the added connotation of haste or weariness. Balthasar's haste in outstripping the message crafted by the friar is important in both quartos, but Q2 is silent about the boots (such silence, it should be noted, is the norm in such situations). Meanwhile, imagery in the dialogue linked to haste is much more prominent or developed in Q2, with that prominence or development also true for other networks of imagery in the longer version. Thus, the following exchange is only found in Q2: Romeo: "O, let us hence! I stand on sudden haste"; friar: "Wisely and slow. They stumble that run fast" (2.3.93-4). Q1 as we have it relies heavily upon staging details to set up its images and connotations, but this particular costume signifier would also be appropriate for Q2 where it would form part of a much richer network.⁵

An especially provocative situation is generated by Romeo's attempted suicide in 3.3 where Q2 provides no stage direction at all but Q1 provides: "*He offers to stab himself, and Nurse snatches the dagger away*" (G1v). Some editors deem the Q1 signal relevant to Q2 and therefore incorporate it into their texts, but New Arden editor Brian Gibbons rejects the Nurse's intervention as "neither necessary or defensible." Rather, for this editor "this piece of business looks like a gratuitous and distracting bid on the part of the actor in the unauthorized version to claim extra attention to himself when the audience should be concentrating on Romeo and the Friar" (p. 180). In the Arden edition the Nurse's intervention is therefore relegated to the textual notes and footnotes.

Whether the Q1 signal does or does not pertain to the Q2 scene may be moot, but the strategy behind this stage direction is to call attention not to the actor but to the onstage configuration, a configuration that in turn epitomizes images and motifs enunciated in the dialogue of both quartos. After Mercutio's death, Q1's Romeo, echoing a comparable passage in Q2, had cried out: "Ah *Iuliet* / Thy beautie makes me thus effeminate, / And in my temper softens valors steele" (F2r, see 3.1.111-13). Then, in Q1,

after Romeo's aborted attempt at suicide and the Nurse's intervention, the friar's long moralization starts:

Hold, stay thy hand: art thou a man? thy forme
Cryes out thou art, but thy wilde actes denote
The vnresonable furyes of a beast.
Vnseemely woman in a seeming man,
Or ill beseeming beast in seeming both. (G1v--see 3.3.108-13)

The playgoer who sees Q1's Romeo's self-destructive violence interrupted (surprisingly) by the nurse and then hears the friar's terms (e.g., "art thou a man?"; "Vnseemely woman in a seeming man") is therefore encouraged to consider: what kind of "man" *is* Romeo at this point in the play? What by one kind of interpretative logic may seem "gratuitous and distracting" or "out of character" or "unbelievable" may, in the terms of a different logic or vocabulary, prove imagistically or symbolically consistent or meaningful. Indeed, how better act out the ascendancy of the "womanish" or unmanly side of Romeo and call that ascendancy to the attention of a first-time playgoer? The Q1 stage business thereby italicizes ideas and images even further developed in Q2 (where the friar's moralization includes the phrase "thy tears are womanish" not found in Q1). My instinct is to treat this Q1-only signal as comparable to Balthasar's boots (as a theatrical effect relevant to Q2 but not recorded or specified in the extant text), but that claim must remain moot.

A second category of the unusually specific Q1 signals that again could pertain to Q2 as well is composed of stage directions that echo each other so as to suggest some kind of patterning. First, a very common staging signal in this period (as with *Enter...booted*) is the call for figures to *offer to go* and then be called back or change their minds. No such signals are to be found in Q2, but two turn up in Q1 within a page of each other. First, in 3.3 after Romeo's attempted suicide and the friar's lecture, "*Nurse offers to goe in and turne againe*" (G2r) so as to give a ring to Romeo (and then depart); a few lines later in 3.4 after Paris says his farewell: "*Paris offers to goe in, and Capolet*

calles him againe" (G2v) to offer Juliet's hand in marriage. Both bits of business (as with Balthasar's boots) may or may not be relevant to Q2, but such spelling out of a highly visible interrupted exit twice within fifteen lines in Q1 suggests some kind of linkage or patterning not available to the reader of the received text. Is this departure-return of first the nurse, then Paris, designed to italicize the plight of Juliet? Or are these two scripted moments part of a larger network whose other elements for whatever reason have not been spelled out (examples might include Romeo during the balcony scene or the friar in the tomb)? To attend solely to the signals in Q2 is to sidestep what could be some fruitful questions.

Also of possible interest is a link in Q1 between the entrance of the nurse in 3.2 with news of Tybalt's death "*wringing her hands*" (F3r) and the discovery of Juliet's body where "*All at once cry out and wring their hands*" (I2r). Such wringing of hands is not a recurrent stage direction in this period, although it may indeed have been a regular part of the theatrical vocabulary shared by players and playgoers to denote grief or perhaps excessive grief (e.g., after discovering the body of Polonius behind the arras Hamlet tells Gertrude "leave wringing of your hands"--3.4.35). As with the two examples of "*offers to goe in,*" the repetition of hand-wringing in these two signals raises some interpretative questions. Are these two moments to be linked in any fashion, perhaps to suggest the hollowness of the reaction to Juliet's "death"? Or, again, are these two items (as perhaps, according to one scholarly formulation, remembered from an actual performance) part of a larger network that might include other hand-wringings by Romeo, Juliet, and their parents in 5.1 and 5.3? Such questions linked to patterning may or may not pertain to Q2 but *are* generated by these two echoes in Q1. Moreover, that a close look at Q1 *does* generate such questions indicates the assets of treating the shorter text as an integral unit rather than merely a foil for Q2.

Other visual echoes also turn up in Q1: Juliet's two kneelings, first when resisting old Capulet's proposed marriage to Paris ("*She kneeles downe*"--H1r) and next, after her

visit to the friar, when she apparently acquiesces to her father (again, "*She kneeles downe*"--H4r); and the two specific references to curtains, first after Juliet takes the potion in 4.3 ("*She fals upon her bed within the Curtaines*"--I1r), and next after the lamenting over Juliet's body ("*They all but the Nurse goe forth, casting Rosemary at her and shutting the Curtens*"--I2v). Such visual analogues do not in themselves turn Q1 into a "good" or fully realized play, but when taken as a group they do suggest a sense of design at work that may be further realized in other moments not so specified. Given the many silences about staging and onstage effects in this period, any such evidence should be treated as a precious commodity and not lumped in a "bad" category.

Of perhaps greater interest (and easier to miss today) are those elements in Q1 that do *not* mesh comfortably with Q2 and hence have been discarded by generations of editors who have viewed the shorter text through the lens of the longer. Consider the brawl that begins the play. Readers conditioned by the received text may understandably find the Q1 version underdone and hence less interesting. Thus, after a shorter version of the sparring among the four servants, Benvolio enters; after one line from the second Capulet servant ("Say I, here comes my Masters kinsman"), the stage direction reads: "*They draw, to them enters Tybalt, they fight, to them the Prince, old Mountague, and his wife, old Capulet and his wife, and other Citizens and part them*" (A4v); the Prince's speech then follows. Missing here are Q2's verbal confrontation between Benvolio and Tybalt, a few lines from an officer and some citizens, some impassioned speeches from the two fathers, and some words of restraint from the two mothers.

Like other readers, I find Q2's version much richer, whether Capulet's call for his long sword (to which his wife responds "A crutch, a crutch! Why call you for a sword?"--1.1.73-4) or, most tellingly, Tybalt's powerful five lines (e.g., "What, drawn, and talk of peace? I hate the word / As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee"--67-8). Nonetheless, to dwell upon the assets of the longer version is to run the risk of missing some distinctive Q1-only features. In particular, to read carefully the Q1 stage direction is to raise the

question: what or who is the subject of the verb *part* and who is to be understood as included within the collective *them*? If a reader starts with the Q2 scene, the answer is obvious, for there, with the two fathers itching to join the fray, any parting of combatants must be done by officers, citizens, and those in the prince's "*train*" (78.s.d.). If that same reader, however, can disremember the Q2 signal, Q1's wording ("*They draw, to them enters Tybalt, they fight, to them the Prince, old Mountague, and his wife, old Capulet and his wife, and other Citizens and part them*") consistently links *they-them* to the servants, Benvolio, and Tybalt and appears to include the two fathers and two mothers among those who do the parting.

How would this signal be read if only the shorter version were available? As in Q2 the prince in Q1 holds old Capulet and old Montague responsible for this and previous civil brawls; in both versions, moreover, Tybalt is definitely a part of the fray, although in Q1 he does not vocalize his hatred, nor does Benvolio have the opportunity to act out, however ineffectually, the Good Will in his name. But Q1, if read in its own right and not through the lens of Q2, is not only shorter but significantly different in that the fathers seem to be restraining influences (at least at this moment) rather than eager participants. Such a different sense of agency or dynamics in turn sets up a different context for Capulet's restraint of Tybalt in 1.5. If the father has not been seen as a near combatant, his praise of Romeo (who is reported to be "a vertuous and well gouern'd youth") and his desire to avoid any disturbance ("I would not for the wealth of all this towne, / Here in my house doo him disparagement"--C3r) make excellent sense and, as in 1.1, link the passions of the feud primarily to the servants and to the hotheads of the younger generation epitomized by Tybalt. Then at the end of 3.1 where Q2 introduces the parents again, Q1 signals only: "*Enter Prince, Capolets wife*" (F2v). A variety of explanations can be offered for this shorter version of the reaction to the deaths of Mercutio and Tybalt (e.g., the hypothesis that Q1 is designed for a smaller cast), but, if Q1 is read as a discrete text, the practical result is a different set of images or

relationships, most notably a Capulet less involved in the passions of the feud (with those passions in Q1's 3.1 linked solely to Lady Capulet) and more the conventional father figure and the elimination of any appearance of Montague between 1.1 and the end of 5.3.

As with the signal for the brawl in 1.1, many other elements with possible interpretative significance unique to Q1 have been screened from sight by the presence of a better known version found in Q2. For example, how is a reader or playgoer with an allegorical bent to react to old Montague's revelation in Q1's 5.3 that not only has his wife died but "yong *Benuolio* is deceased too" (K3r). In this version, the wiping out of the younger generation is complete--along with the demise of Good Will. In the remainder of this essay, however, I propose to sidestep detailed enumeration of such elements and focus instead upon a group of significant moments and images, some of them common to both texts, linked to the onstage presentation of distinctive places or locales.

Let me start with a seemingly anomalous Q2-only moment where in 2.3 Romeo is directed to enter not at the end of Friar Laurence's 30-line speech but after line 22. To have Romeo enter just in time to deliver his first line in the scene ("Good morrow, father") may be a tidier solution (so some editors reposition the entry), but various interpretative possibilities emerge if Romeo is onstage for lines 23-30. For example, a Romeo who hears the friar talking about the presence of both poison and medicine within the same flower may be more likely to think of such poison (and the apothecary) in 5.1. Moreover, a playgoer who sees Romeo appear and meanwhile listens to the friar may be more likely to make a connection between "this weak flower" (in line 23, juxtaposed with Romeo's appearance) and Romeo, so that the friar's subsequent analysis, that builds to a postulation of "grace and rude will" (28) encamped in all of us, is not understood solely in highly abstract terms but is linked to the key chooser in the tragedy. Whatever the interpretation, the juxtaposition and timing here can be highly suggestive to both the actor and the playgoer and can form a significant part of the onstage vocabulary of this scene.

No such early entrance for Romeo is to be found in Q1, however, so that at first glance the juxtaposition of Romeo with the final lines of the friar's speech appears to be an effect unique to Q2. A second glance, however, reveals no designated entrance for Romeo at all in the shorter text. The absence of such a signal for Romeo in Q1's 2.3 is certainly not unusual, for printed texts of the period regularly omit both exits and mid-scene entrances. The omission here of such an entrance for Romeo, whether during the friar's speech or before Romeo's first lines, may therefore be no more than an error, another example of the "badness" of a "bad" quarto.⁶ The editor or reader who consults Q1 to flesh out or explain difficulties in Q2 will waste little time on such an absence.

For the reader who views Q1 as a discrete entity, however, the situation is more interesting--or anomalous--for combined with this particular silence is a comparable absence of an *exit* for Q1's Romeo in the previous 2.2. In both quartos a Romeo couplet before the friar's entrance suggests a change of place: "Now will I to my Ghostly fathers Cell, / His help to craue, and my good hap to tell"--Q1, D3v), but only in Q2 is "*Exit*" to be found in the right margin (D4v) although there is space for such a signal in Q1. That reader who takes Q1's signals literally will therefore find a Romeo who at the end of the balcony scene announces a displacement to "my Ghostly fathers Cell" but in fact remains somewhere onstage so as eventually to address the friar. Again, if one reads Q1 as printed, in this version Romeo is not only onstage for the *latter* part of the friar's speech, as in Q2, but is present throughout the *entire* speech, unseen by the friar but presumably seen by the playgoer.

Several issues are at stake here, issues that bring into focus a distinctive gap between 1590s stage practice and 1990s assumptions. The reader today, conditioned by the scene divisions encoded by Shakespeare's earliest editors, takes for granted an entity known as The Balcony Scene (2.2) which is to be distinguished from the first Friar Laurence scene (2.3). Such a distinction *is* to be found in Q2 to the extent that Romeo exits and the stage is cleared before the friar's appearance.⁷ Even more telling is the

violation (again, if one takes seriously Q1 as printed) of what might be termed "geographical realism." If the dialogue and action of 2.2 have defined the locale as an enclosed area beneath Juliet's balcony to which Romeo gains access with some risk, how is a playgoer to believe that the friar casually enters the same place to gather his flowers and weeds, an inference that might be supported, despite Romeo's final couplet, if he indeed does not leave the stage?

Although of some importance to readers today, such an objection apparently carried considerably less weight for Elizabethan players and playgoers. Rather, violations of our sense of geographical realism do turn up elsewhere: a well known example is provided in *King Lear* where Kent asleep in the stocks, presumably in the courtyard of Gloucester's castle, is juxtaposed with an Edgar in flight who speaks of having hid in the hollow of a tree.⁸ Whether to enhance the narrative pace or to italicize some point (as with the links between the plights of Kent and Edgar), Shakespeare and his colleagues were capable of dispensing with a form of "realism" prized more highly today. The "placing" of scenes is not irrelevant to Elizabethan theatrical practice, at least in their terms, but upon occasion something else--a concern for imagery or patterning or economy--could supersede what some readers today consider of primary importance.

Furthermore, the reader who finds Romeo's continuous presence during 2.2-2.3 unlikely or even bizarre should remember that at the end of 1.4 in *both* quartos Romeo, Mercutio, and the other masquers do not *exeunt* but remain onstage to be joined by the Capulets, their servants, and their guests. As with the 1.1 brawl, the effect is considerably more elaborate in Q2 where, after Romeo's "on lustie Gentlemen" and Benvolio's "Strike drum," "*They march about the Stage, and Seruingmen come forth with Napkins*" (C2v).⁹ Then, after speeches from the servants (with no reference to the masquers) and an *exeunt*: "*Enter all the guests and gentlewomen to the Maskers*" (C3r), with Capulet elaborately welcoming the masked visitors and recalling the days when he too wore a visor. In its more concise version, Q1 provides a comparable Romeo speech

that also ends with "on lustie Gentlemen" (C2v) and, like Q2, does not signal an *exeunt* for the masquers. This shorter text, however, does not include a march about the stage and does not bring on any servants; rather, Romeo's line is followed immediately by "*Enter old Capulet with the Ladies*," saying "Welcome Gentlemen, welcome Gentlemen." The effect in Q1 is therefore comparable but simpler and more direct, with fewer personnel required, a more abrupt change of place, and no specifying of physical action by the masquers to suggest, however elliptically, a movement from street to house.

In both quartos, then, the ball comes to the masquers; in neither do the the masquers *exeunt* and *re-enter* to a new place.¹⁰ Is it therefore inconceivable that a few scenes later Q1's friar could join a Romeo already onstage? In such a staging the friar would not be joining Romeo in a place adjacent to Juliet's balcony but would by his arrival be signaling a new locale, with that change of place reinforced by Romeo's couplet ("Now will I to my Ghostly fathers Cell...") and perhaps some accompanying movement comparable to the marching about the stage called for in Q2 for 1.4-1.5. Such a staging is possible, not certain, but even the possibility can be blurred or eclipsed for readers wedded to 1990s as opposed to 1590s approaches to "place."

To take seriously the continuity in Q1's presentation of 2.2-2.3 and, in general, the greater flexibility in presenting onstage locales is not to undermine traditional interpretations of the play. Nonetheless, advantages are to be gained by invoking the original theatrical vocabulary. To pursue the assets of such an approach as applied to place-locale, consider the available ways to stage a "shop scene" in an Elizabethan theatre. One option was to "discover" one or more figures in such a shop: "*Enter discover'd in a Shop, a Shoo-maker, his Wife Spinning, Barnaby, two Journimen*" (W. Rowley, *A Shoemaker, a Gentleman*, 1.2.0.s.d.); "A Mercers Shop discovered, *Gartred* working in it, *Spendall* walking by the Shop" (Cooke, *Greene's Tu Quoque*, B1r). Far more plentiful, however, are comparable signals that do not specify a discovery wherein "the shop" would be revealed by opening a curtain but rather direct the players to enter

"*in the shop*," a locution that *could* be read as "*enter [as if] in the shop*": "*Enter Signior Alunio the Apothecarie in his shop with wares about him*" (Sharpham, *The Fleer*, 4.2.0.s.d.); "*Enter Luce in a Sempsters shop, at worke upon a lac'd Handkercher, and Joseph a Prentice*" (Heywood, *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*, V, 284); "*Enter in the shop two of Hobsons folkes, and opening the shop*" (Heywood, *2 If You Know Not Me*, I, 283). In at least some scenes, moreover, the actors were not suddenly revealed "in" this place, a theatrical option that jibes with a post-Elizabethan fourth wall convention, but rather brought "the shop" with them onto the main stage, an option supported by Field's signal: "*Enter Seldome and Grace working as in their shop*" (*Amends for Ladies*, 2.1.0.s.d.). Thus, some tradesmen enter with their work rather than being discovered: "*Enter a Shoemaker sitting upon the stage at worke Jenkin to him*" (*George a Greene*, 971-2); "*Enter Strumbo, Dorotheie, Trompart cobling shoos and singing*" (*Lochrine*, 569-70). Several scenes therefore call for a setting forth of furniture on the stage: "*A Table is set out by young fellows like Merchants men, Bookes of Accounts upon it, small Deskes to write upon, they sit downe to write Tickets*" (Dekker, *If this be not a good play*, 2.2.0.s.d.).

Elizabethan players therefore had various options: (1) to draw a curtain so as to discover figures in a shop (and set up an initial tableau); (2) by means of furniture, costume, and properties to have figures set forth "the shop" (so that "*opening the shop*" may have entailed the carrying onto the stage of a stall and merchandise, perhaps even an awning); or (3) to have figures enter working or with the tools of their trade (one way of realizing "*as in the shop*"). The options are comparable to (1) a banquet revealed behind a curtain (from which figures come forth) versus (2) a table and food set up upon the stage versus (3) figures entering "*as from dinner*" (Massinger, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, 3.3.0.s.d.). Given the demands of a particular narrative and the investment in shop, banquet, or other place-event, the players could present considerable detail or could opt for a more economical approach *as in* or *as from*. The latter option both increases the

narrative pace and, if done deftly, can set up "images" that link scenes together.

Invoking "shop" scenes may appear questionable in an essay on *Romeo*, but the one relevant scene in the Shakespeare canon is generated by Romeo's encounter with the apothecary. In the shorter Q1 version Romeo remembers a "needie shop" that was "stufft / With beggerly accounts of empty boxes: / And in the same an *Aligarta* hangs, / Olde endes of packthred, and cakes of Roses, / Are thinly strewed to make vp a show" (I3v--see 5.1.42-8). The playgoer, however, sees no such interior, for when Romeo seeks out the apothecary ("and here about he dwels"), he notes "Being Holiday the Beggers shop is shut." In effect, whatever the actor gestures to at "and here about he dwels" (in Q2, "this should be the house") "becomes" the shop. The apothecary then enters to Romeo's call ("Who calls, what would you sir?") and soon after provides the vial of poison requested ("put it in anie liquid thing you will..."--I4r).

To discover a shop here would go against the dialogue and interfere with the thrust of the scene. After all, the focus is upon Romeo, not the supplier of the poison, so that an elaborate display of a shop would be counterproductive. But what if the apothecary enters "[*as if*] in his shop"? In addition to some distinctive costume, such a staging would involve some hand-held property or properties, so that the vial would be brought forth not from a pocket but from a larger supply of wares--as with figures cited above who enter bearing their "work."

Such an entrance is conjectural, although it does conform to practice elsewhere. Nonetheless, the particular asset of such an *as [if] in* approach to this moment is that the image presented would then echo comparable images presented earlier so as to set up the climax for a potentially meaningful progression that starts with the first appearance of the friar. Thus, as noted earlier, at the outset of 2.3, Friar Laurence enters "*with a basket*" (Q2, D4r, 0.s.d.), in both texts talks of filling up "this oasier Cage of ours, / With balefull weeds, and precious iuyced flowers," and, in his moralization, refers specifically to "the infant rinde of this small flower" (Q1, D3v-D4r--see 2.3.7-8, 23). To readers and editors

2.3 may be a "garden" scene (i.e., located in a "place" where a friar can gather weeds and flowers), but the original playgoer probably saw only an actor carrying a basket from which he produced one object, a flower.

A comparable onstage image is accessible when a desperate Juliet seeks out the friar in his cell. A reader wedded to "geographical realism" may see no connection between the "place" (garden? field?) where the friar gathers weeds-flowers and "the cell," a distinction reinforced by the locale headings in many editions, but what would the original playgoer actually have seen? Previewing the apothecary ("put it in anie liquid thing you will..."), the friar produces an object: "And when thou art alone, take thou this Violl, / And this distilled Liquor drinke thou off" (Q1, H3r--see 4.1.93-4). Here as in 5.1, the actor could pull forth the vial from a pocket, but he equally well could be carrying the same basket as in 2.3, a hand-held property that could then reappear in 5.1 as a version of "*enter [as] in the shop.*" Back in 2.3 the friar had noted that within the same flower (taken from his basket) "Poyson hath residence, and medecine power" and had linked these two opposites or options to "grace and rude will" within humankind (Q1, D4r--2.3.24-30). If the apothecary pulls *his* vial out of a basket, the links among the three moments need not be subtle, something to be teased out after many readings, but could instead be italicized.

To postulate such a staging, which cannot be established with any degree of certainty, is to move beyond the clearly scripted "shop" signals cited earlier. Yet given the Elizabethan theatrical vocabulary such links and images are possible, perhaps even likely. A post-1660 sense of place-locale that distinguishes firmly among garden-field, cell, and a street in Mantua outside a shop blocks today's interpreter from even minimal awareness of a staging of the apothecary's brief appearance that would establish some meaningful connections and enhance a playgoer's sense of the choices made by the two title figures, choices that may have been visibly linked to two contrasting basket-bearing suppliers of vials. Because of both the nature of the evidence and our post-Elizabethan

assumptions about staging, something significant may be lost in translation.

The potential links among 2.3, 4.1, and 5.1 postulated here are not unique to either quarto, for the evidence for baskets and vials is basically the same in both--as is also true for the evidence about the staging of the tomb scene. What remains to be factored in is any difference in imagery or theatrical effect in the two quartos, particularly differences generated by the possible continuity of Romeo's presence between 2.2 and 2.3. In this context, the Q2 version of 2.3 makes excellent sense, for, as noted earlier, Romeo's entrance before the end of the friar's speech can italicize various links between the basket-bearing friar's moralization and the tragic protagonist. Such a link is still possible if, as in Q1, Romeo is in view during the entire speech, but the linkage is less emphatic. Is anything then to be gained theatrically or imagistically if Romeo does not leave the stage after his couplet that precedes the friar's entrance?

Needless to say, much depends upon what Romeo is or is not doing before he addresses the friar in 2.3, and no such evidence is available. Remember too that in Q1 as printed Romeo has been offstage only very briefly (at the end of 1.5) between the Queen Mab scene (1.4) and the end of 2.3. During 1.5 he has a major speech that is overheard by Tybalt, interacts with Juliet and the Nurse, and departs, but for part of the scene he stands somewhere alone, watching Juliet. Q1's version of 2.1 then begins with "*Enter Romeo alone*" and a two-line speech: "Shall I goe forward and my heart is here? / Turne backe dull earth and finde thy Center out" (C4v). As in Q2, Romeo then stands by somewhere, silently, able to hear the speeches of Mercutio and Benvolio as they seek him out, eventually emerging with "He iests at scars that neuer felt a wound" (D1r) so as to form a couplet with Mercutio's final line. Benvolio, moreover, has "placed" the action of 2.1 by referring to Romeo's having "came this way, and leapt this Orchard wall" and "hid himselfe amongst those trees" (C4v), a placing echoed by Juliet's "the Orchard walles are high and hard to clime" (D2r). Romeo then stands by again as he observes and then listens to Juliet above before he finally responds. Finally, in Q1 as opposed to Q2 he

remains onstage, yet again a silent observer or a moody brooder, as the friar delivers his 30-line moralization.

Given Q1's silence about where Romeo is to be placed and what he is or is not to do during his possible presence at the outset of 2.3, I can offer only a conjecture about the potential assets of this version. If one assumes that during the friar's speech Romeo is positioned in the same spot (perhaps adjacent to a stage post) he had occupied during Mercutio's gibes in 2.1, the centerpiece speeches of the balcony scene would be framed by a playgoer's awareness of Romeo as auditor. Mercutio's bawdy attack on love and lovers (linked to Romeo's moping over Rosaline, not the newly found Juliet) is unwelcome to the romantic idealist of 2.2, just as in a different way are the friar's measured couplets and sense of restraint unwelcome to the impassioned lover who wants the friar "to marrie vs to day" (D4v). To have Romeo onstage, visible, and silent during 2.1 and 2.3 could heighten (along with Tybalt's forceful presence in 1.5) his resistance to those other voices that Romeo would prefer not to hear. That resistance in turn is linked to his eventual choice of the vial-bearing apothecary as opposed to the vial-bearing friar. In this reading of the strategy behind this sequence, a concern for juxtapositions and the possible insights to be gained through those juxtapositions would supersede that concern with "geographical realism" that weighs so heavily today.

Such a reading may not satisfy the reader comfortable with a Romeo who re-enters in 2.3; moreover, the absence of an exit and re-entry in Q1 may be no more than an omission in the process of the transmission of the text (as is clearly the case with the absence in Q1 of an entrance and exit for Juliet in 2.2). Why then call attention to this anomalous silence from a "bad" quarto? So what?

To confront such questions is to return to my starting point, the advantages of attending to Q1 in general, especially what I am terming its theatrical vocabulary. Whatever the genesis of this shorter version, it appears to have strong theatrical roots. To sweep under the carpet its unique features (e.g., Balthasar's boots, the nurse's

intervention, staging analogues, the different version of the 1.1 brawl) and particularly its apparent oddities and anomalies (as with Romeo's continuous onstage presence between 2.1 and 2.3) is to risk blurring or eclipsing much of its distinctive value as evidence. Do our 1990s interpretations take into account a 1590s vocabulary of "place"?¹¹ Indeed, what better way to gain a window into another era or a primer for another theatrical language than to confront head-on those elements that do not mesh comfortably with today's expectations or idiom? As with Q1 *Hamlet* and the other shorter texts, for the historian, the historicist, and the general reader there is a lot of valuable "good" evidence in the supposedly "bad" quartos.

Notes

1. Such a mental blocking out of the longer, more familiar text is more readily achieved with the first printed versions of the less admired 2 and 3 *Henry VI*--e.g., with the differing versions of the death of Gloucester in Part Two. Those who joke about Q1 Hamlet's "I there's the point," moreover, should be reminded of Iago's "Ay, there's the point!" in the famous temptation scene (3.3.228).

2. Citations from Q1 and Q2 are from *Shakespeare's Plays in Quarto*, ed. Michael J. B. Allen and Kenneth Muir (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: U. of California Press, 1981). Unless otherwise noted, Q2 dialogue is taken from *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare*, gen. ed. Alfred Harbage (Baltimore: Penguin, 1969).

3. One possible explanation for the atypical number of stage directions in Q1 *Romeo* is linked to the "memorial reconstruction" hypothesis in that actors cobbling together a text from memory would presumably be erratic about the dialogue but well informed about the staging.

4. See Alan C. Dessen, *Elizabethan Stage Directions and Modern Interpreters* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1984), pp. 39-40.

5. For other comparable Q1-only signals consider "*He rises*" (3.3, G1r) and "*They*

whisper in his eare" (1.5, C4r), both of which spell out what may be happening in Q2. For the latter, the two texts have basically the same dialogue: in Q1 Capulet asks the masquers not to leave, ending "I pray let me intreat you. Is it so?", with the "*whisper*" stage direction before this line; Q2 provides basically the same request and reaction (1.5.121-3) but no stage direction (so *something* must generate "Is it e'en so?"--Q2, 123). In a few instances Q2 is more explicit about staging than Q1. Where Q1 has only "*Enter Fryer With a Lanthorne*" (K2r), Q2 provides "*with lanthorn, crow, and spade*" (5.3.120.s.d.); for the beginning of 2.3 Q1 has no details other than *enter* for the friar (here named Francis), but Q2 directs the friar to enter "*alone, with a basket*" (2.3.0.s.d.). Although lacking a specific signal for a basket, Q1 does include comparable lines: "We must vp fill this oasiser Cage of ours, / With balefull weeds, and precious iuyced flowers" (D3v)--hence here one finds the reverse of the *booted* situation.

6. The intermittent presence and absence of designated entrances and exits in Act 2 of Q1 makes it difficult to evaluate this silence. For example, in 2.2 Q1 specifies neither an entrance nor an exit for Juliet; if this silence is to be the yardstick, Romeo's missing exit and re-entrance are clearly an error. In 2.1, both Romeo and Mercutio-Benvolio are given designated entrances, but the latter pair have no exeunt; in 2.3, the friar has an entrance, and he and Romeo an exeunt; in 2.4, Mercutio-Benvolio and Nurse-Peter have entrances but Romeo does not; two designated exeunts get all five offstage.

7. Neither Q1 nor Q2 as printed designates act or scene divisions, a typical silence that has been interpreted to indicate continuous action without pauses between acts or scenes in the public theatres in the 1590s and early 1600s. In addition, if a cleared stage is the basis for a "new" scene, both 1.5 and 2.2 in *Romeo* as divided in most editions today are misnumbered, for in both instances figures from the previous scene remain onstage (Romeo and the masquers from 1.4, Romeo himself from 2.1).

8. The *Lear* scenes are designated 2.2 and 2.3 in today's editions, but, as with the comparable scenes in *Romeo*, are not so distinguished in the early printed texts. For a

discussion of the possible implications of the *Lear* juxtapositions as part of a larger exploration of place and locale see Dessen, *Elizabethan Stage Conventions*, pp. 103-4.

9. Beneath Q2's stage direction that calls for the masquers to march about the stage and the servants to enter is a centered "*Enter Romeo*" which I take to be an error--a "bad" moment in the "good" text.

10. Such a changing of locale without clearing the stage can be noted elsewhere. In a play very close chronologically to *Romeo*, the lengthy 2.3 of Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* starts in a public slave market and, as clearly indicated in the dialogue, moves to Barabas' house. In Day's *Law Tricks* the long final scene starts with a figure revealed in his study, continues as an inside-the-house scene, but ends with the sudden revelation of a supposedly dead figure in her tomb, the site of a previous scene clearly set in a graveyard. Perhaps closest to the situation in *Romeo* 1.4-5 is Marlowe's *The Massacre at Paris* where the king announces hypocritically "I will goe visite the Admirall" who has been wounded and is "sick in his bed." Rather than using an *exit* and *re-enter* to move the king to the Admiral's chambers, Marlowe instead keeps the royal group onstage and "*Enter the Admirall in his bed*" (255, 250, 256.s.d.).

11. For a discussion of such an onstage vocabulary of "place" see Alan C. Dessen, *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1995), chapter 8.