

Shakespeare, [Re]Visionist
by
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*I remember the players have often mentioned it
as an honor to Shakespeare, that in his writing,
whatsoever he penned, he never blotted out a line.
~ Ben Jonson*

Ben Jonson's account of Shakespeare's reputation among the players is often cited in discussions addressing the issue of whether or not Shakespeare revised his own work.¹ Heminge and Condell share a similar view in their prefatory message to the readers of the 1623 Folio in which they state, "wee haue scarce receiued from him a blot in his papers." To the average lay reader of Shakespeare's work, determining whether or not these descriptions are actually true is, perhaps, relatively inconsequential, apart from enhancing the aura that surrounds Shakespeare's reputation and genius. To those engaged in textual criticism, however, the revision issue is of vital importance, because it directly affects the ways in which we edit his plays, interpret his passages, view the development of his style, and ultimately determine what he wrote. This is particularly true with respect to Shakespeare's "bad" quartos, which are generally perceived as little more than pirated copies assembled through a process of memorial reconstruction. Determining whether or not these texts represent corrupted copies of Shakespeare's plays, authorial or non-authorial abridgments, or earlier unrefined (but legitimate) variants, has been a topic of serious debate throughout the past century.

Special thanks to Larry Ashmead, Papa Manu Cummings, Eric Johnston, Patricia and Scott Patrick, Noel L.

Silverman, Joseph Stringham, James Sullivan, Paul Walsh, and the staff of the Folger Shakespeare Library for their support in the research and preparation of this essay.

¹ Jonson, Ben. *Timber or Discoveries Made Upon Men and Matter*, Ed. Felix E. Schelling (Boston, 1892), p. 23.

In response to these issues, new methodologies, such as computer-aided research, along with traditional techniques applied to new angles of investigation, are continually advancing our understanding of Shakespeare's work and his historical context. Apart from presenting new information, these studies also serve to widen the scope of Shakespeare research, introducing more opportunities for interdisciplinary approaches to Shakespeare's text. In light of these possibilities, one approach which has received little attention, likely due to its relatively recent development in biblical exegesis, is Shakespeare's use of biblical-style complex chiasmus in the structural framework of passages. These complex rhetorical systems, which Shakespeare configures into schematic formats that are often unique to his texts alone, appear with a high level of frequency throughout his work. Recognizing the presence of these forms, along with understanding the principles used in their construction and manipulation, not only provides new and important information about Shakespeare's writing process, but also potentially reveals the presence of authorial revision in Shakespeare's work. However, to advance this claim it is necessary to return to the basic definition of chiasmus in the classical rhetorical tradition, to view how the biblical tradition extends beyond this definition, and to observe how Shakespeare's subsequent development of these forms combines both traditions together into a single style.

Chiasmus in the Classical and Biblical Traditions

Chiasmus, in its most basic and recognizable form, is "a grammatical figure by which the order of words in one of two parallel clauses is inverted in the other,"² or more specifically, a figure that reverses the *ideas* from the first phrase to the second: "*warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer*" (*Merchant* 3.1.58-9, emphasis added).³ Closely related to chiasmus is

² "Chiasmus," *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., 1989.

³ All references to Shakespeare's works (other than the Q1, Q2 and F1 commentary) follow Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor's *Oxford* Edition.

antimetabole, which reverses identical *words* between the phrases: “Suit the *action* to the *word*, the *word* to the *action*” (*Hamlet* 3.2.17-18, emphasis added). Though modern rhetoricians usually differentiate between these forms, Renaissance writers do not (the term “chiasmus” does not appear until 1871 in English texts),⁴ and both devices are used interchangeably among Shakespeare’s contemporaries.⁵ Yet, while Renaissance writers commonly use chiasmus and antimetabole, these forms are generally limited to the small-scale structures handed down from the classical rhetorical tradition, and the large-scale forms that developed outside the Western tradition are, for the most part, seldom used. These complex forms, similar to their smaller counterparts, also reverse ideas from one phrase to another; however, they go further by arranging the order of *phrases* throughout an entire passage into balanced, corresponding positions in the text. Observe the following complex system from the New Testament, which consists of two complex chiasms linked together to create a single form:

<u>Matthew 7: 15-20, KJV (emphasis added)</u>	
A: Beware of <i>false prophets</i> ,	
B: which come to you in <i>sheep’s clothing</i> ,	[antithetical, chiasmic parallelism]
B: but <i>inwardly</i> they are ravening <i>wolves</i> .	[sheep – clothing (outward appearance) : inwardly – wolves]
A: Ye shall know <i>them</i> by their fruits.	[“them” = false prophets]
B: Do men gather <i>grapes of thorns</i> ,	[parallelism of evil fruit]
or <i>figs of thistles</i> ?	
C: Even so every good tree bringeth forth <i>good fruit</i> ;	[“trees” in parallel order]
D: but a corrupt tree bringeth forth <i>evil fruit</i> .	[“fruit” in chiasmic order]
D: A good tree cannot bring forth <i>evil fruit</i> ,	
C: neither can a corrupt tree bring forth <i>good fruit</i> .	
B: Every tree that <i>bringeth not forth good fruit</i> is <i>hewn down</i> ,	[i.e., evil fruit]
and <i>cast into the fire</i> .	[parallelism of destruction]
A: Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.	[note chiasmic reversal of syntax between the last A level phrases]

In terms of analyzing these forms, it is important to recognize the fundamental building blocks on which all complex chiasmic systems are built, and how they are expressed in any given

⁴ Vickers, Brian. *Classical Rhetoric In English Poetry*, (London, 1970), p. 120.

⁵ Davis, William L. “Better A Witty Fool Than A Foolish Wit: The Art of Shakespeare’s Chiasmus,” *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 23 (2003), 311-30; p. 312.

text. To begin, the basic structural unit of biblical chiasmus is the parallelism.⁶ Biblical parallelisms are composed of “two (or sometimes three) lines, in which a theme is repeated and developed. The second line of a Hebrew couplet [i.e., parallelism], for example, can take up a word or theme of the first line.”⁷ These parallelisms (as well as parallelisms in classical rhetoric) can be formed in many different ways, including shared keywords between lines, shared ideas, the same or similar phrases, and even grammatical structures and syntax.

In addition to these basic elements of biblical parallelisms, Shakespeare expands upon this style by introducing principles and devices from the classical rhetorical tradition, particularly those which are related to the areas of definition and repetition. By merging the biblical and classical rhetorical traditions together, Shakespeare subsequently enlarges the variety of ways in which phrases can establish parallel relationships (a brief list of devices includes *circumlocution*, *epanalepsis*, *epanodos*, *epergesis*, *epexegetis*, *euphemismus*, *exemplum*, *exergasia*, *horismus*, *paromoiosis*, *periphrasis*, *synonymia*, among others).⁸ Thus, when Shakespeare creates a parallelism within a complex chiastic system he often presents an idea in the first phrase, and then repeats the idea in the second phrase. This repetition often appears in the form of an example, definition, description, synonymous or antithetical expression, etc., as well as the standard repetition of shared words and phrases. In essence, the majority of these variations serve to restate the original idea, but in new and creative ways.

Incorporating the principles from the classical and biblical traditions, along with an awareness of Shakespeare’s unique additions to the various ways in which parallel thoughts can

⁶ Breck, John. *Scripture in Tradition: The Bible and its Interpretation in the Orthodox Church*, (Crestwood, 2001), p. 93. See also Kugel, James. *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and its History*, (New Haven, 1981), p. 1.

⁷ Breck, *Scripture*, p. 94.

⁸ See also Davis, “Better a Witty Fool,” p. 321.

be achieved, allows for an effective approach when locating Shakespeare's forms in the text. Yet, even though this is usually sufficient in terms of simply finding these structures in the plays, exploring passages for possible revision (or lack thereof) requires a closer examination of the structures, specifically regarding the process by which the simple forms are developed into the large-scale forms of the biblical tradition. This process requires a return to the discussion on parallelisms with a closer look at the component parts of a parallelism, and how they operate together in the text.

Component Parts of Parallelisms

Parallelisms are effective in delivering short, concise sayings; however, they are also limited in the amount of information they can hold. Due to this challenge, and the need to form larger passages that retained the structural benefits of parallelisms, ancient writers formulated various complex chiasmic systems. These systems act as an extension of the basic parallel structures by incorporating multiple parallelisms into single, large-scale patterns. This process is accomplished through an awareness of the component parts of parallelisms, and it is here, at this fundamental structural level, that a tremendous amount of invaluable information is revealed about the process of composition along the structural lines of complex chiasmus.

At the most elementary level, the majority of standard parallelisms are composed of two parts: part a (the first phrase), and part b (the second phrase):⁹

(part a): The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge:

(part b): but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness. (Proverbs 15: 14, KJV)

When composing a complex chiasmic structure, these two halves of the parallelism are split up and arranged into balanced, corresponding positions in the structural framework of a larger

⁹ Breck, *Scripture*, p. 95. Kugel, *Biblical Poetry*, p. 2.

passage. Shakespeare employs the complex structure in many different ways, on many different levels, and in the following basic example from *Twelfth Night* (1.5.150-55) he uses the pattern to arrange the dialogue between Lady Olivia and Malvolio. Observe the following chart which illustrates the component parts of each parallelism (parallel elements italicized), along with the complex chiastic arrangement in which the two halves of each parallelism are positioned in the actual dialogue:

Parallelisms and their Component Phrases	Complex Chiastic Arrangement
<p>A (a): <i>Of what personage and years is he?</i> (b): <i>He is very well-favour'd,</i></p> <p>B (a): Not yet old enough for a <i>man</i>, (b): and <i>man</i>.</p> <p>C (a): nor young enough for a <i>boy</i>; (b): 'Tis with him in standing water between <i>boy</i></p> <p>D (a): as a squash is before 'tis a peascod, (b): or a codling when 'tis almost an apple.¹⁰</p>	<p>A: Of what personage and years is he? B: Not yet old enough for a man, C: nor young enough for a boy; D: as a squash is before 'tis a peascod, D: or a codling when 'tis almost an apple. C: 'Tis with him in standing water between boy B: and man. A: He is very well-favour'd,</p>

One characteristic of complex chiasmus, which should be immediately apparent with this example, is the delicate balancing act taking place between the parts of each parallelism. Each phrase has a specific location in the overall form, and that location is mirrored on the opposite side of the chiastic structure with a parallel phrase (e.g., A corresponds to A, B to B, etc.). If a single phrase were removed to a different location in the text, the entire chiastic structure would lose its integrity and fall into disarray. This is critical, not only in locating complex chiastic structures, but understanding the compositional process involved with these forms. Without knowledge of these underlying structures, any attempt to manipulate a chiastic passage would inevitably destroy the structural harmony of the system, and as these patterns become more

¹⁰ Note the chiastic arrangement of elements in the parallelism: squash (mature) – peascod (seedling) : codling (seedling) – apple (mature). Shakespeare frequently reverses the syntax of parallel phrases in complex systems, particularly in or near the apex (level D, in this case).

complex the opportunities for such mistakes increase exponentially. Once this principle is recognized, the stage is set for the revision process of these complex forms.¹¹

Revision along Chiastic Structural Lines

As previously indicated, complex chiastic structures are built with a series of parallel phrases arranged into balanced, corresponding positions within a text. This characteristic, by default, becomes extremely convenient when revising complex forms, because the parallel elements contained within the corresponding phrases are essentially interchangeable, permitting the possibility of transposition and substitution. For example, the chiasm, “Ajax, who wears his *wit* in his *belly* and his *guts* in his *head*” (*Troilus* 2.1.74-5; emphasis added), can be rearranged into, “Ajax, who wears his *head* in his *guts* and his *belly* in his *wit*,” and still maintain the integrity of the underlying structural form, as well as the positions of each idea (though the style and effect of the new phrasing is certainly different). In complex forms, this ability to transpose parallel ideas extends beyond single words to entire phrases: “I am very glad of it. I’ll plague him, I’ll torture him. I am glad of it” (*Merchant* 3.1.108-9) can be reversed into “I am glad of it. I’ll torture him, I’ll plague him. I am very glad of it.” This characteristic of complex chiasmus offers writers a great deal of flexibility when composing, arranging and rearranging a passage, and also proves crucial when observing techniques of revision associated with these forms.

Understanding the potential of revision in Shakespeare’s complex systems further requires an awareness of how the rearrangement of phrases can behave in context of an entire passage. In such revisions, the importance of maintaining balance between parallel thoughts and

¹¹ Space does not permit a comprehensive review of biblical chiasmus, nor does it allow for a survey of the wide variety of patterns Shakespeare adopts into his work; subsequently, further investigation of these rhetorical systems is highly recommended to interested researchers.

phrases is critical, because any change that affects the parallel elements of one phrase requires the author to make a similar change to the balanced, corresponding phrase across the system; otherwise, the integrity of the entire complex structure is compromised. These emendations may occur in a countless number of variations, and the following example illustrates only a few of the possibilities that can potentially occur in Shakespeare's forms (the parallel elements are italicized to facilitate comparison; these elements also form the structural spine of the overall chiasmic system):

A: <i>Complex chiasms</i> have <i>characteristics</i>	[chiasm #1 begins]
B: which allow an <i>author</i>	
C: <i>to be very clever</i>	
D: and to <i>maximize the impact</i> of the text.	
D: Therefore, <i>achieving the greatest effect</i> ,	
C: (and proving how <i>clever one can be</i>)	
B: is made possible when the <i>writer</i> develops the form	
A: according to the <i>properties</i> of <i>complex chiasmus</i> .	[shared, linking level: chiasm #1 ends, chiasm #2 begins]
B: This approach allows <i>authors</i>	
C: to <i>manipulate the structure</i> with ease,	
C: and <i>make multiple changes</i> ,	
B: as the <i>author</i> so desires,	
A: when composing these <i>complex forms</i> .	
A (a): Further information about <i>Shakespeare's writing process</i> ,	[basic parallelism]
(b): Is revealed through an awareness of <i>Shakespeare's complex chiasmus</i> .	

This complex chiasmic system is constructed by three smaller structures: two complex chiasms (linked together at the A level), followed by a basic parallelism. Shakespeare frequently links a series of chiasms together in this same manner to create speeches or dialogue between characters within scenes, which makes this example particularly helpful when observing the potential dynamics of Shakespeare's structural style. From here, the next step in the revision process is to begin a series of emendations that rearrange the structure, while maintaining symmetrical balance within the overall system. The following diagram illustrates five basic types of revision within these complex forms (this rather densely packed illustration benefits from the notes in the diagram, as well as the explanatory notes that follow the passage):

(b): Is revealed through an awareness of <i>Shakespeare's complex chiasmus</i> [transferred from line 21]	Line 1
A (a): Further information about <i>Shakespeare's writing process</i> [transferred from line 20]	2
A: <i>Complex chiasms</i> have [] → [“properties” removed, “characteristics” inserted from line 10]	3
B: Which allow <i>an author</i>	4
C: To be very clever ← [replaced with “to <i>manipulate the structure</i> with ease,” from line 12]	5
D: and to maximize the impact of the text.	6
D: Therefore, achieving the greatest effect,	7
C: And proving how clever one can be, ← [replaced with “And <i>make multiple changes,</i> ” line 17]	8
B: is made possible when <i>the writer</i> develops the form	9
A: According to the [] of <i>complex chiasmus</i> . ← [“properties” inserted from line 3]	10
B: This approach allows <i>authors</i>	11
C: [] → to <i>manipulate the structure</i> with ease [transferred to line 5]	12
C: The flexibility to <i>add</i> , [new chiasm inserted into the C level, replacing the former C level]	13
D: <i>Subtract</i> , [lines 13 thru 16 = new material in chiastic structural form]	14
D: <i>Remove</i> ,	15
C: Or <i>insert</i> information at will	16
C: [] → And <i>make multiple changes</i> , [phrase transferred to line 8]	17
B: As the author so desires. ← [replaced with “This approach also forms the basis” (new parallelism)]	18
A: when composing these complex forms. ← [replaced with “of revision along complex chiastic lines”]	19
A (a): Further information about Shakespeare's writing process, [parallelism transferred to lines 1 and 2]	20
(b): Is revealed through an awareness of Shakespeare's complex chiasmus. [note reversal of (a) and (b) above]	21

The first revision, which is also one of the most fundamental moves when working with parallelisms in a complex form, occurs in the transfer of lines 20 and 21 to the beginning of the passage, or lines 1 and 2. It is particularly important to note that this entire parallelism is not transposed as a single unit across the system, but rather, each part of the parallelism—the first phrase, part (a), and the second phrase, part (b)—is treated as an independent phrase within the parallel structure. When the parallelism is moved from the end of the speech to the beginning, the phrases chiastically reverse (i.e., the final positions of the phrases chiastically mirror their original positions in the unrevised form) so that the last phrase of the final parallelism (line 21) becomes the first phrase (line 1), and the first phrase of the final parallelism (line 20) becomes the last (line 2). Whether a parallelism is treated as a single unit or as two reversible phrases in the revision process is solely at the discretion of the author; however, when revisions such as these occur it reveals the author's awareness of the structural nature of complex chiastic

systems—particularly the way in which they are constructed on the building blocks of parallelisms.

The next revision occurs in lines 3 and 10, and is another example of one of the most basic types of chiasmic revision. The words “properties” and “characteristics,” which occur in the parallel phrases of the A level, are simply transposed.

The third revision occurs when the parallelism formed by lines 5 and 8 (which share the idea of how “clever” an author can be) is deleted. This creates an empty slot in this C level of the first chiasm, which can be filled in one of two basic ways: by dropping the D level parallelism, lines 6 and 7, into the C level (thereby reassigning the D level), or by filling the empty slots with another parallelism. In this example, the phrases forming the parallelism in lines 12 and 17 are excised and transferred to these empty positions (line 12 is moved to line 5, and line 17 to line 8). Again, it is important to stress that these phrases are removed and reassigned within balanced and corresponding positions in the text, and not merely reinserted into random locations. Arbitrary movement of one or both of these phrases, with disregard to the overall form, would immediately disrupt the balance within the system and corrupt the structural integrity of the chiasm.

Next, once the parallelism is removed from lines 12 and 17, this opens up two more potential slots in the complex chiasm. This sets the stage for the next structural emendation: adding new material. Apart from replacing the former parallelism with a new one, the empty positions also provide an entry point to insert new information. The newly vacated C levels in the second chiasm are subsequently filled with a new chiasm (lines 13 through 16). This emendation not only fills the vacated slots where the former parallelism was located, but also adds a new D level to the second chiasm.

In general, when new chiasms are inserted into a complex system during the revision process, they usually appear in one of two ways: they are either linked into the existing form (i.e., a bordering phrase is shared between two successive chiasms, such as line 10 in this example), or they appear as free-standing chiastic units (i.e., none of the levels of the new material is shared by a neighboring chiasm, which is illustrated in lines 13 through 16 of this example). If the new material does not appear in the form of a complete chiasm, but merely the alteration or deletion of a single preexisting phrase, the new phrase simply needs to retain enough information to form a parallelism with the corresponding phrase in the system (note how line 19 is completely revised, yet it maintains balance with line 10 by sharing the concept of “complex chiasmus”).

The final structural revision this example illustrates is the way a parallelism can be broken down and reconstructed. In the original chiasm the phrase “this approach allows *authors*” (line 11) previously formed a parallelism with the phrase “as the *author* so desires” (line 18). In the revision process, however, the second phrase is entirely deleted and the parallelism based on “author(s)” is eradicated. The new material, however, corrects this problem and the new phrase, “this approach also forms the basis” (line 18), creates a new parallelism with line 11 through the use of *anaphora* (i.e., both phrases begin with “this approach...”), and allows the overall chiastic form to maintain equilibrium.

Once the structural elements of a passage have been rearranged in the revision process, the syntax and grammar of the passage are usually disrupted, causing a problem with the narrative progression of the text from one chiastic level to another. This requires the author to go back over the text and smooth out the irregularities by making adjustments (usually minor grammatical corrections), and modifying the choice of words to express the ideas (note how the

opening lines of the following version are reworded from lines 1 and 2 in the preceding example). Once these adjustments are made, the revised passage emerges:

- A (a): An awareness of Shakespeare's complex chiasmus
- (b): reveals further information about Shakespeare's writing process.

- A: Complex chiasms have properties
 - B: which allow an author
 - C: to manipulate the structure with ease,
 - D: and to maximize the impact of the text.
 - D: Therefore, achieving the greatest effect,
 - C: and making multiple changes,
 - B: is made possible when the writer develops the form
- A: according to the characteristics of complex chiasmus.
 - B: This approach allows authors
 - C: the flexibility to add,
 - D: subtract,
 - D: remove,
 - C: or insert information at will.
 - B: This approach also forms the basis
- A: of revision along complex chiastic lines.

Again, it is important to recognize how the phrases within a complex chiastic form are *interdependent*, i.e., the majority of phrases balance against corresponding, parallel phrases located elsewhere in the form. The importance of this characteristic cannot be stressed enough. Successfully editing, abridging and revising such systems are delicate tasks which require a solid understanding and mastery of the complex forms. Without such knowledge, any modifications would inevitably result in wholesale corruption of the underlying structure, leaving fragmentary chiasms and non-chiastic sections in the wake. Complex chiasms are, in this respect, analogous to the proverbial house of cards: the moment a few key supports are removed, the entire structure collapses.

Along with the potential for observing revision in complex chiastic systems, biblical researchers have identified a number of other benefits that result from an awareness of complex chiasmus in passages, and many of these same benefits translate to Shakespeare's texts. For example, when the meaning of a certain word or phrase is unclear in an obscure passage, a

review of the parallel phrase (or phrases) in the overall system often provides clues to the meaning of the ambiguous section. For the biblical researcher, this not only aids in interpretation, but also facilitates the translation process. Many other similar benefits exist, but for the purpose of identifying the possibility of revision in a passage, complex chiasmus is also recognized as an invaluable tool when comparing variant forms of the same text. Breck notes, “it happens occasionally that the parallels within chiastic patterns lend weight to one variant reading against another, and thereby aid the exegete in “establishing” the text, or determining its original wording.”¹² In light of Shakespeare’s variant texts, and with particular regard to the bad quartos, the possibilities are intriguing and the ramifications potentially far-reaching. Before addressing passages from any one of these texts, however, a brief review of the history and development of textual criticism regarding the bad quartos is in order.

Origins of the “Bad” Quartos

While a consensus on defining and explaining the presence of Shakespeare’s bad quartos has never existed among scholars, perhaps the dominant view throughout the past century is that these plays represent pirated copies which were assembled by memorial reconstruction. According to Henry Gray, Tycho Mommsen, in 1857, was the first scholar to suggest an actor reconstructed a Shakespeare play from memory,¹³ and George Duthie later echoed this opinion, saying, “to the best of my knowledge, Mommsen was the first critic to advance the theory of memorial reconstruction to explain an illegitimately published Shakespearian text.”¹⁴ As the theory of memorial reconstruction became more widely accepted, scholars began to analyze the

¹² Breck, John. *The Shape of Biblical Language: Chiasmus in the Scriptures and Beyond*, (Crestwood, 1994), p. 344.

¹³ Gray, Henry David. “The First Quarto ‘Hamlet’,” *Modern Language Review*, 10 (1915), 171-180; p. 172.

¹⁴ Duthie, George Ian. *The “Bad” Quarto of Hamlet: A Critical Study*, (Cambridge, 1941), p. 26.

texts accordingly, paying greater attention to the difference in quality between the early quartos, and the analysis seemed to confirm that a portion of these quartos were indeed inferior, representing little more than illicit copies of the plays.

In the decades that followed, memorial reconstruction achieved greater popularity and in 1909 Alfred Pollard published his book, *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos*. In chapter three of this folio-sized work, Pollard became the first scholar to classify the quartos into “good” and “bad” categories, setting a standard of perception that remains, for the most part, intact to this day. In his survey of nineteen variant quarto editions of the plays, it was his opinion that, “of these nineteen texts five are by universal consent thoroughly bad, viz., Danter’s *Romeo and Juliet*, *Henry V*, *The Merry Wives*, the first *Hamlet* and *Pericles*, three at least of these being demonstrably derived from shorthand copies taken down at the theatre or from quotations from memory.”¹⁵ Building on Mommsen’s and other nineteenth century scholars’ suspicions about the problematic quartos, Pollard’s proclamation formed a decisive barrier between the quartos regarded as legitimate variants for study, and the “pirated” ones that were decidedly unreliable. Though scholars were not in total agreement with the finer points of Pollard’s views (particularly regarding the genesis of each of the “bad” quartos), the theory depicting the bad quarto texts as corruptions, which involved the presence and influence of one or more reporters, soon became part of the emerging orthodox view of memorial reconstruction in textual criticism. This tradition was carried by a generation of Shakespeare scholars and included such prominent names as W. W. Greg, H. C. Hart, J. Dover Wilson, E. K. Chambers, and a host of many other

¹⁵ Pollard, Alfred W. *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos: A study in the Bibliography of Shakespeare’s Plays, 1594-1685*, (London, 1909), p. 79.

respected names in Shakespeare research. However, not all the scholars agreed with this general premise.

Apart from those who believed in memorial reconstruction, another smaller group of scholars felt that the “bad” quartos were actually abridged plays that were likely used for touring performances in the provinces. According to Hardin Craig, one of the most prominent voices of this camp, “there is, as we have seen, no evidence, even in the form of necessity or convenience, to justify the establishment of a class of reported plays.”¹⁶ More recently, another faction (often referred to as Revisionists or New Revisionists) has suggested that some of these inferior quartos may represent early, unpolished (or abridged) versions of the plays that Shakespeare wrote himself, and later revised. To complicate matters further, most scholars do not hold exclusively to one of these theories to explain all the problems behind the bad quartos, but often use a mixture of theories, depending on which text is under examination (for example, many revisionists still maintain that certain bad quartos may still likely be the result of memorial reconstruction). It is therefore common to find scholars within the same camp who do not always agree with one another; in fact, when the minutiae of all these theories are examined it would appear that none of them comes into complete agreement on all the details of each theory, and ultimately the conjectures can be as distinct as the fingerprints of the authors who write them.

In the midst of all these varying opinions, however, some issues surrounding the bad quartos almost succeed in pulling the different schools of theorists together in agreement, and the text which nearly manages this otherwise insurmountable challenge, which is mentioned more often than any other text as the penultimate example of a corrupted text, is the 1603 bad quarto

¹⁶ Craig, Hardin. *A New Look at Shakespeare's Quartos*, (Stanford, 1961), p. 10.

of *Hamlet*. This quarto, the bastard quarto at the bottom of the heap among bad quartos, has few champions. In recent years, Steven Urkowitz and Eric Sams have voiced their opinion that the bad quarto might well be an earlier version of the *Hamlet* we know today, written by Shakespeare himself.¹⁷ This position, however, has met serious opposition and has been depicted as “an attack on the authority of the great generation of scholars—Greg, McKerrow, and Pollard—who in the early decades of this century revolutionized Shakespearean textual study.”¹⁸

Apart from the dissenting voices of Urkowitz and Sams, among the mainstream of Shakespeare researchers, “there is general if not unanimous agreement that the First Quarto is a reported or memorially reconstructed text of an early acting version of *Hamlet*, and that one of the reporters must have been an actor who had doubled in it the roles of Marcellus, Voltimand, and perhaps Luciano in the play within the play.”¹⁹ Given the passionate viewpoints surrounding this text, and the potential to either reinforce the traditional views about the 1603 *Hamlet* or alter the fundamental perceptions surrounding Shakespeare’s writing process as a whole, this variant

¹⁷ Urkowitz, Steven. “‘Well-sayd olde Mole’: Burying Three *Hamlets* in Modern Editions,” *Shakespeare Study Today: The Horace Howard Furness Memorial Lectures*, Ed. Georgianna Ziegler, (New York, 1986), 37-70.

Urkowitz, “Back to Basics: Thinking about the *Hamlet* First Quarto,” *The Hamlet First Published (Q1, 1603): Origins, Form, Intertextualities*, Ed. Thomas Clayton, (Delaware, 1992), 257-291. Sams, Eric. *The Real Shakespeare: Retrieving the Early Years, 1564-1594*, (New Haven, 1995). Sams, “Taboo, or NotTaboo? The Text, Dating and Authorship of *Hamlet*, 1589-1623,” *Hamlet Studies*, 10 (1988), 12-46.

¹⁸ Thomas, Sidney. “*Hamlet* Q1: First Version or Bad Quarto?” *The Hamlet First Published (Q1, 1603): Origins, Form, Intertextualities*, Ed. Thomas Clayton, (Delaware, 1992), 249-256; p. 249.

¹⁹ Melchiori, Giorgio. “The Acting Version and the Wiser Sort,” *The Hamlet First Published (Q1, 1603)*, Ed. Thomas Clayton, (Delaware, 1992), 195-210; p. 201.

quarto will act as the springboard for an investigation that will attempt to determine whether or not Shakespeare's use of complex chiasmus may assist in identifying the true nature of this text.

The 1603, Q1 *Hamlet*

Of all of Shakespeare's soliloquies, one of the most recognizable and well-known passages is Hamlet's "to be, or not to be." While the 1604-5 second quarto (Q2) and the 1623 Folio (F1) contain slightly different versions of this speech, the differences are minor; in the bad quarto (Q1), however, this speech appears in a drastically altered version, beginning with the very first line: "to be, or not to be, I there's the point." The Q1 speech is so different, in fact, it is quoted more often than any other passage in the Q1 *Hamlet* to illustrate the corrupt and inferior nature of the work.

Yet, despite the unfavorable treatment of the Q1 text, the differences between variants still remain important for chiasmic structural analysis, because a greater number of discrepancies allows for a more thorough investigation of the text. Thus, establishing the text as a pirated copy reconstructed by memory, or as an abridgment, or even as an earlier version of the play written by Shakespeare himself is a task that is made easier when the variant copies exhibit the kind of disparity that is present between the Q1 and the Q2/F1 versions of Hamlet's soliloquy.

Significant differences are particularly valuable because a higher number of alterations between variant texts can provide stronger evidence to support the outcome of the investigation.

To begin the structural analysis, however, it is important to first recognize the presence of complex chiasmus in the passages, and in the case of Hamlet's Q2/F1 "to be or not to be" soliloquy, a very basic pattern of linking and successive chiasms—one that Shakespeare uses throughout his entire career—emerges in the text:

First Folio (F1, 1623; TLN 1710-42)

To be, or not to be, that is the Question:

[Anacrusis (the premise, or springboard)]

A: Whether 'tis Nobler in the minde to suffer [chiasm #1]
 B: The Slings and Arrowes of outragious Fortune,
 B: Or to take Armes against a Sea of troubles,
 A: And by opposing end them:
 A: To dye, to sleepe [chiasm #2]
 B: No more;
 A: and by a sleepe, to say we end
 B: The Heart-ake,
 B: and the thousand Naturall shockes That Flesh is heyre too?
 A: 'Tis a consummation Deuoutly to be wish'd.
 A: To dye to sleepe, To sleepe, [chiasm #3 (parallel to chiasm #2)]
 B: perchance to Dreame;
 B: I, there's the rub,
 A: For in that sleepe of death,
 B: what dreames may come,
 A: When we haue shufflel'd off this mortall coile, [shared level: chiasm #3 ends; chiasm #4 begins]
 B: Must giue vs pawse.
 B: There's the respect
 A: That makes Calamity of so long life: [shared level: chiasm #4 ends; chiasm #5 begins]
 B: For who would beare
 the Whips and Scornes of time,
 The Oppressors wrong,
 the poore mans Contumely,
 The pangs of dispriz'd Loue,
 the Lawes delay,
 The insolence of Office,
 and the Spurnes That patient merit of the vnworthy takes,
 C: When he himselfe might his *Quietus* make With a bare Bodkin? [Apex of the overall system]
 B: Who would these Fardles beare
 A: To grunt and sweat vnder a weary life,
 A: But that the dread of something after death, [chiasm #6]
 B: the vndiscovered Countrey,
 B: from whose Borne No Traueller returns,
 A: Puzels the will, [chiasm #6 ends; chiasm #7 begins]
 B: And makes vs rather beare those illes we haue,
 B: Then flye to others that we know not of.
 A: Thus Conscience does make Cowards of vs all, [#7 ends; chiasm #8 begins (two linking inclusions: ABA)]
 B: And thus the Natiue hew of Resolution
 A: Is sicklied o're, with the pale cast of Thought,
 B: And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
 A: With this regard their Currants turne away,
 And loose the name of Action.

Perhaps some might argue that making a comparison between this passage and the variant form in Q1 is unnecessary, given the obvious discrepancies that already appear between them. It could be argued that the final analysis of the chiastic structural forms would have a nominal payoff, because such an inquiry would do little more than reinforce the perception of corruption that already appears to be a self-evident in the text, and that further pursuit of the

issue would be paramount to carrying critical coals to Newcastle. For similar reasons, those who feel the Q1 text is a legitimate variant of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* might complain that this particular comparison should not be over-generalized to include the entire play, since the chaotic state of the Q1 soliloquy could have resulted from an irresponsible company member or compositor who did not handle the speech very carefully. The necessity of addressing these concerns, however, is immediately alleviated by an unexpected result in the preliminary analysis of this speech, which indicates that the Q1 soliloquy, like its counterparts in Q2 and F1, is formed on the structural bedrock of a complex chiasm that is structurally sound and fully intact:

First "Bad" Quarto (Q1, 1603)²⁰

A: To be, or not to be, I there's the point,	[Anacrusis (the premise, or springboard ²¹)]
A: To Die, to sleepe,	[chiasm #1]
B: is that all?	
I all:	
No,	
A: to sleepe, to dreame,	
B: I mary there it goes,	
A: For in that dreame of death,	
A: when wee awake, And borne before an euerlasting Iudge,	[chiasm #2]
B: From whence no passenger euer retur'nd,	
B: The vndiscovered country,	
A: at whose sight The happy smile, and the accursed damn'd.	
A: But for this, the ioyfull hope of this,	[chiasm #3]
B: Whol'd beare	
the scornes and flattery of the world,	
Scorned by the right rich,	
the rich curssed of the poore?	
The widow being oppressed,	
the orphan wrong'd,	
The taste of hunger,	
or a tirants raigne,	
And thousand more calamities besides,	
To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life,	
C: When that he may his full <i>Quietus</i> make, With a bare bodkin,	

²⁰ For spelling, punctuation and through line numbers of the 1603 Q1 *Hamlet*, this essay follows Bertram, Paul and Bernice Kliman. *The Three-Text Hamlet: Parallel Texts of the First and Second Quartos and First Folio*, (New York, 1991).

²¹ See Davis, "Better a Witty Fool," p. 314.

B: who would this indure,	
A: But for a hope of something after death?	[shared, linking level: chiasm #3 ends, chiasm #4 begins]
B: Which pusles the braine,	
B: and doth confound the sence,	
B: Which makes vs rather beare those euilles we haue,	
B: Than flie to others that we know not of.	
A: I that, O this conscience makes cowardes of vs all,	[chiasm #4 ends; rejoinder ²²]

The presence of an undamaged structure in this speech creates a serious challenge.

Unless the agent performing the alteration to the text is someone well versed in complex chiasmic systems, as well as someone who is consciously seeking to maintain the structural integrity of the form, fragmentary and structurally incoherent sections should appear in the speech. But they do not, which suggests the pirate knew about complex chiasmus, and intentionally used it to reconstruct this speech. Assuming this to be the case, however, leads to an even greater complication.

Even though Shakespeare is not the only writer who makes use of certain forms of complex chiasmus in the Renaissance, no other author uses chiasmus to the same extent and complexity expressed in this passage. This pattern of composition—linking a series of minor complex forms together to create a single large-scale system of this magnitude—is unique to Shakespeare.²³ To compound the difficulties even further, the earliest known publication that

²² See Davis, “Better a Witty Fool,” p. 314.

²³ Christopher Marlowe uses periodic sentences that often resemble Shakespeare’s basic complex forms, however, they rarely resolve into chiasmus (certain styles of periodic sentences mimic chiasmus without actually being chiasmus; Marlowe’s usage, in any case, significantly departs from Shakespeare’s forms); Francis Bacon makes common use of simple chiasmus from the classical rhetorical tradition, but never uses the large-scale biblical forms; Edward DeVere displays an awareness of periodic phrasing (see his poem titled “The Earle of Oxenforde to the Reader”), but such examples never resolve into complex chiasmus. DeVere, in fact, makes sparing use of chiasmus in the simple forms, and he never uses or even exhibits an awareness of the large-scale biblical style structures in his

mentions biblical parallelisms, as well as their relationship to larger rhetorical forms in Hebrew (e.g., multiple parallelisms in stanzas), is *De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum*, by Bishop Robert Lowth—published in 1753, nearly a century and a half after Shakespeare had passed away.²⁴ If Q1 does represent a memorial reconstruction by a minor actor, it would appear that scholars have severely underestimated his capabilities.

Yet, despite this initial challenge, caution should be exercised before jumping to the conclusion that Shakespeare's hand is involved in the Q1 *Hamlet* soliloquy. It is always possible that someone in Shakespeare's company might have been familiar with Shakespeare's style and approach to composition, especially given the close proximity Shakespeare likely had to the other writers and players. If this were the case, and the individual were relatively skilled in writing and rhetoric, it is conceivable that such a person could have made a conscious (or even unconscious) effort to mimic Shakespeare's style in the process of reporting the play from memory, and whether by accident or intent may have composed the passage in the complex chiasmic form. However, no evidence for this theory exists, and it rests solely upon conjecture; therefore, to better determine who might have been responsible for the alterations in this passage, a much closer look at the variant texts is required to identify the source of these changes.

early poetry, the personal letters that span his entire lifetime, or the notations and marginalia of his Bible. Other authors who do not use complex chiasmus as a large-scale pattern of composition throughout their works (this list is not comprehensive) include Peele, Kyd, Spenser, Lily, Greene, Surrey, Middleton, Fletcher, Nashe and Jonson.

²⁴ See Lowth, Robert. *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, Ed. Calvin Stowe, (Andover, 1829). The book is a collection of lectures first published in Latin in 1753, and later published in English in 1787. Robert Lowth is considered the first scholar to recognize parallelisms as the fundamental rhetorical unit in the Bible, and his seminal work eventually lead to the rediscovery of the complex chiasmic forms.

Analyzing texts containing complex chiasmic structures, in an effort to retrace the actual steps taken to move from one variant to another, inevitably requires the researcher to examine the progression of the text from a specific viewpoint, e.g., do the alterations in the passage result from a legitimate text being turned into an abridged or corrupted text, or do the alterations result from an early legitimate text being revised into a later version. Ultimately, these two directions cross paths (one approach is simply the reversal of the other), but one of the pathways inevitably reveals a more systematic, logical set of manipulations to the text. This approach almost always reveals the direction in which the original text was altered to achieve the final result.

With respect to the Q1 and Q2/F1 variants, this means that Q1 can be analyzed as the corruption or abridgment of Q2/F1, or it can be analyzed as a legitimate early version of the play that was revised into Q2/F1. Based on the structural evidence presented so far (the presence of a structurally sound, complex chiasm in the Q1 soliloquy), it is reasonable to begin the analysis from the viewpoint that the Bad Quarto might possibly represent a legitimate version of *Hamlet*, which was later revised. If this direction were true, however, we would then expect to see a systematic progression of logical revisions in the text, rather than a series of haphazard emendations. With this viewpoint as the basis for inquiry, the investigation then leads us to the central chiasm in Q1, which constitutes the apex of the overall system:

(Q1, 1603; emphasis added)

A: But for this, the ioyfull hope of this,

B: Whol'd beare
the scornes and flattery of the world,
Scorned by the right rich,
the rich curssed of the poore?
The widow being oppressed,
the orphan wrong'd,
The taste of hunger,
or a tirants raigne,
And thousand more calamities besides,
To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life,

C: When that he may his full *Quietus* make, With a bare bodkin,

B: who would this indure,

A: But for a hope of something after death?

In this central chiasm, note the final two phrases that follow the catalogue of problems occurring in life. Shakespeare frequently ends such lists with a summarizing phrase (usually *symperasma*, but also *epitasis* or *epiphonema*); yet, for Shakespeare, it is unusual to see two phrases in this position. It is possible that these phrases were intended to form a parallelism of ideas (i.e., both summarize the foregoing list of “calamities”), but the connection is not definite; however, whether or not these phrases were originally intended to be a parallelism, they are still treated as such in the revision (or corruption) process:

(Q1, 1603; revised)

A: ~~But for this, the joyfull hope of this,~~ ← *And thousand more calamities besides* [replaces “hope” parallelism]

B: Whol'd beare
the scornes and flattery of the world,
Scorned by the right rich,
the rich cursed of the poore?
The widow being oppressed,
the orphan wrong'd,
The taste of hunger,
or a tirants raigne,

[] → *And thousand more calamities besides*, [phrase transferred above]

[] → *To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life* [transferred below]

C: When that he may his full *Quietus* make, With a bare bodkin,

B: who would this indure,

A: ~~But for a hope~~ of something after death? ← *To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life* [replaces “hope” position]

If this alteration is viewed from the standpoint of revision, it can then be observed that the original parallelism in the A level, based on the idea of “hope,” is deleted and the phrases are subsequently replaced by the parallelism that formerly summarized the catalogue of life’s problems (even though the last phrase “But for the hope of something after death” is replaced, only the concept of “hope” is deleted; the remainder of the phrase, “But . . . of something after death,” is shifted down to form a new A level in the overall complex system).

In terms of revising along chiastic structural lines, this is a relatively simple emendation that maintains the balance of the overall chiastic form, and perhaps more importantly, it is not the

sort of arbitrary movement that is expressed in corrupted texts. Whether this parallelism was split and transferred to the A level (the viewpoint of revision), or if the parallelism in the A level was removed and both phrases were transferred together to the end of the catalogue (the viewpoint of corruption, or perhaps even abridgment), this specific redaction further confirms that the person responsible for altering the text had a solid understanding of the chiasmic system in place, as well as a knowledge of how to manipulate the form. Haphazard corruptions simply do not manifest this type of alteration.

Once these shifts are made, a comparison of the revised Q1 variant and the 1623 Folio offers an interesting result (truncated phrases are present due to limitations of space, but do not affect the structural form):

Q1, 1603 (structurally revised)	1623 Folio
<p>A: And thousand more calamities besides, B: Whol'd beare the scornes and flattery of the world, Scorned by the right rich, the rich curssed of the poore? The widow being oppressed, the orphan wrong'd, The taste of hunger, or a tirants raigne, C: When that he may his full <i>Quietus</i> B: who would this indure, A: To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life,</p>	<p>A: That makes Calamity of so long life: B: For who would beare the Whips and Scornes of time, The Oppressors wrong, the poore mans Contumely, The pangs of dispriz'd Loue, the Lawes delay, The insolence of Office, and the Spurnes That patient merit of the... C: When he himselfe might his <i>Quietus</i> B: Who would these Fardles beare A: To grunt and sweat vnder a weary life,</p>

Operating from the viewpoint of revision, some interesting alterations occur in this passage which further clarify an awareness of the complex chiasmic structure. First, observe the opening line of the 1623 Folio, “that makes Calamity of so long *life*.” The addition of the word “life” makes the parallelism clearer in the A level (notice the corresponding phrase in the system, “to grunt and sweat vnder a weary *life*”). If we suppose that this alteration is the work of a corruptor or an adapter, then we need to assume the manipulation took place in two stages: first, the word “life” was removed to obscure the parallelism, and then the phrase itself was removed

from the A level and inserted at the end of the catalogue. It would appear that if this is a pirate's handiwork after all, he certainly went to a great deal of trouble to manipulate the structure in a way that no one, other than Shakespeare himself, could appreciate.

A similar alteration occurs in the last B level phrase of the Q1 text: "who would this indure." Notice how "indure" balances the idea of "beare" in the Q1 text, while the Folio phrases balance "beare" in the opening B level with "beare" in the closing one. Again, this is an attempt to clarify the parallelism in the text, but what is perhaps most interesting here is the change of the phrase "who would *this* indure" to "Who would *these Fardles* beare." By introducing the word "fardles," the text now points directly back to the foregoing list of life's calamities with greater specificity than the Q1 phrase, which only uses the word "this" to represent the same idea. In addition, this also clarifies the internal chiasm surrounding the apex of the system, which is one of Shakespeare's trademarks in many of his complex systems: "beare" – (list of "fardles") : "Fardles" – "beare." This again suggests a conscientious attempt to clarify the relationships between parallel thoughts in the text.

Continuing with the analysis, the next manipulations occur in two related and significant stages. The first stage focuses on the chiasm that immediately follows the one in the previous example:

Q1, 1603 (emphasis added)

A: But [] of something after death?
B: Which pusles the braine,
B: and doth confound the sence,

B: Which makes vs rather beare those euilles we haue,
B: Than flie to others that we know not of.
A: I that, O this conscience makes cowardes of vs all,

The lettering used to distinguish the phrases can be misleading in this portion of the chiasm because the B level phrases actually form two parallelisms (as opposed to four

“independent” parallel phrases).²⁵ This can be verified by Shakespeare’s use of anaphora to establish balance between these two parallelisms in the system (notice how each parallelism begins with the word, “which”). This style of structure is somewhat unusual for Shakespeare, though it certainly appears again in passages throughout his plays; yet, Shakespeare tends to use this particular format less frequently.²⁶ It may never be possible to know the reasons why Shakespeare does not prefer this style; yet, in the case of this chiasmic structure, the scheme is reformatted in the revision process:

Q1, 1603 (revised)

A: But [] of something after death?
 B: [] → *Which pusles the braine*, [phrase removed, transferred below]
 B: and doth confound the sence,
 A: *Which pusles the braine*, ← [creation of a new A level; phrase inserted from above]
 B: Which makes vs rather beare those euilles we haue,
 B: Than flie to others that we know not of.
 A: I that, O this conscience makes cowardes of vs all,

Once the new A level is created, the restructured parallelism effectively splits this chiasm into two parallel, linking chiasms in the overall system. This sets the stage for the next revision. However, to fully appreciate the next manipulation of the text, one more important note needs to be made about Shakespeare’s style of complex chiasmus before proceeding.

Apart from setting parallel phrases into balanced, corresponding positions throughout a complex chiasmic passage, Shakespeare frequently arranges entire *sections* of a passage in chiasmic order. These sections are not usually symmetrical in terms of actual size from one parallel section to the other; however, the arrangement of the central ideas in a passage still often

²⁵ The system of alphabetizing the various levels of a complex chiasm is a modern convention to aid analysis; it is doubtful Shakespeare used such a system.

²⁶ Setting two immediate parallelisms into balance, without intervening material, is more commonly observed in certain chiasmic structures of the Sonnets.

follows a chiasitic pattern. For example, the sections of the Q1 soliloquy can be arranged in the following manner:

Q1 Pattern of Arrangement:

A: Ay, there's the point . . . Is that all? Ay, all . . . Ay, marry there it goes [opening springboard and chiasm #1]
 B: When we awake [awaken after death] . . . undiscovered country [chiasm #2]
 C: hope . . . life's fardels . . . bare bodkin . . . fardels . . . hope [chiasm #3]
 B: something after death . . . which puzzles the brain [chiasm #4]
 A: Ay, that. [closing rejoinder]

Much more could be said about the way Shakespeare arranges the sections of chiasitic passages, but for the purposes of detecting the process of revision in this soliloquy it is essential to notice how the two chiasms bordering the central apex of the system are set into balanced positions. This pattern is verified in the next manipulation (the following alteration builds upon the first stage of restructuring that occurred in the previous example):

Q1, 1603 (partially revised)

A: *when wee awake, And borne before an euerlasting Iudge,* [chiasm #2 in the passage; balances against chiasm #4]
 B: *From whence no passenger euer retur'nd,*
 B: *The vndiscovered country,*
 A: *at whose sight The happy smile, and the accursed damn'd.*

A: And thousand more calamities besides,
 B: Whol'd beare
 the scornes and flattery of the world,
 Scorned by the right rich,
 the rich cursed of the poore?
 The widow being oppressed,
 the orphan wrong'd,
 The taste of hunger,
 or a tirants raigne,
 C: When that he may his full *Quietus*
 B: who would this indure,
 A: To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life,

A: *But [] of something after death?* [chiasm #4; balances against chiasm #2]
 B: []
 B: *and doth confound the sence,*
 A: *Which pusles the braine,*

This stage of the revision entails a combination of deleting unwanted material, as well as excising specific phrases for the purpose of rearrangement. This particular alteration deserves

special attention, because it is one of the most basic and fundamental manipulations that illustrates the process of revision along chiasmic structural lines:

Q1, 1603 (revised)

A: when wee awake, ~~And borne before an euerlasting Iudge,~~
 B: [] → (a) From whence no passenger euer retur'nd,
 B: [] → (b) The vndiscovered country, [phrases excised for transfer]
 A: ~~at whose sight The happy smile, and the accursed damn'd.~~

A: And thousand more calamities besides,
 B: Whol'd beare
 the scornes and flattery of the world,
 Scorned by the right rich,
 the rich cursed of the poore?
 The widow being oppressed,
 the orphan wrong'd,
 The taste of hunger,
 or a tirants raigne,
 C: When that he may his full Quietus
 B: who would this indure,
 A: To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life,

A: But [] of something after death?
 B: []
 B: [] → (a) and doth confound the sence, [phrase excised for transfer]
 A: Which pusles the braine,

At this point, the excised phrases are transferred to their corresponding positions on the opposite side of the chiasm. What is particularly interesting is to observe how *the phrases chiastically reverse* from one side of the system to the other, mirroring their original positions. This manipulation in particular reveals that the person responsible for these alterations not only knew how to manipulate the complex chiasmic structure, but that his awareness was highly advanced:

Q1, 1603 (revised)

A: when wee awake, ~~And borne before an euerlasting Iudge,~~
 B: [] ← (a) and doth confound the sence, [phrase reinserted into form]
 B: []
 A: ~~at whose sight The happy smile, and the accursed damn'd.~~

A: And thousand more calamities besides,
 B: Whol'd beare
 the scornes and flattery of the world,
 Scorned by the right rich,
 the rich cursed of the poore?
 The widow being oppressed,
 the orphan wrong'd,
 The taste of hunger,
 or a tirants raigne,
 C: When that he may his full *Quietus*
 B: who would this indure,
 A: To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life,

A: But [] of something after death?
 B: [] ← (b) The vndiscovered country, [phrases reversed from above]
 B: [] ← (a) From whence no passenger euer retur'nd, [reinserted into form]
 A: Which pusles the braine,

Once this transfer is complete, observe the comparison between the revised Q1 variant and the Folio (no attempt is made to smooth out the text by altering words, grammar or punctuation in the phrasing of Q1):

Q1, 1603 (revised)	1623 Folio
<p>A: when wee awake, B: and doth confound the sence, B: []</p> <p>A: And thousand more calamities besides, B: Whol'd beare the scornes and flattery of the world, Scorned by the right rich, the rich cursed of the poore? The widow being oppressed, the orphan wrong'd, The taste of hunger, or a tirants raigne, C: When that he may his full <i>Quietus</i> B: who would this indure, A: To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life, A: But [] of something after death? B: The vndiscovered country, B: From whence no passenger euer retur'nd, A: Which pusles the braine, B: Which makes vs rather beare those euilles... B: Than flie to others that we know not of. A: I that, O this conscience makes cowardes of vs all,</p>	<p>A: When we haue shuffle'd off this mortall coile, B: Must giue vs pawse. B: There's the respect</p> <p>A: That makes Calamity of so long life: B: For who would beare the Whips and Scornes of time, The Oppressors wrong, the poore mans Contumely, The pangs of dispriz'd Loue, the Lawes delay, The insolence of Office, and the Spurnes That patient merit of the... C: When he himselfe might his <i>Quietus</i> B: Who would these Fardles beare A: To grunt and sweat vnder a weary life, A: But that the dread of something after death, B: the vndiscovered Countrey, B: from whose Borne No Traueller returnes, A: Puzels the will, B: And makes vs rather beare those illes... B: Then flye to others that we know not of. A: Thus Conscience does make Cowards of vs all,</p>

To achieve these results, only three standard revisions along chiasmic structural lines have been applied to the Q1 variant: reassignment of a parallelism, restructuring of a parallelism, and the transposition of parallel phrases between balancing chiasms in the system. That this level of correspondence between the Q1 and F1 variants can be achieved with only three structural manipulations is both surprising and unexpected, and it confirms that these modifications are intentional and consciously made.

The next structural alteration between variants poses a new challenge. Unlike the earlier manipulations, which demonstrate words and phrases being altered within the context of the same structural foundation, the following manipulation involves dismantling the underlying form itself and reconstructing it anew:

Q1, 1603	1623 Folio
A: To Die, to sleepe, B: is that all? I all: No, A: to sleepe, to dreame, B: I mary there it goes, A: For in that dreame of death, A: when wee awake,	A: To dye, to sleepe B: No more; A: and by a sleepe, to say we end B: The Heart-ake, B: and the thousand Naturall shockes That Flesh is heyre too? A: 'Tis a consummation Deuoutly to be wish'd. A: To dye to sleepe, To sleepe, B: perchance to Dreame; B: I, there's the rub, A: For in that sleepe of death, B: what dreames may come, A: When we haue shuffel'd off this mortall coile,

Apart from additional material in the 1623 Folio, the structures between these two variants are based on the same underlying form. The Folio merely expresses two parallel chiasms, while the Q1 is condensed into one. Depending on the viewpoint taken, this either represents an expansion of the Q1 variant into F1, or an abridgment of F1 into Q1 (the Folio separates the ideas of “no more” and “to dream” into two separate chiasms, while Q1 contains both the ideas in the same form). In either case, due to the presence of the complex chiasmic structure in both variants, the movement from one complex form into another complex form

signifies that the person responsible recognized the chiasmic structure and made a conscious attempt to preserve it in the text. This same approach, expanding or contracting chiasms, occurs in other areas between the Q1 and Q2/F1 variants as well. Note the following example:

Q1 1603 Hamlet (TLN 981-4; emphasis added)
<p>A: this great world you see <i>contents me not</i>, B: <i>No nor</i> the spangled heauens, C: <i>nor</i> earth C: <i>nor</i> sea, B: <i>No nor</i> Man that is so glorious a creature, A: <i>Contents not me</i>, B: <i>no nor</i> woman too, X: though you laugh. [Rosencrantz interrupts the form]</p>
1623 Folio (TLN 1345-57; emphasis added)
<p>A: this goodly frame the Earth, B: <i>seemes to me</i> a sterrill Promontory; C: this most excellent Canopy D: the Ayre, E: look you, D: this braue ore-hanging [firmament (Q2)], C: this Maiesticall Roofe, fretted with golden fire: B: why, it <i>appeares</i> no other thing <i>to mee</i>, A: then a foule and pestilent congregation of vapours. [earth and sky contrasted] A: What a piece of worke is a man! B: how Noble in <i>Reason</i>? C: how infinite in <i>faculty</i>? D: in forme E: and mouing E: how expresse D: and admirable? C: in <i>Action</i>, how like an Angel? B: in <i>apprehension</i>, how like a God? A: the beauty of the world, the Parragon of Animals; A: and yet to me, what is this Quintessence of Dust? B: Man delights not me; B: no, nor Woman neither; X: though by your smiling you seeme to say so. [Rosencrantz interrupts the form]</p>

Again, the Q1 variant contains one primary chiasm, while the Q2/F1 variants display two (not including the short chiasm at the end, which acts as a rejoinder). In this instance, the Q1 variant contains a much simpler form that relies primarily on the use of *anaphora* (shared initial

words in phrases) to establish the structural spine of the chiasm, while the Q2/F1 variants express advanced forms that also incorporate the ideas within the phrases to create the overall system. More importantly, however, the Q1 variant contains both the ideas of “earth” and “man” in a single form, while the Q2/F1 variants separate these ideas into two chiasms. The process accountable for this particular structural variation is identical to the process in Hamlet’s “to be or not to be” speech, suggesting the person responsible for the changes was engaged in a systematic approach that covered multiple passages throughout the text.

Whether attempting to illustrate the process of revision, abridgment or even corruption between variants, the structures illustrated here require a different approach in analysis. The absence of a fixed, unaltered structural form between the variants makes it extremely difficult to observe the actual progress from one version to another. Any attempt to retrace each individual stage of transformation in restructured chiasms can only be subjective, and rarely definitive. However, one significant alteration in the structural form can be observed with confidence: in Hamlet’s “to be or not to be” soliloquy, the concept of “dream” is reassigned from the A level to the B level (or vice versa, if the text represents an abridgment or corruption). This alteration is important, because it offers a glimpse into the *thought process* behind the manipulations. However, the actual steps in the progression of one variant to another with this specific example can only be determined by conjecture. Because restructuring a chiasm involves pulling apart the form into its constituent parts, and then reassembling it with alterations, the only way to reconstruct the process with confidence would be the unlikely event of discovering the author’s original notes or foul papers used to rewrite such a passage.

Due to this obstacle, the following analysis is offered simply as an illustration of the process behind reassigning an element to a new structural level; it is not, however, an attempt to

The substitution of “dreame” with “sleepe” is particularly notable, because the Q1 phrase “for in that *dreame* of death” is generally thought to be a case where the pirate actor simply botched up the Q2/F1 phrase, “for in that *sleepe* of death,” when he was reconstructing the speech from memory. From a chiasitic structural viewpoint, however, it is imperative that the term “dreame” shift to a new level; otherwise, the underlying structure would display a confusing pattern of false parallels and unbalanced ideas.

<u>Step Three:</u>	
A: To Die, to sleepe,	
B: [] ← to dreame, [reinserted]
B: I mary there it goes,	
A: For in that [sleepe] of death,	
B: [] ← dreame [reinserted]
A: when wee awake,	

Apart from the presence of new material in the Q2/F1 variants (“the Heart-ake . . . Flesh is heyre too” which, notably, appears as a chiasitic unit linked into the preexisting text), the parallel sections now appear as follows:

Q1, 1603 (restructured)	1623 Folio
A: To Die, to sleepe, B: I all A: to sleepe,	A: To dye, to sleepe B: No more; A: and by a sleepe, to say we end B: The Heart-ake, B: and the thousand Naturall shockes That Flesh is heyre too? A: 'Tis a consummation Deuoutly to be wish'd.
A: To Die, to sleepe, B: to dreame B: I mary there it goes, A: For in that sleepe of death, B: dreame A: when wee awake,	A: To dye to sleepe, To sleepe, B: perchance to Dreame; B: I, there's the rub, A: For in that sleepe of death, B: what dreames may come, A: When we haue shufflel'd off this mortall coile,

Accounting for the remaining differences in text between the Q1 and Q2/F1 variants is rather straightforward, because it simply involves the introduction (or deletion) of new material into the Q2/F1 structures. It is significant that in both cases, the material is arranged into chiasitic units:

1623 Folio (new material inserted in chiasitic form):

A: Whether 'tis Nobler in the minde to suffer
 B: The Slings and Arrowes of outragious Fortune,
 B: Or to take Armes against a Sea of troubles,
 A: And by opposing end them:

A: Thus Conscience does make Cowards of vs all, [the new material below is linked into this preexisting line]
 B: And thus the Natiue hew of Resolution

A: Is sicklied o're, with the pale cast of Thought,
 B: And enterprizes of great pith and moment,

A: With this regard their Currants turne away,
 And loose the name of Action.

With the expansion of the text, combined with the rearrangement of the overall chiasitic system of the entire soliloquy, these two sections of new material are set into corresponding positions. This can be seen in the antithetical balance between the ideas of noble and cowardly actions. The Q1 text, which is lop-sided in this specific level of corresponding sections, is subsequently improved in the Q2/F1 variants, permitting the overall form to achieve a greater sense of balance and resolution. Once these portions are included, a comprehensive diagram illustrates the correspondence between the Q1 and F1 variants:

Q1, 1603 (revised)	1623 Folio
<p>A: To be, or not to be, I there's the point,</p> <p>A: To Die, to sleepe, B: I all</p> <p>A: to sleepe,</p> <p>A: To Die, to sleepe, B: to dreame B: I mary there it goes,</p> <p>A: For in that sleepe of death, B: dreame</p> <p>A: when wee awake, B: and doth confound the sence,</p>	<p>To be, or not to be, that is the Question:</p> <p>A: Whether 'tis Nobler in the minde to suffer B: The Slings and Arrowes of outrageous... B: Or to take Armes against a Sea of troubles, A: And by opposing end them:</p> <p>A: To dye, to sleepe B: No more;</p> <p>A: and by a sleepe, to say we end B: The Heart-ake, B: and the thousand Naturall shockes...</p> <p>A: 'Tis a consummation Deuoutly to be wish'd.</p> <p>A: To dye to sleepe, To sleepe, B: perchance to Dreame; B: I, there's the rub,</p> <p>A: For in that sleepe of death, B: what dreames may come,</p> <p>A: When we haue shufflel'd off this mortall coile, B: Must giue vs pawse.</p>

<p>B: []</p> <p>A: And thousand more calamities besides,</p> <p>B: Whol'd beare the scornes and flattery of the world, Scorned by the right rich, the rich cursed of the poore? The widow being oppressed, the orphan wrong'd, The taste of hunger, or a tirants raigne,</p> <p>C: When that he may his full <i>Quietus</i></p> <p>B: who would this indure,</p> <p>A: To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life,</p> <p>A: But [] of something after death?</p> <p>B: The vndiscouered country,</p> <p>B: From whence no passenger euer retur'nd,</p> <p>A: Which pusles the braine,</p> <p>B: Which makes vs rather beare those euilles...</p> <p>B: Than flie to others that we know not of.</p> <p>A: I that, O this conscience makes cowardes of vs all,</p>	<p>B: There's the respect</p> <p>A: That makes Calamity of so long life:</p> <p>B: For who would beare the Whips and Scornes of time, The Oppressors wrong, the poore mans Contumely, The pangs of dispriz'd Loue, the Lawes delay, The insolence of Office, and the Spurnes That patient merit of the...</p> <p>C: When he himselfe might his <i>Quietus</i></p> <p>B: Who would these Fardles beare</p> <p>A: To grunt and sweat vnder a weary life,</p> <p>A: But that the dread of something after death,</p> <p>B: the vndiscouered Country,</p> <p>B: from whose Borne No Traueller returnes,</p> <p>A: Puzels the will,</p> <p>B: And makes vs rather beare those illes...</p> <p>B: Then flye to others that we know not of.</p> <p>A: Thus Conscience does make Cowards of vs all,</p> <p>B: And thus the Natiue hew of Resolution</p> <p>A: Is sicklied o're, with the pale cast of Thought,</p> <p>B: And enterprizes of great pith and moment,</p> <p>A: With this regard their Currants turne away, And loose the name of Action.</p>
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With the completion of the chiasitic structural analysis between the variant forms of this speech, it is possible to draw a number of important conclusions about the Q1 variant in relation to the Q2 and F1 versions, especially regarding the theories of abridgment, memorial reconstruction and revision. These conclusions, given in context of the specific types and varieties of structural manipulations present between the variants, provide a number of insights into the origin and development of the texts.

In terms of abridgment, it is important to recognize that the primary goal of the redactor is to compress the text into a shorter—but equally viable—version of the original play. With specific regards to *Hamlet*, the abridgment theory contends that a full version of *Hamlet* was condensed into the Q1 variant to meet the time constraint of “the two-hours’ traffic” for a stage performance. It also contends that the simplified language of the text is meant to make the play more accessible to a country audience, as opposed to the more sophisticated viewers in London. However, the chiasitic analysis does not support this conclusion.

The manipulations occurring between the Q1 and Q2/F1 variants go well beyond simple abridgment and reveal an active creative process at work, which includes the reassignment of terms, the rearrangement of the structural development and dramatic progression of the speech, and numerous conscious decisions regarding the style. In addition, while abridgments are intended to shorten a text, this does not involve simplifying the style of the writer in the drastic manner that these variants exhibit (these theoretical simplifications of the structure do not enhance comprehension of the speech; therefore, the idea that the soliloquy has been dumbed down for stupid provincial folk is untenable). Neither do abridgments include the conscious attempt to make a speech awkward, nor do they exhibit changes to the structural locations of specific concepts in such a way as to alter the definitions of terms, endowing them with new meaning and thereby redefining the original text. If the Q1 passage constitutes an abridgment, it can only be an abridgment of an earlier lost version of *Hamlet*, but not an abridgment of the Q2 or F1 texts.

Next, of all the theories explaining the origin of the Q1 text, the structural analysis of this soliloquy makes memorial reconstruction the most difficult and problematic to demonstrate. Throughout the passage, multiple phrases are excised, adjusted and reinserted into balanced locations with the precision of a surgeon, and most of these manipulations are not readily discernable—even to the eye of one trained in the complex forms. To retain this theory, we would need to suppose that this minor actor, depicted as “a man of considerable ignorance” who was “apparently as dull as he was venal” and afflicted with “heavy stupidity,”²⁷ managed to forget major sections of the soliloquy which also just happened to form complete chiasmic units in the passage (apparently he was prone to forgetting texts occurring in chiasmic “chunks”); that he

²⁷ Gray, “The First Quarto,” p. 177.

had extraordinary dumb luck by rearranging phrases in the overall form, while somehow maintaining the balance of the component parallelisms; he had the ability to excise the verse lines mentioning “the undiscovered country from whose bourn / No traveler returns,” chiasmatically reverse the phrases, and then reinsert them in the only possible corresponding positions available in the text—eleven verse lines away on the opposite side of the system; he apparently tried to make the speech appear like a legitimate, simplified version of Shakespeare’s soliloquy by simplifying the overall structural form into a basic format; and finally (though this list is not finished), he even managed to insert balanced parallel phrases in the text when he included his own interpolations (the parallelism on “hope,” for example, which balances across the central apex of the entire system). Whatever theory one chooses to believe, these alterations are not the work of an amateur.

The idea that the Q1 variant results from a minor actor attempting to recreate the Q2 or F1 speeches from a faulty memory is inconsistent with the internal structural evidence that is present between the texts, particularly in light of the fact that every structural change in Hamlet’s soliloquy—without exception—occurs along the lines of the underlying, complex chiasmic form.²⁸ The differences between the variants reveal a systematic approach to the text that is both deliberate and calculated. While the style of the Q1 variant is clearly inferior to the Q2/F1 texts (most plausibly a reflection of the time span between the dates of composition, rather than the

²⁸ While it has been supposed that a minor actor playing the role of Marcellus is responsible for creating the “pirated” copy of the Q1 *Hamlet* (due to the high correlation of his spoken lines between the variants), the studies measuring correspondence in dialogue actually appear to indicate the roles requiring the least amount of change in the revision process, rather than identifying the “pirate” who stole the play.

authorship itself),²⁹ Hamlet's Q1 soliloquy nevertheless emerges as a legitimate text.³⁰ If, after all, this passage represents a memorial reconstruction, then it can only be an *accurate* reconstruction from an earlier *Hamlet* that is no longer in our possession.

Finally, the presence of a fully intact, chiasmic structural form—one that shares the same basic structural spine between all the variants—illustrates that whoever performed the manipulations on the Q1 variant was fully conscious of Shakespeare's use of complex chiasmus, as well as his unique style and adaptation of the biblical rhetorical form, and made a conscious effort to retain the same style of complex structure between the variant texts. Apart from assigning these changes to a hypothetical corruptor, these facts also suggest that the person responsible for the changes between the variant texts may have also been the same author who wrote all the versions in the first place. Because complex chiasmic structures of the size and magnitude that Shakespeare employs in his work were generally unknown by his contemporaries

²⁹ The scene containing Hamlet's advice to the players (Q1, TLN 1886-1893) ends with a speech about clowns who only have a stock set of jokes ("cinkapase of ieast"). The passage is written in a common Shakespearean complex chiasm, and the opening portion of the system is preserved in the final periodic sentence of Q2 and F1: "And let those that play your clowns . . . a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it" (F1, TLN 1886-1993; *Oxford Edition* 3.2.38-45). This opening section expresses the same structural style as the Q1 "clown" speech, which is absent from the Q2/F1 variants (and different in style from all the preceding chiasms in the Q2/F1 passages), and links into the Q1 structure like a missing puzzle piece. This style of complex chiasm (e.g., unusually verbose chiasmic phrases appearing consistently throughout the system, but separate from the catalogue) is reflected in Shakespeare's earliest known chiasmic structures, including many of those found in *Titus Andronicus*, *2 Henry VI*, and the dedication to *Venus and Adonis*.

³⁰ This does not preclude the possibility of piecemeal corruption throughout the Q1 text, due to compositional and scribal errors, or errors introduced by players or other company members, particularly if the 1603 publication were based on a manuscript (likely a promptbook) that had been in the acting company's possession for over a decade.

(except in the most limited fashion), and remained undiscovered for centuries to come, this would suggest that the person responsible for the changes was none other than Shakespeare himself.

In view of the potential research that could be (and should be) further performed on the variant texts of *Hamlet*, which would subsequently reveal more information about Shakespeare's writing process as a whole, I feel compelled to state a clear and direct conclusion about the outcome of this analysis: the differences between many of the corresponding passages in the Q1 and Q2/F1 variants, including but not limited to the famous soliloquy analyzed in this essay, represent patent authorial revision. No other explanation provides a plausible scenario for these changes, and the textual differences between the variants blatantly reveal the process involved when a writer composes an early chiasmic passage, and then returns to revise it at a later date. In fact, in terms of Hamlet's soliloquy, it would be difficult to create a better textbook example of revision along chiasmic structural lines—even if the author intentionally left clues about his process for future unknown generations of scholars to discover and examine.

Shakespeare's use of complex chiasmus is widespread throughout all his works, forming the structural foundation of speeches, scenes and even entire plays. It is a new tool for textual analysis that promises to enhance our understanding of Shakespeare's work and process, and the potential of this device reaches far beyond the analysis of variant texts. Other applications include, but are not limited to, observing the development of Shakespeare's structural style, providing an aid in establishing and confirming the chronology of his plays (as well as dating the potentially revised portions within them), and assisting in attribution studies. In fact, Shakespeare's unique style of complex chiasmus is often as distinct as a fingerprint in the text, which can potentially yield further answers to questions regarding the Shakespeare apocryphal

plays, as well as authorship controversies. By taking advantage of new methodologies in Shakespeare textual criticism, scholars can enhance our understanding of Shakespeare's work and his process, and the full ramifications of what this structure may provide have yet to be seen. For it seems that each time we learn more about Shakespeare and his work, the more we find that the parameters of his capabilities extend beyond the imagination of even his most ardent admirers, and we have yet to discover the boundaries of his genius. Therefore, if knowing an author's work reveals insight into the mind behind the text, then Shakespeare himself is further revealed in the structure of his work, and Shakespeare's use of complex chiasmus promises to enhance scholarly inquiries well into the new century.