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‘For now hath time made me his numbering clock’: Shakespeare’s Jacquemarts

*According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word ‘jacquemart’ appears first in the early sixteenth century, a curious amalgam of the working class moniker ‘Jack’ with the French word for hammer, ‘marteau’. An articulated automaton that struck a clock bell, a jacquemart is a metallic embodiment of an ideology that conflates physical labour with dehumanization. Little considered, Shakespeare’s named and self-appointed ‘Jacks’ — Falstaff, Jaques of *As You Like It*, and Richard II represent ‘rude mechanicals’ subject to the agency of more powerful political figures. Yet the automaton jack is not merely a pawn of history; he is also associated with the inventive Vulcan and models of early modern poetry as built, fabricated, or machined. Richard II’s ‘hammered’ thoughts or Falstaff’s multiplying buckram men help reveal the capacity for creative making within these dispossessed characters’ seeming mechanicity.*

‘There is no clock in the forest.’¹ Or so insists *As You Like It*’s hapless Orlando, in response to Rosalind’s teasing question ‘what is’t a’ clock?’ (3.2.299). In one sense Orlando is right: as genre critics have been wont to observe, the play repeatedly ‘contrasts the timelessness of the forest world with the time-ridden preoccupations of court and city life.’² Yet in another sense the pastoral world of Arden is not a wholly protected biosphere. The change of seasons, the fragility of old age, and the ideal pacing of the courtship ritual: all of these militate against any state of truly suspended animation. Love in particular creates a sense of temporality far keener than any bell-tower; as Rosalind retorts, ‘Then there is no true lover in the forest, else / sighing every minute and groaning every hour would / detect the lazy foot of Time as well as a clock’ (302–5). But Orlando must stand corrected at an even more fundamental level, for as every audience of the play ought to know, there actually *is* a clock in the forest. I am not just speaking about the timepiece

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up Touchstone's sleeve. There is another 'clock' in the forest as well, and his name is Jaques.

Thinking of persons as clocks may not be customary, even if Rosalind's horological blazon provides a template for doing so. Yet Jaques makes the connection irresistible. To begin with, his one moment of levity comes when he encounters the like-minded Touchstone, who 'drew a dial from his poke' (2.7.20) and propounded that 'from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe, / And then from hour to hour, we rot and rot' (26–7).³ His doing so, as Jonathan Sawday has noted, is particularly remarkable given the incongruity between Touchstone's humble stature and the expense of owning a personal time-piece; his action thereby signals his 'social sophistication', or, less generously, suggests that he was getting 'ideas above [his] station'.⁴ We might here recall the self-inflated Malvolio, fantasizing about his future fortunes: 'I frown the while, and perchance wind up my watch, or play with my — some rich jewel' (*Twelfth Night* 2.5.59–60). The rarity of such watches in the sixteenth century thereby partly helps account for Jaques's delight in encountering this fool, and so too does a shared sense of being at a remove from the other characters. But if the encounter temporarily gives respite to his melancholy, it only does so long enough for him to respond with a disquisition on time of his own, the acerbic set piece about the seven ages of man ('All the world's a stage', 2.7.139–66). This narrative, more than any watch pulled from a pocket, speaks for that *universal* clock in the forest, as old Adam's entrance corroborates immediately at the monologue's dour conclusion.⁵ Or rather, Adam's entrance corroborates the iconographic collation of different kinds of time, such as that voiced by John Norden's *The Labyrinth of Man's Life* (1614): 'this moving world, may well resembled be, / t'a Jack, or Watch, or Clock, or to all three'.⁶ Jaques participates in meditations upon both quotidian and historical time; by the end of the play, he is a uniquely Saturnalian figure, a gloomy Chronos who refuses to be swept up into the play's final festivities because the forces he represents cannot be forestalled by marriage or recuperated by comedy. He is as metronomically true to his humour throughout, and leaves the stage 'to see no pastime I' — pun presumably intended.

That Jaques's subtle horological function should be so commonly overlooked is, I think, partly a result of another effect of time: that which has almost erased the symbolism of his given name. For in being named 'Jaques', this melancholy reporter of age's declination is symbolically akin to a clock-work 'jack': the mechanical automaton which hammered the time in the elaborate bell-towers of the Renaissance and — as I hope cursorily to show — in

several of Shakespeare's plays. This essay comprises a preliminary attempt to make sense of these surprisingly common Shakespearean figures. I will focus here on the jacks' convoluted and somewhat speculative etymological history, their often overlooked time-keeping function, and their ideologically charged role in their respective plays. 'But where are the jacquemarts in Shakespeare?' asked each of the colleagues to whom I first mentioned this idea. My contention is that just as clocks are everywhere in Shakespeare, even in the forests and Roman republics where they do not belong, the clockwork jack also strikes an uncanny bell in the characters that literally bear its name: the Jack Falstaff of *Merry Wives* and the *Henry IV* plays, Jaques of *As You Like It*, Jack Cade of *Henry VI*, and by an apposition he introduces, Richard II. That is to say, each of these men named Jack is figured as having qualities like the jacquemart, the automaton, or the puppet. And not coincidentally, each of these characters has a complicated relationship to time, to labour, to interiority, and to the larger sweep of historical events around him. If I cannot in this short essay fully explore each aspect of what it means to be a 'jack', I hope to point to some possibilities for further research, not least with regard to emergent theories of distributed cognition and the Renaissance stage. When it comes to the stage life of 'things', the 'jack' is both more and less than he — than it — seems.

According to the *Dictionnaire Alphabétique et Analogique de La Langue Française*, the word 'jacquemart' likely derives from a curious amalgam of the moniker 'Jack' with the French word for hammer, 'marteau'.⁷ An observer of a working jacquemart will see that it is just that: an articulated automaton holding a mallet, driven by clockworks to strike one or several bells on the quarter hour. According to historian D.W. Hering, the tradition began because the earliest wheel and water clocks necessitated a human bell-ringer. Automata were soon constructed to do the striking in lieu of humans, rarely amenable to hoisting hammers for hours at a stretch.⁸ A jacquemart, then, is a mechanical 'Jack' with a mechanical hammer, used to strike clock bells, just as today a jackhammer is used to strike pavement. The same local craftsmen who fashioned puppets apparently also made many of the jacks, a point of origin that I will return to later.⁹ Some of the more elaborate automata, however, and the horological devices they were part of, carried an expense that radically belied this seemingly folksy origin.¹⁰

The notoriously entangled etymologies underlying the word 'Jack' also share the complexity of the jacquemart. Almost from its inception this name was a placeholder for generic 'man', the familiar version of the name John.¹¹

In its ubiquity the Jack is an everyman marked by class: one tends to be an average Joe, not an extraordinary one — a jack-of-all trades, but not a ‘master’ of any (cf. Oscar Wilde’s haughty Gwendolen: ‘there is very little music in the name Jack, if any at all, indeed. It does not thrill. It produces absolutely no vibrations ... I have known several Jacks, and they all, without exception, were more than usually plain. Besides, Jack is a notorious domesticity for John!’¹²). This class demarcation too has an origin in etymological history, as in the 1391 word ‘Jakke’, meaning ‘mechanical device’. Likewise, the ‘jakes’, or flush toilet, would further besmirch the name ‘Jack’ by association.¹³ Indeed, the word retains its mechanical affiliations to this day, as the various iterative activities that involve ‘jacking’ evidence — some not appropriate to mention in print. The word also continues to carry mechanical meanings in the proliferating compound nouns derived from the root, such as the jack-a-nape (a trained monkey), a jack-a-lent (a puppet), a Jack-in-the-box (a sprung pop-up toy), a jack-ladder, or a jack-o-the-clock. The stubborn literalism of such Germanic compounds further underscores their humble origins in mechanical labour.

In all these instances, the word ‘Jack’ retains its affiliation with manual trades and the implication of a quasi-subhuman status, such that when it is applied to persons, generally those of a ‘superior’ class use it to insult those ‘beneath them’. Two instances from *Richard III* are illuminating. The first comes when the duke of Buckingham urges Richard to finally give him the long-promised earldom of Hereford. Richard pointedly ignores Buckingham, who then repeats his request several times. In response, Richard only asks, ‘what’s o’clock?’ When the bewildered Buckingham asks him the point of this seeming non-sequitor, Richard replies that, ‘Because like a Jack thou keep’st the stroke / Betwixt thy begging and my meditation’ (4.2.114–15).¹⁴ Positing himself as an allegorical figure for the *vita contemplativa* — as he did earlier by deploying a prop bible — Richard sniffs at a kind of rude mechanical interrupting his cogitations. That Buckingham should so reiterate his question reveals a kind of compulsivity or mechanicity that, in Richard’s eyes, disqualifies him from true aristocracy. The same class snobbery appears when Gloucester remarks to Queen Elizabeth:

The world is grown so bad,
 That wrens make prey where eagles dare not perch.
 Since every Jack became a gentleman,
 There’s many a gentle person made a Jack. (1.3.69–72)

In other words, the Jack is a figure who does not know his or her place, a social climber, a jab which Elizabeth understands perfectly well: 'Come, come, we know your meaning, brother Gloucester; / You envy my advancement and my friends' (72–4). So, too, Touchstone with his timepiece and Jaques with his 'Seven ages' speech try to set themselves above their lowly surroundings. The association of jacks with hierarchical jostling makes an appearance in the *Sonnets* as well, as when the poet envies those 'saucy' (11) 'jacks that nimble leap, / To kiss' (5–6) where he himself cannot.¹⁵ If for Donne and Ovid the wily flea insinuated himself into intimacy, here the ivory keys' unwitting machinations are envied; the poet's lips gladly 'would change their state' with this same 'dead wood'. The poet must obey the rules of Petrarchan courtship, but Jacks, even in their seeming inanimacy, overleap convention. They seem, too, to give the truth to emergent post-humanist theories trying to recover the uncanny lives of 'things'.¹⁶

The social ambitiousness of the 'Jack' can be traced back, in part, to its origin in the name 'Yaakov', a name that came to mean 'he who supplants or deceives'. A diminutive for 'Jacob', 'Jack' thereby preserves some of the traces of its association with ambition and trickery. If we have lost the full force of those etymologies we can easily recover them when considering the other name cognate with 'Yaakov': namely *Iago*.¹⁷ Indeed, recalling that *Othello* begins with resentments over the assignation of lieutenantcy, we see how much work this etymology is doing for the playwright. A lieutenant is by definition also a supplanter, one who stands 'in lieu of' another.¹⁸ Just as clockwork 'Jacks' stand in 'lieu' of actual human bell-ringers, Buckingham's repeated request marks him as Richard's puppet, a compulsive social climber, a poor excuse for a man. Like Iago, a 'Jack' is not to be trusted. Iachimo, Iago's romance cousin, pretends to likewise 'stand in lieu of' Imogen's proper husband, initiating a further array of identity substitutions and transpositions in the play.

As these examples suggest, a 'Jack' is an ambitious and often dangerous figure to any pre-existing power structure — be he a demonic Iago or a rebellious Jack Cade. But these irrepressible over-leapers and social climbers also reveal the extent to which those in power cannot tell the story of the 'jack'. Jacks often fight back, revealing even in their seeming mechanicity a kind of inventiveness and self-making. The true story of the 'jack', these examples suggest, is not only of the automaton inside the man, but the man inside the automaton.

An important example is that of Richard of Gloucester, whose dehumanization at the hands of Bullingbrook is described in curiously horological terms. I refer here to that oft-quoted passage at the end of *Richard II*, where the deposed king soliloquizes on his unhappy circumstances, referring to himself explicitly as a ‘jack’:

I wasted time, and now doth time waste me;
 For now hath time made me his numb’ring clock:
 My thoughts are minutes, and with sighs they jar
 Their watches on unto mine eyes, the outward watch,
 Whereto my finger, like a dial’s point,
 Is pointing still, in cleansing them from tears.
 Now sir, the sound that tells what hour it is
 Are clamorous groans, which strike upon my heart,
 Which is the bell. So sighs, and tears, and groans
 Show minutes, times, and hours; but my time
 Runs posting on in Bullingbrook’s proud joy,
 While I stand fooling here, his Jack o’ the clock. (5.5.49–60)

In this amazing penultimate scene, Richard anthropomorphizes himself as a timepiece, like some surreal Arcimboldo painting made not of fruit, but of clockworks (a strategy not unlike Rosalind’s simile of the lover ‘sighing every minute and groaning every hour’ to ‘detect the lazy foot of Time’). It is a stunning image, self-pitying but also deeply creative: if audiences spend much of the play recoiling from the idea of Richard as king, here they are asked to recall the giftedness of Richard the poet. But more to the point, it is deeply astute: moralizing on his own place in history, Richard sees that he is no longer an agent, but driven by the machinations of larger forces by which he is colonized. One thinks of *Henry V*’s Katherine’s ‘Englishing’ of herself via blazon as something akin; Katherine turns her French body into English body parts, just as Richard renames his human body into blazoned clockworks.

But if Richard is a puppet, a ‘jack’ of history, he is also a curiously self-created, self-dramatizing one. Surely external forces control his physical fate, like the Jacquemart’s. Yet in important ways the mind itself is its own place: a place of generativity that cannot be colonized. From the beginning of the scene, after all, Richard self-consciously announces that he is engaged in a peculiar kind of thought-experiment, summoning vitality even from his doom:

I have been studying how I may compare
This prison where I live unto the world;
And for because the world is populous,
And here is not a creature but myself,
I cannot do it; yet I'll hammer it out. (5.5.1–5)

Many have observed the pathos of the scene and its rather touching portrayal of the imaginative life. Despite his highly straightened circumstances, the former king is still, if only in the capaciousness of his fantasy, thinking the impossible, mentally birthing other creatures. What is particularly striking however, especially given his representation of himself as a 'jack of the clock', is the horological verb employed here: 'hammer'. In history's eyes, Richard has become a mere jack, a pawn of others' actions. But for Richard, seizing upon this technical analogy allows him to do — to imagine — the impossible ('I cannot do it'). Richard thereby reinvents himself as the mechanic poet, recalling Sir Philip Sidney's distinction between the *vates* ('which is as much as a diviner, foreseer, or prophet') and the Greek poet (which 'comes of this word *poiein*, which is "to make"').¹⁹ This 'Jack' becomes a kind of Vulcan figure, labouring in the smithy of the mind. It is crucial to recall here Vulcan's association not just with ironworks, but also with automaton-making.²⁰ For Richard is nothing if not a maker, impossibly conceptualizing a teeming microcosm in the place of his empty prison:

My brain will prove the female to my soul,
My soul the father, and these two beget
A generation of still-breeding thoughts;
And these same thoughts people this little world. (5.5.6–10)

A full reading of this scene therefore acknowledges that Richard is both the automaton *and* the automaton maker, just like Othello was both the 'turbaned Turk' *and* the Venetian.

The victors write history, and in the history plays, the victors are those who control time. When Richard III asks Buckingham 'what's o'clock?' the question is sardonic, meant to suggest that Buckingham's role is menial: he hammers out his demands, but he does not influence events. Likewise, when Falstaff of *1 Henry IV* once asks, 'Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?' Hal's dismissive reply reveals how little he thinks Falstaff should have to do with time:

What a devil hast thou to do with the time of the day? Unless hours were cups of sack, and minutes capons, and clocks the tongues of bawds, and the dials the signs of leaping-houses, and the blessed sun himself a fair hot wench in flame-colored taffata; I see no reason why thou shouldst be so superfluous to demand the time of day. (1.2.6–11)

Hal's anthropomorphization of time is by now familiar. Here, it dismembers the abstract forces of time into a mere assemblage of clock parts, with the implication that Jack Falstaff, as well, is too trivial a person to concern himself with the exigencies of time. Yet fat Jack is not only a historically constructed factor, he is also as self-made and *making* a man as ever was. To consider the character in his fullness is to recognize that being a 'jack' is part of Falstaff's subversive hold over Hal and audience alike. Not coincidentally, sixteenth-century jacquemarts were most often sculpted in the likeness of soldiers (departing from their original form, angels). Falstaff is not only the most popular fictional soldier to come out of the sixteenth century (or rather, 'not of an age, but for all time'). He is also frequently associated with clock time, both in the second tetralogy and in *Merry Wives of Windsor*. His continued popularity, notably, is utterly consistent with the history of the jacquemart. Although we cannot be certain how common jacquemarts were at the time Shakespeare was writing, we do know that Shakespeare and his audience could still have seen 'the original Jack o' the clock at Wells Cathedral, where a puppet known as Jack Blandifer moved his head and struck a bell on the hour'.²¹ As this naming suggests, clock jacquemarts were distinguished by name (Blandifer, Smiter, etc.), painted in and costumed in unique styles, and were often the stuff of local legend. Indeed, such figures were ubiquitous and individualized enough for them 'to become part of the towns' character'.²² So too 'a combination of civic pride, utilitarianism, and mechanical interest fostered the diffusion of the [elaborate Renaissance] clock despite its relatively high cost'.²³ The ongoing affection audiences feel for 'our' Jack Falstaff interpolates us in this very localized custom, and perhaps even enacts that uncanny sense of palimpsestic temporality that Jonathan Gil Harris records (citing likewise Latour's concept of 'polytemporality') in *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare*.²⁴ In several ways, future and past seem to write each other whenever 'jacks' appear. The dramatic figure Falstaff is named after the historical figure truly named John (aka Jack) Oldcastle, and Shakespeare's Jack Cade is likewise derived from history. But Shakespeare certainly calls attention to the fortuitousness of the

name at every opportunity, making it a plot point — if not *the* plot point in relation to this character. To recall a previous citation (see note 11), the name Jacques is an 'ancien sobriquet du paysan français, notamment des paysans insurgés'. Whether the insurgencies predated the assumptions that 'Jacks' are insurgent, or the other way around, is now lost to time.

In *Merry Wives of Windsor*, 'merriness' and minor rebellion are both deeply imbricated with timeliness, and all the characters feel its pull. Agitated at the absence of his rival duelist, Hugh Evans, the preposterous Doctor Caius turns to his servant and demands, 'Vat is the clock, Jack?'²⁵ The comedy lies not only in the French physician's mangled English, but also in the juxtaposition of the timepiece with his companion's Christian name: clock, Jack. In fact, as it turns out, time is of the essence in the play: not just for the aborted duel, but also for Falstaff's two hasty escapes from Ford's house, in the Herne the hunter trick, and in the precision required for any of Mistress Page's several would-be abductors to succeed.

While the joke might go by quickly, 'jack' is to Caius's vocabulary as 'humor' is to Nym's (cf: 'that's the humor of it!'). 'I will teach a scurvy jack-a-nape priest to meddle or make' (1.4.109–10) Caius insists; later, he again calls Evans a 'Scurvy Jack-dog priest' (2.3.63) and finally, to his face, 'de coward, de Jack dog, John ape' (3.1.83–4). While none of these insults have the obvious horological reference of 'Vat is the clock, Jack?' all avail themselves of that particular lexicon of insult which suggests there is something robotic, too worker-like, about the priest.²⁶ The accusation is that Evans is a tool of another, which audiences know quite well. The vocabulary, however, is not just applied to the foolish priest. Mistress Page calls her servant Robin, 'You little Jack-a-Lent' (3.3.27–8), suggesting that as a servant of her will, he, too, is little more than a puppet.

But the real 'Jack' of the play is neither servant Robin nor preacher Hugh, but Jack Falstaff. He himself employs the wordplay exactly once. In a moralizing vein quite unthinkable to the Falstaff of the history plays, he observes, 'See now how wit may be made a Jack-a-Lent, when 'tis upon ill employment' (5.5.126–7). By personifying his wit as a jack-a-lent, a small stuffed puppet traditionally pelted during the Lenten season,²⁷ Falstaff attests that he has become the butt of the very joke anticipated by his first name (we recall, too, that puppeteers sometimes actually constructed jacks). Falstaff's hasty exit draped in Mother Pratt's dress presents an explicit visual pun, moreover, at least for an Elizabethan audience. Here he becomes emblematically a jack-straw, an effigy, or stuffed man. The association with mere clothing is also

obvious in his exit via laundry basket earlier in that play — or even in Prince Hal's *1 Henry IV* quip: 'How now, blown Jack? How now, quilt?' (4.2.49).

But if Hal only sees him as a puppet, and if the merry wives prank him out as a stuffed shirt, the audience also remembers Jack Falstaff as a creative force: the man who outrageously concocts a whole troop of fabric doppelgangers — 'eleven buckram men grown out of two!' — in the earlier play. A mere jack-straw in Hal's eyes, the inventive Falstaff animates buckram men just like Richard, jack of Bullingbrook's clock, 'hammered out' a court of followers. In contradistinction to Hal's or Bullingbrook's reductionist view of these 'jacks', their creative acts are fully consistent with how early moderns understood poetic making, as several rhetorical manuals of the period witness. According to one, eloquence is 'made by ayre; beaten and framed with articulate and distinct sound'; another suggests it is 'a distilling our notions into a quintessence, or forming all our thoughts in a Cone and smiting with the point'; and for Montaigne, thought itself, 'when compressed into the numbered feet of poetry, springs forth more violently and strikes me a much stiffer jolt'.²⁸ These very physicalized, even mechanistic descriptions, reveal a 'jack' is not merely an appendage of someone else's engine, but can be a creative maker in its own right.

This implication is something that audiences have always understood. Hal may depose Falstaff in Eastcheap, but Falstaff supplants *him*, stands in lieu of him, in the popular imagination. As the prince observes: 'thou art not what thou seem'st', to which Falstaff responds: 'No, that's certain, I am not a double man; but if I be not Jack Falstaff, then am I a Jack' (*1 Henry IV*, 5.4.137–9). But where Hal's invasion has Katherine blazoning and anatomizing herself, Falstaff points out the life, and the agency, the fullness of what a *Jack* thinks of being a Jack:

banish Peto, banish Bardolph, banish Poins, but for sweet Jack Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, true Jack Falstaff, valiant Jack Falstaff, and therefore more valiant, being as he is old Jack Falstaff, banish not him thy Harry's company, banish not him thy Harry's company — banish plump Jack, and banish all the world.
(2.4.474–80)

In Hal's dismissal of Falstaff, we see yet again the expression of a classist ideology that conflates physical labour with dehumanization, and sees 'Jack' as incidental to the narrative arc that Hal constructs for himself as subject. But if Norden's assertion (cited above) is true that 'this moving world, may

well resembled be, / t'a Jack, or Watch, or Clock, or to all three', then Jack Falstaff best emblemizes that truth. As a maker of poetic fictions — outrageous stories, buckram men, himself — Jack has no equal; as a polytemporal and multivalent character, Jack exceeds by all measures Hal's reductive dichotomies. Like those other 'rude mechanicals' too easily dismissed as puppets or tools, Shakespeare's wily, self-dramatizing, saucy jacks are makers of fictions perhaps more powerful than historical time. To think about where Shakespeare's sympathies lie, we only need to recall Robert Greene's famous insult in the *Groats-Worth of Wit* (1592), that Shakespeare himself was a grubby 'Johannas fac totum': an upstart supplanter, a wily seizer of the time, a jack-of-all-trades.

Notes

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- 1 William Shakespeare, *As You Like It* (3.2.300–1), *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd ed. (Boston, 1997). All future Shakespeare references come from *The Riverside*, and will be cited parenthetically in the text.
- 2 Jay L. Halio, 'No Clock in the Forest', *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 2.2 (Spring, 1962), 197–207. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/449499>
- 3 E. Michael Thron, in 'Jaques: Emblems and Morals', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 30.1 (1979), 84–9, remarks that Touchstone is actually aping the well-known emblem for time as found in Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes*, in which a melancholy man stares at a timepiece, as a way of satirizing Jaques's self-involved philosophizing (88). DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2869664>
- 4 Jonathan Sawday, *Engines of the Imagination: Renaissance Culture and the Rise of the Machine* (London and New York, 2007), 77.
- 5 As Harry Morris points out, Jaques's 'seven ages' speech is actually a *memento mori*, and its description of old age (sans eyes, etc.) is most literally that of a death's head. See 'As You Like It: Et in Arcadia Ego', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 26.3 (1975), 269–75. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2869607>

- 6 Quoted in Adam Cohen, *Shakespeare and Technology: Dramatizing Early Modern Technological Revolutions* (New York: Palgrave, 2006), 205 fn. 33.
- 7 Although the ancient derivation of the name is under some dispute, several sources corroborate the formation of the word as a compound of the ancient name 'Jacques' with the French word for 'hammer'. Paul Robert, *Dictionnaire Alphabétique et Analogique de La Langue Française*, 12th ed., 9 vols (Paris, 1985), 5.789, lists the first definition as: 'figure de métal or de bois sculpté représentant un homme d'armes muni d'un marteau avec lequel il frappe les heures sur le timbre ou la clocke d'une horloge placée en haut d'un édifice (befroi, église, tour ...) ['a figure of metal or wood sculpted to represent a man armed with a hammer, with which he strikes the hours on a bell of a clock or of an elaborate clockworks placed above a building (belfry, church, tower ...)]; the translation here and in subsequent citations is mine]. Robert likewise cross-lists 'Jaquemart' under the entry for 'Marteau' (277). The *Trésor de la Langue Française Informatisé* (<http://atilf.atilf.fr/dendien/scripts/tlfiv5/advanced.exe?8;s=501396045>), suggests that Rabelais popularized this use of the term in *Gargantua* (1534). The *Dictionnaire Historique de la langue Française: Contenant les Mots Français en Usage et Quelques Autres Délaiés, avec Leur Origine Proche et Lointaine*, ed. Alain Rey et al. (Paris, 1998) offers a similar explication for 'jaquemart' (1904). The early French-English bilingual dictionary edited by Abel Boyer, *Royal Dictionary Abridged* (London, 1797) confirms the anglicizing of the name as "'jaquemart": a jack that strikes the hour' (237), and early English sobriquets such as Jack-the-smiter and Jackhammer likewise confirm the associations. However, the *Oxford Dictionary of English Christian Names*, ed. E.G. Withycombe (New York and London, 1947) cites E.W.B. Nicholson's *The Pedigree of Jack and Various Allied Names* (1892) as denying a historical connection between the French Jacques and the English Jack.
- 8 D.W. Hering, 'Numerals on Clock and Watch Dials', *The Scientific Monthly* 49.4 (1939), 311–23, 316fn. For a more thorough treatment of the development of clock technology and its cultural consequences, see especially Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Chicago and London, 1996).
- 9 Tiffany Stern, "'Observe the Sawciness of the Jackes": Clock Jacks and the Complexity of Time in Early Modern England', (unpublished paper, given at the Modern Language Association Convention, 6 January 2012).
- 10 See Carlo M. Cipolla, *Clocks and Culture 1300–1700*. (London, 1967), 41.
- 11 See the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED): 'A familiar by-form of the name *John*; hence, a generic proper name for any representative of the common people' (I.1.a.). So too in French: *Jaque*, 'probabit de *Jacques*, ancien sobriquet du paysan français,

- notamment des paysans insurgés' [probably derived from Jacques, the ancient name for a French peasant, particularly an insurgent] (*Dictionnaire Alfabétique*, 789).
- 12 Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest and Other Plays* (Oxford, 1995), 263.
 - 13 John Harington's *A New Discourse of a Stale Subject, Called the Metamorphosis of Ajax* (1596) had recently popularized the wordplay; Harington invented a precursor to the flush toilet; in his allegory, libel is a kind of excrement best suited for the 'jakes'.
 - 14 This exchange perhaps challenges Sawday's assertion that 'one did not ask the time from one's social inferiors, only from those of equal or superior rank' (77), though obviously here Richard asks the question for pointed effect.
 - 15 Shakespeare, 'Sonnet 128' (1772).
 - 16 See, for example, Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford, 2005); Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, 2010); and Bill Brown, 'Thing Theory', *Critical Inquiry* 28.1 (2001), 1–22. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/449030>. Andrew Sofer has also paid important attention to the agency of objects on the Renaissance stage in *The Stage Life of Props* (Michigan, 2003), as have the contributors to *Staged Properties in Early Modern English Drama*, ed. Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Korda (Cambridge, 2006).
 - 17 In its entry for the name 'Jacob', *A Dictionary of First Names* (Oxford, 2006) notes its biblical origin in the Hebrew name Yaakov, as well as its Welsh cognate Iago. The association with 'supplanting' is biblical: 'The derivation of the name has been much discussed. It is traditionally explained as being derived from Hebrew *akev* "heel" and to have meant "heel grabber", because when Jacob was born "his hand took hold of Esau's heel" (Genesis 25:26). This is interpreted later in the Bible as "supplanter" Esau himself remarks, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? for he has supplanted me these two times" (Genesis 27:36)'. 'Jacob', *A Dictionary of First Names*, Patrick Hanks, Kate Hardcastle, and Flavia Hodges (Oxford, 2006) <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t41.e1557>.
 - 18 Lieutenant, 'one who takes the place of another' (*oed* 1.a) derives from the French 'lieu' (place) and 'tenant' (holding).
 - 19 Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry or The Defence of Poesy*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd, rev. and expanded by R.W. Maslen, 3rd ed. (Manchester and New York, 2002), 84.
 - 20 See, for example, Leah Knight, 'Orpheus and the Poetic Automation of the Natural World', *The Automaton in English Renaissance Literature* (Farnham; Burlington, 2011): 'In Francis Beaumont's *Masque of the Inner Temple and Grayes Inne*, the goddess Iris celebrates Vulcan's automata: "See how they moue, drawne by this heauenly ioy, / Like the wilde trees, which follow'd Orpheus Harpe." The simile in

Iris' praise reminds us what current scholars have often overlooked: the ingenious Vulcan may have been a model for Renaissance engineers in much the same way as Orpheus was a model for the period's poets. Iris's admiration makes clear that both figures — Vulcan and Orpheus, engineer and poet — were imagined in the period as like-minded makers of automata' (79).

- 21 Adam Cohen, *Shakespeare and Technology: Dramatizing Early Modern Technological Revolutions*, (New York, 2006), 140.
- 22 According to Stern thirteen Jacquemarts still survive in England; in the early modern period, they would have been relatively common (each of the major cathedrals came to acquire one). My thanks to Dr Stern for our private correspondence on these points.
- 23 Cipolla, *Clocks and Culture*, 43.
- 24 Jonathan Gil Harris, *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare* (Philadelphia, 2008), 3. Harris argues that 'a strikingly wide array of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century forms of English literary and cultural activity — devotional lyric verse, urban chorography, vitalist philosophy, and, most insistently, Shakespeare's own drama — expound or enact theories of the polychronic nature of matter' (4).
- 25 William Shakespeare, *Merry Wives of Windsor* (2.3.3).
- 26 Curiously, it is an appellation that Evans takes on himself, promising Ford, 'I will teach the children their behaviors; and I will be like a jack-an-apes also, to burn the knight with my tabor' (4.4.67–9).
- 27 In pursuing this line of argument, I am therefore substantially in agreement with Frederick Jonassen's suggestion that in associating Falstaff with the Jack-a-Lent, he is evoking the entire tradition of Jack-a-Lent foolery in order to characterize his great clown: 'Though puny, reviled, and battered, the Jack-a-Lent nevertheless possessed the satirical power of Carnival to reduce the mighty to a laughing stock and thus perform a function that critiqued and ameliorated the injustices of society. By alluding to the Jack-a-Lent, Shakespeare was applying to Falstaff the variety of associations and responses the Jack-a-Lent would evoke in an Elizabethan audience Though the action of the Jack-a-Lent custom may arise from throwing at cocks, the Jack-a-Lent puppet itself is likely to derive from a pageant figure'. See 'The Meaning of Falstaff's Allusion to the Jack-A-Lent in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*', *Studies in Philology* 88.1 (1991), 66.
- 28 John Bodenheim, *Politeuphuia, Wits Common-Wealth* (London, 1598); Thomas Blount, *Academy of Eloquence* (London, 1654), 66; Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Works*, trans. Donald M. Frame (London, 2003), 130.