Back to the Future: A Review of Comparative Studies in Shakespeare and the Commedia dell'Arte

A wide-ranging, if admittedly not exhaustive, interpretive survey of comparative studies of Shakespeare and the commedia dell'arte, which this essay aims to provide, must include several important studies from the early twentieth century because their archival and bibliographic rigour makes them still useful points of departure for serious comparative study. Whereas the linear positivistic source study (eg, 'x influenced y') that flourished in this early phase of comparative literature no longer compels us living in the age of intertextuality, a transnational approach to Renaissance theatre should welcome archivally-documented accounts of actors crossing boundaries: the material encounters of international exchange. New work on the Shakespeare-*arte* question can weave together the archival and the intertextual, which has been richly redefined in recent years for the field of Renaissance drama by Louise George Clubb and other scholars.[1] In giving some prolonged attention to early-twentieth-century scholars in the first half of this essay, I will pause over some of the foundational documents published in their studies as interpretive cruxes still meriting discussion. In my discussion of late-twentieth-century scholarship, I will acknowledge ties to the earlier work.

Drawing from several late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century archival studies, such as Albert Feuillerat's 1908 printed edition of documents from the Office of the Revels during Elizabeth's reign,[2] Winifred Smith (1912) is among the first Anglo-American critics to examine the flurry of visits to the English court by Italian players between 1573 and 1578.[3] The documents she examines include a suggestive list of apparel and props for 'the Italian players' who performed a pastoral play for Queen Elizabeth on her progresses in Reading and Windsor in 1573,[4] and the permit given by the Privy Council on January 13, 1578 to Drusiano Martinelli (brother of Tristano, the first Arlecchino) to 'playe within the Citie and the liberties' (conceivably indicating Martinelli's performance at James Burbage's recently constructed theatre in the northern liberties of Shoreditch).[5] In addition to citations from the 1570s, to be well rehearsed in later English studies, Smith mentions an intriguing 1550 Privy Council payment to a group of Italian players that include a certain 'Marck Antonio', possibly the Venetian *buffone* of this name who performed at the Castel St. Angelo in 1550 and 1551.[6] Initiating ground that would be reprised, expanded, and systematized by Kathleen Lea twenty years later,[7] Smith records reports of the commedia dell'arte in the commen-

taries and travel journals of Thomas Coryate, Thomas Nashe, George Whetstone, Thomas Heywood, and others, and surveys notices of *arte maschere* in plays by Shakespeare and contemporaries such as Thomas Middleton, John Marston, and John Day. Among these might be singled out a revealing reference, in Middleton and Rowley's *The Spanish Gipsie* (1653), to a 'scenical' school of improvisation curiously not very different from a practice used by some contemporary improv groups and relevant, as we shall see, to the Italian actress in particular:

> There is a way
> Which the Italians and the Frenchmen use;
> That is, on a word given, or some slight plot,
> The actors will *extempore* fashion out
> Sceanes neat and witty. (4.2.39–43)[8]

Like Lea, for whom she lays much of the groundwork, Smith extends consideration of commedia company performance to the mercenary-performative activities of itinerant mountebanks, according substantial attention to the mountebank scene in Jonson's *Volpone* and Corvino's subsequent response that he has just been thrust into a scene from the commedia dell'arte. More so than Shakespeare, and closely following the Venetian travel accounts of Thomas Coryate and others, Jonson understands the structural connections between the new year-round professional theatre and mercenary charlatanry that have recently been explored by scholars such as Roberto Tessari and Kenneth and Laura Richards.[9] In the context of her *Volpone* discussion, Smith refers to the historical Scoto of Mantua — an Italian who performed sleight-of-hand tricks before Queen Elizabeth — and discusses the textually fascinating *Antimask of Mountebanks,* performed at Gray's Inn in 1617.[10] It may fairly be said that Smith initiates serious, careful comparative study of Shakespeare and the commedia dell'arte in the twentieth century, amply availing herself of then-recent archival research by continental and English scholars.

E.K. Chambers provides the best, and still useful, early compendium of the documents regarding Italian players in England, which surprisingly are almost entirely concentrated between 1573 and 1578.[11] Chambers suggests that these visits may have been prompted by performances of Italian players witnessed by English ambassadors in France in 1571 and 1572, and underlines the importance of Mantua, not only for *arte* activity in general, but also for Anglo-Italian theatrical exchange. When Lord Buckhurst saw Italian

players perform in France on 4 March 1571, in the context of the wedding of Charles IX to his Habsburg bride Elizabeth of Austria, the event was hosted by Luigi Gonzaga, the Duke of Nevers and brother to the Duke of Mantua, intricately aligned with the Habsburgs through marital alliances.[12] (Thus, in the context of the Gonzaga-Habsburg alliance, the many occasions of *arte* travel to the German-speaking regions from the 1550s on).[13] Three other records of English ambassadors or envoys viewing Italian actors in France during the years 1571 and 1572[14] further demonstrate that the initial contact between the commedia dell'arte and England occurred at the courtly, supranational level. To the documents mentioned by Smith, Chambers adds a payment by the Treasurer of the Chamber to Alfonso Ferrabosco, court musician and entertainer, 'and the rest of the Italian players' for a play performed at the English court on 27 February 1576.[15] Probably indicating a performance of dilettantes rather than professionals, the reference suggests that a close relationship between professional and amateur commedia activity obtained in England as it did in Bavaria during the same period — a point stressed by Louise George Clubb. Another document that Chambers adds to Smith's group is Thomas Norton's November 1574 denunciation of the 'unchaste, shameless and unnatural tumbling of the Italian women', reflecting the frequent English antipathy to the actress that may partly explain why the archival documentation of the commedia in England all but ceases after 1578.[16] (That there is no extant documentation, of course, does not mean that there were no players.)

A neglected series of studies by Oscar Campbell on commedia dell'arte elements in *Love's Labour's Lost, Two Gentleman of Verona,* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor,* published in 1925 and 1932,[17] still deserves attention because of the remarkable way in which they anticipate Clubb's insistence on the commedia dell'arte's close ties with literary and academic culture — a point not pursued in the studies of Smith and Lea, both of which tellingly define the commedia dell'arte as 'popular comedy' in their titles. What renders Campbell's reading of Don Armado in *Love's Labour's Lost* as a commedia Capitano particularly nuanced is precisely the fact that, in specifying the close relationship of famous Capitani such as Francesco Andreini to northern Italian court culture, he deftly distinguishes between the classical braggart soldier and the more amorous, refined, and rhetorically gifted Renaissance captain. Campbell thus contests the then prevailing view — and it might be optimistic to say that much has changed eighty years hence — that native figures such as Lyly's Sir Tophas in *Endimion* constituted Shakespeare's fundamental com-

edic models. Campbell's analysis of the 'farced Humanism' of the Dottore in both Holofernes (*Love's Labour's Lost*) and, surprisingly, Falstaff in *The Merry Wives of Windsor,* are similarly nuanced and attentive to the specifics of Renaissance rhetorical culture as practised by highly refined commedia Dottori such as the Gelosi's Lodovico dei Bianchi. Also anticipating Clubb's and subsequent studies, including the seminal work of Richard Andrews,[18] and consonant with the emphasis on the *arte*'s use of Renaissance poetics, is Campbell's assumption of a close relationship between the scripted comedy of the *commedia erudita* and the improvised 'compositions' of the professional players, who also frequently performed scripted plays. Campbell's discussion of the scripted play *Fedele and Fortunio, the Two Italian Gentleman* (translated in 1584 by Anthony Munday from Luigi Pasqualigo's 1576 *Il Fedele*)[19] as a basis for *Two Gentlemen of Verona* is entirely relevant to his discussion of commedia elements in the play, for the professional players based their repertoire on 'theatregrams' (Clubb's term) regularly filched from the learned comedy. In fact, as Campbell points out, the commedia scenario 'Flavio traditio', Day 5 of Flaminio Scala's *Il teatro delle favole rappresentative,* resembles the Pasqualigo play (and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*) in many respects. Kathleen Lea interestingly notes that Anthony Munday was reported to have practised the improvisatory method of acting during a stay in Italy.[20]

Reprising the actor-centred work of Smith and Chambers, Louis Wright in his 1926 article 'Will Kemp and the Commedia dell'Arte', examines the possible contacts that Will Kemp, Shakespeare's clown until 1599, might have had with the commedia dell'arte.[21] As a member of the Earl of Leicester's Men, along with two other actors who would later become part of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, Thomas Pope and George Bryan,[22] Will Kemp toured the continent in 1586, performing (like the itinerant troupe in *Hamlet*) at the Danish court of Elsinore and in Utrecht, where they performed an acrobatic routine called *The Labours of Hercules* that had been presented by Italian actors before English ambassadors on 18 June 1572 in Paris.[23] By 1590, as Thomas Nashe notes in *An Almond for a Parrat,* Kemp seems to have been known by the Italian players.[24] In 1601, after leaving Shakespeare's company, Kemp travelled to Italy and Germany.[25] An imaginative snippet of this trip seems to have been captured in John Day's *The Travailes of the Three English Brothers* (1607),[26] which in one scene represents the presentation of an 'Italian Harlequin' before Sir Anthony Shirley in Venice, who immediately turns to Kemp to request that he act out an improvised play with the Italian actor. Besides providing an interesting fictional rendering of how the court and

the aristocracy could function as transnational contact points between actors from different countries, the excerpt suggests that, like Anthony Munday, Kemp could have actually practised Italian improvisation to a theme and/or plot (in addition to the English clown's famed improvisation to a rhyme).

Any future study of the commedia dell'arte and English Renaissance drama surely will still have to address Kathleen Lea's monumental study, with 116 richly documented pages in the second volume explicitly examining this question. Lea's only limitation is that she does not explore 'Italian Renaissance comedy' as an entire system in which scripts and scenarios, the piazza (or *stanzone*) and court, and the literary and the oral continually interact.[27] Her account of possible contact between England and the commedia dell'arte is admirable and exhaustive: she methodically considers English travellers in Italy; English ambassadors in Paris witnessing commedia performance; English actors on the continent (one of the best cases for the co-presence of commedia and English travelling actors in one place in time is 1604 in Paris, just before the Gelosi left on the voyage that would be fatal for Isabella Andreini);[28] Italian actors in England; Italian plays produced in London by Italian musicians and dilettantes such as Alfonso Ferrabosco; and para-theatrical activity such as mountebank performance. Lea's exposition of English travellers and ambassadors observing commedia performance in Italy and France is particular useful for scholars today. Because she extends few interpretive remarks from the copious, well-documented citations that she includes from Fynes Moryson, Thomas Coryate, Robert Dallington, George Whetstone, the Earl of Lincoln, and Thomas Smith, we can venture a few synthetic observations here from these reports.

1. English travellers considered their own amphitheatres such as the Globe and the Fortune to be architecturally superior to the public Italian theatres in Italian cities such as Florence and Venice. Thomas Nashe, in *Pierce Pennilesse,* finds the English theatres 'more statelye furnisht' than the Italian theatres; for Thomas Coryate, the Venetian playhouses that he has visited are 'very beggarly and base in comparison with our stately playhouses in England; neither can their actors compare with us for apparel, shewes, and musicke'.[29]
2. Despite the fact that the *arte* troupes, from 1567 on, did perform pastoral, tragicomedy, and even tragedy, Nashe and other Englishmen seem to be unaware of this fact, and consider the Italians' supposed limitation to comedy and farce to be another sign of inferiority relative to the English theatre, whose proficiency in tragedy renders them more worthy inheritors of the classical mantle. For Fynes

Moryson, Italian comedies 'were of amorous matters, never of histories, much less of tragedies, which thee Italian nature too much affects to imitate and surpass'.[30]

3. The Italian practice of improvisation impresses the English as quite distinct from their own 'fully penned' productions, and also substantially different in method from the English clown's practice of improvising to a rhyme.[31] In 1582, George Whetstone anticipates the Middleton and Rowley reference mentioned above, reporting that 'Signior Philoxenus' [the name that he invents for the anonymous Italian gentlemen at whose palace he spends Christmas] … commaunded the Comedians to bethinke themselves of some action, that should lyvelie expresse the nature of Inconstancie, Dissimulation, Ignorance and the rest of the passions, before named'.[32] Mainly pertaining to amorous matters, these 'actions' or themes probably were improvised by the actresses playing the role of the Innamorate.
4. Understandably struck by the presence of actresses, the English tend to associate them with the bawdy and sexual comportment that renders Italian comedy, in their view, morally inferior to English theatre.[33] In an astonishing statement, Thomas Coryate magnanimously concedes that the Italian actresses can act 'with as good a grace, action, gesture, and whatsoever convenient for a Player, as ever I saw any masculine actor'.[34]

Every arena of Italian-English contact taken up by Lea, as well as the textual residue regarding Italian masks and the improvisatory method in English dramatic and non-dramatic literature, is significantly extended and developed in relation to what she inherits from Smith and Chambers. Her extensive quotations from Harvey, Whetstone, Gosson, Nashe, Heywood, Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton, Middleton and Rowley, Drayton, Marston, Massinger, Sir Thomas Browne, John Day, and others conclusively reveal that the types and method of the commedia dell'arte were very familiar to the English in Shakespeare's time. Following Ferdinando Neri's 1913 comparison of *The Tempest* and a group of commedia dell'arte pastoral scenarios (in manuscript, in Rome and Naples) whose general plot bear a striking resemblance to Shakespeare's play, Lea provides a compelling case for Shakespeare's general awareness of this kind of commedia play, and furnishes the texts of these Arcadian scenarios (mostly dating from 1618–22, but representing a genre in circulation for some time) both in Italian and in English.[35]

After Lea, many years pass before a thick description of Italian-English contact emerges again. Reprising and extending the archival and bibliographic sources of Smith, Chambers, and Lea with explicit attention to the question

of whether Shakespeare's actors might have ever used the Italian method of improvisation, Andrew Grewar investigates the 'stage plots' found among the papers of Edward Alleyn, used by a combined company of the Lord Admiral's Men and the Lord Strange's Men between 1590 and 1592.[36] Written in two columns with a hole cut near the top so that it could be used in performance, containing a list of entrances and exits, the stage plot strikingly resembles the form of the commedia dell'arte scenario. One plot, *The Dead Man's Fortune*, contains the first reference to 'Pantaloon' in the English language and provides the rough outline for a commedia-style plot: Pantaloon, who is attended by his servant Peascod, is cuckolded by his young wife Asspida and her equally young lover Validore. Grewar's significant contribution is to connect these documents with specific actors. *The Dead Man's Fortune* contains the direction '*Enter Burbage*' and in addition to the twenty-year-old Burbage, the plot of *The Seven Deadlie Sinns* contains the names of several actors who would join Shakespeare and Burbage to form the Lord Chamberlain's Men in 1594: Thomas Pope, George Bryan, Richard Cowley, John Duke, Augustine Phillips, John Sincler, and William Slye. Greg has even speculated that Shakespeare himself might have played the role of Henry VI in *The Seven Deadlie Sinns*.[37] As Grewar notes, Pope and Bryan travelled with Will Kemp to the continent in 1586, where on at least one occasion they performed a routine also practised by *arte* actors (*The Labours of Hercules*). In addition to connecting the stage plots to the very group of actors who would work with Shakespeare, Grewar connects this possible English experimentation with commedia techniques to comedies that Shakespeare wrote in the same period, noting that the next occurrences of 'Pantaloon' come in *The Taming of the Shrew* where, as in *Love's Labour's Lost,* there are *maschere,* dialogue structures, and copiously expanding set speeches (e.g. Holofernes' disquisitions in *Love's Labour's Lost*) that seem to reflect both the character system and the verbal methods of the commedia dell'arte.[38] Combined with a constellation of English references to the *arte* between 1588 and 1594,[39] we can surmise a spurt of renewed English interest during this time, now more professionally calibrated than the court-based activity of the 1570s.

The stage plots in themselves cannot provide indisputable evidence either for or against the proposition that the English actors practised improvisation in the Italian manner. Considerably less detailed than the scenarios of Scala and others, they mainly mark entrances and exits, and even if actually hung backstage may have constituted no more than an actor's guide to a scripted play. But if the English did not practise the particular Italian method of

improvising an action to a theme or word, seen by Whetstone and Moryson as a distinguishing characteristic, Louise George Clubb has rewritten the Shakespeare-commedia question by enlarging our understanding about transnationally-shared 'methods'. Stressing the consanguinity of scripted and improvised Italian drama, the adjacency of courtly/dilettante performance and *arte* production, and the notion of 'Italian comedy' as an overall system based on the combinatory composition of 'theatregrams' (characters, character relationships, topoi, dialogic structures, actions, etc.), Clubb invites us to consider the methods of modular composition that would have been shared by the Elizabethan dramatist and the Italian actor alike, the latter highly dependent on literature for his or her improvisations. For an evocation of how this process might have worked, Clubb juxtaposes printed vestigia of Isabella Andreini's performance in the form of her *Fragmenti di alcune scritture — contrasti* organized exactly according to the kind of themes suggested by Whetstone's 'Italian Gentleman' — with the verbal dueling of Beatrice and Benedict. These kinds of micro-compositions could be inserted into an Italian scenario and an English script alike, and evidently the Shakespearean clown improvised at this level, much to Hamlet's dismay in his speech to the players. But Clubb's most important point, which enlarges the scope of 'method' beyond that conceived by Grewar, is that English writers in this age of 'secondary orality'[40] composed in ways not dissimilar to actors improvising their 'compositions', as they called them, on stage. To appreciate the full force of this observation on the macro as well as micro level necessitates reading all of Clubb's work on comic, pastoral, and tragic theatregrams in the overall system of 'Renaissance drama'.

If scripted and improvised Italian drama were part of the same system, as Clubb argues, then the study of Shakespeare and the commedia dell'arte must attend to the *commedia erudita* and other forms of scripted drama as well. Certainly when Shakespeare was composing *The Taming of the Shrew,* which fleshes out a subplot based on Ariosto's *I suppositi* (via Gascoigne's translation) with commedia dell'arte *maschere* such as Gremio as 'Pantaloon' (a character we remember, in the nearly contemporary stage plot of *The Dead Man's Fortune*), he seems to have been thinking of 'Italian comedy' as a single, if capacious, category. The convincing case that Richard Andrews made in *Scripts and Scenarios* for a continuum between scripted and improvised drama, seconding Clubb's argument, was extended in an article specifically devoted to the comparative question.[41] Developing Clubb's highly influential idea of 'theatregrams', or theatrical moving parts by which Italian playwrights

and actors alike composed moments, scenes, and plays, Andrews proposes three general types of Italian plots: one of urban comedy; one, of erotic pursuit in a pastoral setting; finally, a plot based on a magician living on an island, encountering a range of characters who find themselves on the island against their will. Andrews uses the third kind of plot, so clearly cognate with *The Tempest,* to make a comparative methodological point, as he considers Frank Kermode's resistance to the notion that the *arte* scenarios could have provided a kind of source for *The Tempest.*[42] Kermode, argues Andrews, is limited by the need to 'distinguish firm "sources" from mere "analogues and pseudo-sources"'.[43] But if Renaissance dramatic poetics worked in modular and generic ways, Andrews argues that 'an accumulation of "analogues" can arguably take on the character of a "source"'. Theatrical intertextuality, whose main channels were oral, cannot be tracked merely according to the printed record, so that the fact that surviving written records of this type of play — mainly dating 1618–22 — postdate *The Tempest* is not decisive.[44] Andrews' examination of correspondences in character types and dramatic structures between Shakespeare and the commedia dell'arte is as instructive for its sceptical disclaimers as for its identification of correspondences. In Shakespearean comedy, he notes the absence of the hungry zanni, the foolish old man, and the servant's control of the plot, pointing out however in the latter two cases that Shakespeare sometimes recalibrates the commedia type in a tragically subverted mode (*King Lear* and *Othello,* respectively).[45]

Recent comparative work on the *arte* actress and Shakespeare has also been inspired by Clubb's discussion of Isabella Andreini and other famous female performers. Julie D. Campbell's insightful article on *Love's Labour's Lost* fills in the gender gaps from Oscar Campbell's otherwise informative study mentioned above (typically, Oscar Campbell only addresses male *maschere* in Shakespeare's play).[46] If the princess and her attendants in Shakespeare's play are associated with Marguerite de Valois and her attendants, Campbell considers the context of the risqué, witty, and performative circle of female courtiers close to Marguerite and Catherine de' Medici known as the *escadron volant.* French noblewomen and courtiers in the sixteenth-century, notes Campbell, would have been regularly exposed to commedia dell'arte troupes with witty and virtuosic actresses such as Isabella Andreini, and naturally would have absorbed some of their performative verve and improvisatory techniques (the early modern court, it can be said, was a natural theatre of improvisation). Taking up a frequently conjured, but never deeply examined chestnut of Shakespeare-*arte* comparison — the correspondences between

the *pazzia,* or mad scene of the Italian Innamorata and Ophelia's madness — Eric Nicholson locates the Archimedean point of contact (as did Julie Campbell in regard to *Love's Labour's Lost*) precisely in the performative and theatrical dimensions.[47] Citing the fascinating stage direction of the 1603 Quarto ('Enter Ophelia, playing on a Lute, and her haire downe singing') as a point of departure, Nicholson deftly shows how the musical (eg, lute performance), gestural, and improvisatory talents of Italian actresses such as Vincenza Armani, thought to convey powerfully the 'high flames of the heart', could be virtuosically distilled into the *pazzia,* in ways that might recalibrate our reading of Ophelia from the passive subject of madness to a bawdy, virtuosic, and exciting performer.[48]

Although not extensively discussing the actress, Mace Perlman's recent comparative essay provides another fine example of a performative and theatrical approach to the question.[49] Perlman, an actor trained in classical mime, mask work, and Shakespearean performance, examines the paradoxes of form and flexibility in the *arte* mask and in Shakespearean language, demonstrating how an actor's theatre and a playwright's theatre converge according to common early modern principles of elemental physics, humoral psychology, and status. Perlman's essay provides yet another example, now specifically calibrated to the verbal and visual art of the actor, of a common Renaissance poetics upon which both Shakespeare and the commedia dell'arte drew.

Robert Henke

Notes

1 For a discussion of comparative methodology in the transnational study of Renaissance drama, see Robert Henke, 'Introduction', *Transnational Exchange in Early Modern Drama,* Robert Henke and Eric Nicholson (eds) (Aldershot, 2008), 10–14. Louise George Clubb's major essays are collected in *Italian Drama and Shakespeare's Time* (New Haven, 1989). See especially 'The Law of Writ and the Liberty: Italian Professional Theater' (249–80, part of which was originally a 1985 article), but given her argument that the commedia dell'arte and the *commedia erudita* were intimately connected, the entire book is relevant.

2 Albert Feuillerat, *Documents Relating to the Office of the Revels in the Time of Queen Elizabeth* (Louvain, 1908); Alesssandro D'Ancona, *Origini del teatro italiano,* 2 vols.

(Turin, 1891); and Armand Baschet, *Les comédiens italiens à la cour de France* (Paris, 1882).

3 *The Commedia dell'Arte: A Study in Italian Popular Comedy* (New York, 1912), 170–199.

4 Smith, *The Commedia dell'Arte,* 173, and Feuillerat, *Documents Relating to the Office of the Revels,* 225–28. The items include 'thred and shepherdes hookes', 'lamskynnes for Shepperds', and 'horstayles for the wilde mannes garment'.

5 Smith, *The Commedia dell'Arte,* 175, citing from *Acts of the Privy Council of England,* n.s. 10, 1577–8, John Roche Dasent (ed.) (London, 1895), 144.

6 E. Re, 'Commedianti a Roma nel secolo XVI', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* 63 (1914), 291–300.

7 Kathleen M. Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy: A Study in the Commedia dell'Arte 1560–1620 with Special Reference to the English Stage,* 2 vols. (Oxford, 1934).

8 Smith, *The Commedia dell'Arte,* 182. I quote from Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, *The Spanish Gipsie and All's Lost by Lust,* Edgar C Morris (ed.) (Boston and London, 1908). Interestingly, just as in a reference in *The Spanish Tragedy* (published 1592), improvisation is seen by the English to be the province of *French* as well as Italian actors. In the earlier play, the Italian actors are considered by Hieronimo to be 'so sharp of wit / That in one hour's meditation / They would perform anything in action' — to which Lorenzo replies 'for I have seen the like / In Paris among the French tragedians' (4.1.164–8; Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy,* David Bevington (ed.) (Manchester, 1996).

9 Roberto Tessari, *Commedia dell'Arte: la maschera e l'ombra* (Milan, 1989), 31–47; Kenneth and Laura Richards, *The Commedia dell'Arte: A Documentary History* (Oxford, 1990), 16–19, 25–31. Richards and Richards' indispensable study, which has introduced commedia documents to many Anglo-American readers, contains an insightful section on the commedia dell'arte presence in England (262–66). See also Rosalind Kerr's article in this journal. The definitive study on mountebanks is now M.A. Katritzky, *Women, Medicine, and Theatre, 1500–1750: Literary Mountebanks and Performing Quacks* (Aldershot, 2007).

10 Scoto is cited by James I in *Daemonologie.* See *Workes* (London, 1616), Book 1, 105. In addition to Lea's extended discussion of Scoto, which supplements Smith with several additional references, Katritzky cites uncomplimentary remarks on Scoto delivered by Thomas Nashe, John Harvey, and Thomas Heywood (as well as Jonson himself). See *Women, Medicine, and Theatre, 1500–1750,* 209–10. For the *Antimask of Mountebanks,* see *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth,* J. Nichols (ed.) (London, 1823), 3: 332–48.

11 E.K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford, 1923), 2: 261–5.

12 Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage,* 2: 261, and Baschet, *Les comédiens italiens,* 13–16.

13 See Otto Schindler, 'Zan Tabarino, "Spielman des Kaisers". Italienische Komödianten des Cinquecento zwischen den Höfen von Wien und Paris', *Römische Historische Mitteilungen* 43 (2001), 411–544; M.A. Katritzky, *The Art of Commedia: A Study in the Commedia dell'Arte 1560–1620 with Special Reference to the Visual Records* (Amsterdam, 2006), 44–83, 360.

14 See Robert Henke, 'Border-Crossing in the Commedia dell'Arte', *Transnational Exchange,* Henke and Nicholson (eds), 30.

15 Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage,* 2: 262.

16 Ibid, 2: 262.

17 O.J. Campbell, '*Love's Labour's Lost* Re-Studied', and '*The Two Gentlemen of Verona and Italian Comedy*', in *Studies in Shakespeare, Milton, and Donne* (London, 1925), 1–64; and 'The Italianate Background of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*', in *Essays and Studies in English and Comparative Literature* (Ann Arbor, 1932), 81–118.

18 Richard Andrews, *Scripts and Scenarios: The Performance of Comedy in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, 1993). Robert Henke, *Performance and Literature in the Commedia dell'Arte* (Cambridge, 2002).

19 Anthony Munday, *Fedele and Fortunio, the Two Italian Gentleman* (London, 1584); Luigi Pasqualigo, *Il fedele* (Venice, 1576).

20 Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy,* 2: 383, citing Thomas Alfield, *A True Reporte of the Death and Martyrdome of M. Campion Iesuite and Prieste* (London, 1581).

21 *Modern Language Notes* 41 (1926), 516–20.

22 Andrew Grewar, in 'Shakespeare and the Actors of the Commedia dell'Arte', *Studies in the Commedia dell'Arte,* David J. George and Christopher J. Gossip (eds) (Cardiff, 1993), 13–47, discusses the importance of these three actors as possible mediators between Shakespeare and the commedia dell'arte, 17.

23 Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy,* 2: 348. Wright generally argues that Kemp might have been exposed to commedia techniques while on the 1586 continental tour, but does not mention the 'Labours of Hercules', evidently an acrobatic act that was an international routine. See Henke, 'Border-Crossing in the Commedia dell'Arte', 22–3.

24 In the dedication to Will Kemp at the beginning of *An Almond for a Parrat,* Nashe (in the guise of the persona 'Cuthbert Curry-Knave') recounts that travelling through Bergamo on his way from Venice to England he has met an Italian actor — 'that famous Francatrip Harlicken' — who 'inquired of me if I knew any such Parabolano here as Signor Chiarlatano Kemp'. See *The Works of Thomas Nashe,* Ronald B. McKerrow (ed.) (Oxford, 1958), 3: 342.

25 Chambers cites an extract from the diary of William Smith: 'Kemp, mimus quidam, qui peregrinationem quondam in Germaniam et Italiam instituerat, post multos errores, et infortunia sua, reversus' (*The Elizabethan Stage,* 2: 326). Wright also cites a ballad that locates Kemp specifically in Rome during this trip (517).
26 See Anthony Parr, *Three Renaissance Travel Plays* (Manchester, 1995), 104–5.
27 In this regard, see the studies of O.J. Campbell, Clubb, Andrews and Henke.
28 Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy,* 2: 351.
29 For the Nashe remark, see *The Works of Thomas Nashe,* McKerrow (ed.), 1: 215, and for Coryate, see Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy,* 2: 345.
30 Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy,* 2: 343.
31 So Moryson: 'The cheefe actours hadd not their parts fully penned, but spake much extempory or upon agreement betweene themselves, expetially the wemen, whose speeches were full of wantonness, though not grosse bawdry' (Ibid).
32 Ibid, 2: 346, quoting *An Heptameron of Ciuill Discourses* (London 1582).
33 See Moryson, quoted in Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy,* 2: 343; Nashe, *The Works of Thomas Nashe,* McKerrow (ed.), 1: 215; Thomas Norton's censorship of female Italian acrobatics in 1574 (Lea, 2: 354 and Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage,* 2: 262); Whetstone in a dedicatory letter to *Promos and Cassandra* (Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy,* 2: 379–80); the suggestive remarks about the Italian Harlequin's 'Curtezan' (or wife) in the Will Kemp scene in Day's *The Travaile of Three English Brothers* cited above. If Whetstone's *Heptameron,* as I am suggesting, probably refers to exchanges between the male and the female lover in the passage above, this refined courtly exchange might be placed at the 'high' end of the cultural spectrum.
34 Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy,* 2: 345, quoted from *Coryat's Crudities* (Glasgow, 1905), 1: 412. Struck by the novelty of the actress, Coryate does suggest that the practice is not unknown in England at the time: 'For I sawe women acte, a thing that I never saw before, though I have heard that it hath sometimes been used in London'.
35 Ferdinando Neri, *Scenari delle maschere in Arcadia* (Città di Castello, 1913). Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy,* 2: 443–53.
36 Grewar, 'Shakespeare and the Actors'. For facsimiles and transcriptions of the stage plots, see W.W. Greg, *Dramatic Documents from the Elizabethan Playhouses: Stage Plots, Actors' Parts, Prompt Books* (Oxford, 1931).
37 W.W. Greg, *Henslowe Papers, Being Documents Supplementary to Henslowe's Diary* (London, 1907), 149.
38 For "Pantaloon" references in *The Taming of the Shrew,* see 1.1.48 and 3.1.36 in Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew* (Arden edition), Brian Morris (ed.) (London, 1962). For a good example of Holofernes' copiousness, see *Love's Labour's Lost,* 4.2.65–71, in

Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost* (Arden edition), H.R. Woudbuysen (ed.) (London, 1998).

39 See, for example, the *Spanish Tragedy* quotation cited above and Thomas Nashe's references in both *Pierce Pennilesse* and *An Almond for a Parrat* cited above.

40 For the concept of 'secondary orality', see Walter J. Ong, 'Oral Residue in Tudor Prose Style', *PMLA* 80 (1965),145–54.

41 'Shakespeare and Italian Comedy', in *Shakespeare and Renaissance Europe,* Andrew Hadfield and Paul Hammond (eds) (London, 2005), 123–49.

42 Andrews, 'Shakespeare and Italian Comedy', 132.

43 Andrews, 'Shakespeare and Italian Comedy', 132. See William Shakespeare, *The Tempest,* Frank Kermode (ed.) (Cambridge, 1954), lxvi–lxix.

44 For a discussion of the *arte* scenarios and *The Tempest,* see also my 'Transporting Tragicomedy: Shakespeare and the Magical Pastoral of the Commedia dell'Arte', in *Early Modern Tragicomedy,* Subha Mukherji and Raphael Lyne (eds) (Woodbridge, 2007), 43–58.

45 See, in this regard, Teresa J. Faherty, '"Othello dell'Arte": The Presence of "Commedia" in Shakespeare's Tragedy', *Theatre Journal* 43 (1991), 179–94.

46 Julie D. Campbell, '"Merry, nimble, stirring spirits[s]": Academic, Salon, and Commedia dell'Arte Influence on the Innamorate in *Love's Labour's Lost*', *Women Players in England, 1500–1600: Beyond the All-Male Stage,* Pamela Allen Brown and Peter Parolin (eds) (Aldershot, 2005), 145–70.

47 Eric Nicholson, 'Ophelia Sings like a *Prima Donna Innamorata:* Ophelia's Mad Scene and the Italian Female Performer', in *Transnational Exchange,* Henke and Nicholson (eds), 81–98. Besides Nicholson, the question has been addressed by Franca Angelini, in 'La pazzia d'Isabella', in *Letteratura italiana,* Albert Asor Rosa (ed.) (Turin, 1986), 112–13; and in Clubb, *Italian Drama in Shakespeare's Time,* 264–6. See also Erith Jaffe-Berg's article in this journal.

48 Space does not permit a full examination of the recent comparative work that has been done on the Italian actress and Shakespeare. Special mention should be made of Pamela Allen Brown, 'The Counterfeit *Innamorata* or The Diva Vanishes', *Shakespeare Yearbook* 10 (1999), 402–26 and two articles by Frances Barasch: 'Italian Actresses in Shakespeare's World: Flaminia and Vincenza', *Shakespeare Bulletin* 18.4 (2000), 17–21; and 'Italian Actresses in Shakespeare's World: Vittoria and Isabella', *Shakespeare Bulletin* 19.3 (2001), 5–9.

49 Mace Perlman, 'Epilogue: Reading Shakespeare, Reading the Masks of the Commedia: Fixed Forms and the Breath of Life', in *Transnational Exchange,* Henke and Nicholson (eds), 225–38.