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Tumbling Tricks: Presentational Structure and 'The Taming of the Shrew'

Much interest has recently been shown in the contributions of the actor in the performance of Tudor comedy. Lesley Wade Soule's subject is the larger performative framework of such contributions. Focusing on the main action of *The Taming of the Shrew*, she finds revealing examples of the characteristic presentational structures found in Tudor comedy, including direct audience address, mimesis as a pretext for presentation, a ritual/project structure, the use of stage personae, and a concluding ceremony of celebration. Her essay describes the nature of these structural elements, and offers examples of their functions in the play's performance as bodied forth in the text. Lesley Wade Soule is Senior Lecturer in Drama at the University of Exeter, where she teaches directing and the staging of Shakespeare. She has written articles on performance in the medieval and Elizabethan theatres and is the author of *Actor as Anti-Character: Dionysus, the Devil, and the Boy Rosalind* (Greenwood Press, 2000).

NEAR THE BEGINNING of *The Taming of the Shrew*, learning that the Players are to present 'a pleasant comedy', Christopher Sly has the following exchange with the boy Bartholomew:

SLY: Is not a comonty a Christmas gambold or a tumbling trick?
BARTHOLOMEW: No, my good lord, it is more pleasing stuff . . . it is a kind of history.
(Induction 2.132–6)

Despite Bartholomew's denial, Sly has raised the question of whether the ensuing comedy is to be a popular show performed by a company of stage players primarily for the pit or an illusionistic personation by actors of characters in an invented 'history' aimed mainly at the gallery.

In the event, *The Taming of the Shrew* provides both. While traditional criticism of the play has generally adopted the gallery perspective, in the play's own time groundling responses were central to both its intentions and its stage performance. A significant share of the text, and of the performance it implies and describes, confutes conventional illusionistic expectations, offering instead an old-fashioned popular show, clearly descended from folk festivities and farces, the Tudor interludes of fifty years earlier, and such

antic displays as those of Dick Tarlton in the 1580s. Like so many comedies of the time, *The Taming of the Shrew* was a composite of 'tumbling tricks' and 'history'.

It is only in recent decades that criticism and scholarship have begun to deal with what Robert Weimann describes as 'the question of how and to what extent performance in Shakespeare's theatre actually *was* a formative element, a constituent force, and together with, or even without, the text a source of material and "imaginary puissance".¹ To consider this question it is particularly helpful to look at performances in the last decade or so of the century, just before the conspicuously performative components of theatrical presentation became increasingly overshadowed by the pleasures of illusionistic personation.

In considering this period, we must keep in mind Michael Bristol's observation that 'for the first few decades of its existence, the public playhouse of Elizabethan England was not fully differentiated from more dispersed and anonymous forms of festive life, play and mimesis'² – in other words, a theatre in which the presentational and the representational were freely mingled and by no means always fully distinguishable.

Elizabethan comedy embodied the confluence of two theatrical traditions, one of

popular non- and quasi-dramatic performance from the Middle Ages and earlier, the other stemming mainly from the more illusionistic mimesis of Hellenistic and Roman comedy. Representing the legacies respectively of Aristophanes and Menander, these traditions, which may be called the presentational and the mimetic, involved on the one hand a predominance of loose, celebrative performance and on the other of ordered textual mimesis. Though both of course commonly involved use of mimesis, one tended to give greater emphasis to the performers' presence, the other to the 'history' being represented.

Playing and Personation

The lively interaction of these two theatrical tendencies in the writing and staging of Elizabethan comedy provides an almost definitive paradigm of all theatrical performance, as well as a fertile ground for exploring the interaction of written text and stage performance. At the same time, the prominence of the actors' presence in the Elizabethan theatre raises difficult questions, several of which are summarized by Weimann:

Where, in the script of dramatic representations, do traces of performance retain an authority of their own? How much of the strength of such dramatic representations derives from . . . performed actions that are in excess of, even eccentric to, the strictly representational uses of dramatic language and yet able to conjoin the intellectual and the material springs of theatrical production?³

Weimann's concern is in the context of his interest in 'dramatic representations': such questions take a somewhat different form when one takes into account the primarily non-representational patterns and structures to be found in Elizabethan performance. One effect of a long tradition of emphasizing playing over personating was that the staging of plays (particularly comedies) made use of performative structures derived from other sources than textual mimeses. Looking at Elizabethan comedy in particular, we are led to ask: what are these presentational structures occurring in the players' stage behaviour?

Since the representational and the presentational are closely blended in dramatic performance, the distinction between them is of course by no means always clear. Particularly in the Elizabethan theatre, the interaction of two such fluid components in an actor's stage behaviour was bound to be variable and contingent. In any given performance, the players' actions were a constantly changing composite of mimetic and quasi-, non- and anti-mimetic functions.

Such multiplicity was actively encouraged in various ways: for example, character texts were commonly adapted, often by the players themselves, to the varied talents of individual performers, just as fictional plots might be altered to meet momentary presentational considerations. The insertion into the performance of narratively irrelevant elements such as solo and co-operative routines or *lazzi*, or even mimetic interludes, was also commonplace. It is little wonder that, especially in the early period, a play's performance was often little more than a 'mingle-mangle', in John Lyly's vivid phrase.⁴

The presentational structure of Elizabethan comedy was not merely a loose accretion of varied elements, however. Certain basic forms can be discerned, distinct from those of the mimetic action and deriving from very different sources. Even though presentational structure, by virtue of its nature and varied provenance, is traditionally likely to be less orderly than dramatic form, five basic elements were usually present. Persistent in early popular comedy, they may be regarded as definitive:

- (1) direct address to the audience;
- (2) using mimesis as a pretext for presentational performance;
- (3) a non-dramatic project or ritual structure functioning alongside the mimetic plot;
- (4) the presence of stage personae, distinct from and combined with mimetic characters; and
- (5) the inclusion of a celebrative conclusion alongside or following the resolution of the dramatic plot.

While these presentational elements commonly served to enhance the mimesis, they

all had, and were clearly intended to have, a contra-mimetic effect as well. The primary agency of this effect, of course, was the perceived presence of the player not simply as a character, but as a distinct stage persona, a presence amply (though of course incompletely) evident in the texts. In the public theatre performances of the 1590s, particularly in the staging of comedy, this presence and these elements of presentational structure were prominent – nowhere more clearly than in a play such as *The Taming of the Shrew*.

Addressing the Audience

The most obvious presentational structure to be seen in the performance of any playtext is created by those parts in which the performers interact directly in their own persons with the audience. This includes, firstly, direct address to and interplay with the spectators (often involving some kind of self-introduction and an explicit conclusion in the form of final bows or flourishes), and secondly what may be called the display of the performer's own physical acts of representation (distinguished from what those acts are taken to signify) – i.e., the overt presentation of the use of voice, movement, and gesture, including actions like singing and dancing which employ the text as a vehicle or framework. By such means, performers individually and as an ensemble establish and develop a structure of direct interaction with the audience.

At base, every theatrical performance is addressed to the spectators and is therefore at the primary level a direct rhetorical action, whatever its content. In the staging of most pre-modern comedy, this audience address was openly acknowledged, and the whole performance had an explicitly presentational nature. As in earlier, non-dramatic performances like carnival or festive ritual, the audience came to the theatre expecting a dialogic relationship with the stage performers. Mimetic representation (not, we must remind ourselves, the same thing as illusionism) was fluid. It certainly did not preclude the actors, in the course of the representation of a text, from openly addressing the spectators: they

could (and did) speak freely to the audience as either actor or character or both.

The whole presentational context of the performance was founded on the architecture of the public theatre, which, combined with the effects of daylight performance, located audience and players in what was recognized to be a shared public space. As in its theatrical and non-theatrical predecessors, the Elizabethan public theatre was designed in the first instance for public colloquy. As a result, stage representation inevitably had presentational and metatheatrical dimensions.

The use of direct address occurs from the start in *The Taming of the Shrew*. One of the simplest and most obvious instances is the handling of players' first entrances. The Induction (whose basic purpose has been to state, 'There is a play to come!') is followed by a flourish of trumpets ('The play begins!'), whereupon the actor playing Lucentio enters with his man Tranio (1.1.2) and conspicuously states the mimetic location ('fair Padua'), as the starting actor had done from earliest times.⁵

More specifically presentational is his 'I am arrived. . . .' Often taken as referring merely to the character's arriving at the fictional locale, the words also convey a presentational reminder to the audience: 'I have come onto this stage to address you out there.' By such simple means, the spatial-temporal premise of a physical here-and-now was established from the start, to be reinforced repeatedly throughout the performance by references to the theatrical place and occasion and to the audience's physical presence.

In plays like *The Taming of the Shrew*, the texts themselves were also structured towards direct audience address. One familiar and traditional means of doing this was the prologue, from classical times a device for establishing direct interaction with the spectators. Its expository purpose in relation to dramatic content is familiar, but its presentational function was equally important. This is apparent in virtually all early comedy, from the Old Comedy of Aristophanes (e.g., the opening scenes of *Knights* and *Frogs*) to Plautus (all of whose plays began with direct address prologues) to the interludes of the

Tudor period – of which the boy players' opening address to the spectators, 'Give room there, Sirs!' at the start of Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucrece* (printed 1520)⁶ is a classic example.

Whatever its particular form, a prologue served to instruct the audience how they were expected to interact with the stage players – e.g., how much and how direct their interplay was likely to be – as well as to suggest how illusionistically the actors would handle mimesis, what were the particular conventions and parameters of performer–audience interaction, and how the players would treat the text (e.g., kinds and degrees of extemporization, theatrical irony, gestural amplification, and the like). By such means, the prologue established the norms of the performative relationship between stage and audience.

In the same manner, the Induction of *The Taming of the Shrew*, as an extended prologue, provided the spectators with numerous cues about how they were expected to relate to the actors. Sly's naive belief in the reality of his new identity and the comic 'history' he is shown, for example, offered the audience an ironic anti-model of spectation, while more sophisticated guidelines were provided by the Lord, his men, and the Players. The presence in the Induction of characters of different degrees of mimetic probability made it clear that the audience would be expected to adopt more than one perspective towards representation. Against figures from folk tales and popular performance (Sly and the Hostess) were set the traditionally (even literarily) mimetic Lord and his serving people, a contrast emphasized by their different languages and social class.

A third type of stage identity was normative: the Players, who, as both representational and presentational figures (i.e., both 'Players' and stage performers), bridged the styles represented by the other persons and prefigured the flexible interweaving of the mimetic and presentational which was to follow. Of particular interest was the introduction in the Induction of a crucial dual-function performer: the boy player – the page Bartholomew – who is given the task of impersonating a woman, along with detailed instructions on how to go about it.⁷

Why is so much emphasis placed here on the particulars of female impersonation? One intention seems to be that the boy's performance of Sly's genteel Lady should provide a clear contrast to the soon-to-be-seen shrew. Another, perhaps more important purpose may have been to give an audience already familiar with boys playing female characters a further, more pointed metatheatrical reminder of the dual presence of character and actor, particularly highlighting how the actor could play with representation. The double perspective introduced by this early performance of femininity in the Induction seems intended to sharpen the audience's awareness of the duality of the Katherina figure.

Frequent assertion of the player's presence is of course an essential part of maintaining direct address to the spectators. Considering all we know about the interplay between the Elizabethan player and his audience, and especially taking into account the date of the *Shrew* (1594 or earlier), we can assume (even without the many specific indications in the text) that the spectators were either directly addressed or openly played to almost constantly throughout the performance.⁸ It is noteworthy that such direct address was used most frequently and conspicuously by the performers of the main taming action, above all Petruchio, who repeatedly addressed his action to the audience, often explicitly calling their attention to what he was about to do and had just done,⁹ perpetually reminding them of his personal presence as player.

Many other similar instances, where the spectators were directly communicated with by gesture or look, though without explicit verbal address, are clearly suggested in the text.¹⁰ The frequency of such address makes it clear that, for the spectators, being directly spoken and played to was a central part of their experience of the performance.

Mimesis as Pretext for Presentation

Comic performers have always played with mimesis freely and openly. In consequence, one of the staples of comedy has always been

irony, in particular the theatrical kind. Comic texts tend to focus on amusing disparities between characters' perceptions of their own situations and of other characters, while performances of these texts often play upon contrasts between performer and character, and between the dramatic and the theatrical action. As a result, the performance of a comedy will usually have a clearly perceptible presentational dimension, a performative action providing an ironic accompaniment to the play's fictive plot. The primary agency of this irony of course is the actors' personal presence on the stage.

In the last decades of the sixteenth century, the actors of comedy generally handled mimetic representation without any serious concern for consistency of motivation or mimetic credibility. The play texts make this amply clear. So too does the reaction to 'personation' as it became increasingly popular. Thomas Heywood's enthusiastic response ('It is as if the Personator were the man Personated')¹¹ suggests that such belief had not commonly been the case theretofore. Before personation generated an increased emphasis on mimetic illusion and greater attention to details of the represented character, spectators focused their attention on the specific physical skills of the players and the embellishments with which they presented their rather casual characterizations.

The players themselves, besides enjoying their own skill and the audience response it evoked, were motivated in this highly presentational kind of acting by the traditional actors' desire to assert their independence of and superiority to textual mimesis, thereby demonstrating their primacy in the theatrical occasion: Tarlton remains a definitive example of this. At the simplest level, the comic actor's presentational play with mimesis has always involved simultaneously pretending and by various means calling attention to his own acts of pretence (a pattern of behaviour exactly comparable to the non-theatrical play of humans and animals, which combines make-believe and signals saying, 'This is make-believe').

Even while representing a mimetic action, however believably, the Elizabethan comic

performer often engaged simultaneously in various kinds of openly non-mimetic play, including pure physical display, song and dance, or acrobatic combat. All of these were more easily accommodated if the principal mimesis of the text was kept casual and unsystematic, allowing freedom for actorly display.

Mimesis as Presentational Convenience

The presentational aspect of the players' performance was also enhanced by the frequent use of a kind of action which was neither purely non-mimetic (such as a dance) nor primarily representational (such as a dramatic scene), but readily lent itself to the ends of both presentation and mimesis. In action of this sort (of which the jig provides an example), mimesis was used, but essentially as a convenience, so that the players were only incidentally perceived as mimetic characters. They were seen primarily as stage personae – identities who were neither dramatic characters nor the actors as themselves. In this identity (a mode always available to stage actors) Elizabethan comic players would often shift into seemingly impromptu scenarios or *lazzi* – loose, casually mimetic actions of a kind which encouraged free presentational play: Launce's first appearance in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (2.3.1–36) or the Porter's scene in *Macbeth* (2.3.1–24) are good examples.

Such actions were sometimes extended into complete little comic 'subplots' – e.g., in the jig, or Touchstone's extended interplay with William and Audrey in *As You Like It* (3.3; 5.1) – where clowning predominated, irrespective of the main mimetic action, which then came to be seen as a framework for various episodes of specialized comedic display. The traditional mimetic criteria of credibility, coherence, and causality were generally ignored in favour of the presentational values of display, variety, and exploitation of situation: entertainment took precedence over credibility.

In many early comedies, free play with mimesis was further facilitated by the use of familiar material from folk tales and medieval

farce. (And action of this kind frequently included parody, by its nature a critical presentation of representation.) Examples are found in Udall's *Roister Doister*, where elements of folk festivity and liturgical parody are loosely packed into the external forms of Roman comedy, and in *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, in which the plot is little more than a casual pretext for farcical play. The very familiarity of such materials meant that neither close attention nor serious belief was demanded of the audience. Representation could be loose – even perfunctory – and something very different from the later, more intensive personation. In such plays, mimesis served primarily as a pretext for presentational action, allowing the performers to shift easily in and out of direct audience address, often adding ironic commentary on the mimesis itself. Specific acts of representation themselves sometimes became vehicles for freer presentation, which was thus kept firmly in the foreground.

The central action of *The Taming of the Shrew* consists largely of quasi-mimetic material of this kind. While a more self-contained, neoclassical kind of mimesis is used in the Plautine subplot, representation in the taming plot is loose and casual. The action itself becomes essentially a presentational scenario, loosely assembled after the Aristophanic manner, free and playful, often perfunctory, supplying both a convenient pretext and many opportunities for non-mimetic play. This casual and playful handling of mimesis in the taming action is the key element which keeps the presentational in the foreground of the performance as a whole.

The *Shrew* text also reveals a number of specific ways in which mimesis is used as a pretext for presentational play. In the Induction, the Lord's impulsive decision to play a trick on Sly by giving him a new 'character' is an obvious example of casual mock-mimesis, intended to provide opportunities for a display of actorly skills – in particular Bartholomew's ironic mimicking as Sly's 'Lady'. After the Induction, there is further playful manipulation of mimesis, primarily in the taming action. The very notion and representation of a 'shrew' are

playful, for example, as is evident both in Katherina's exaggerated performance of the type and in her mad suitor's cavalier denial of its credibility. Petruchio's frequent and arbitrary alterations of his own 'character' and his whimsical manipulation of other mimetic 'realities' (e.g., the various topsyturvies of food, dress, and the identities of other stage persons) are further instances of the performers turning mimesis into presentational play.

Petruchio, Kate, and 'Mock-Mimesis'

The ironic impersonations of the Petruchio and Katherina players are of course the prime examples of counter-mimetic, presentational play in *Shrew*. These performances are mimetic representations, of course, but by largely substituting the conventions of popular clowning for those of dramatic impersonation they effectively mock mimesis. This ironic play with representation is prepared early in the play with the Petruchio actor's casual presentation of himself as a virtual burlesque of the typical suitor from traditional romance. After dispensing with the usual plot necessities, however, he casts aside conventional representation ('to the proof', 2.1.136) and steps into his true role as a stage persona: the madcap clown launching happily into playful combat with the equally theatrical shrew figure.

The adoption of such carnivalesque 'masks' by the two main figures is markedly different from the conscientious, rather literary disguises of the young scholar-tutor Lucentio and the pretended music teacher, Hortensio. The difference derives mainly from the fact that Petruchio and Katherina play assertive, clearly performative personae, obviously addressing themselves as much to the audience as to the other characters. Such figures always possess a stronger, more specifically presentational physicality on the stage. Because they openly play to both on- and off-stage audiences, they are seen as physically present *public* figures rather than, as with the lesser persons of the subplot, imaginary, absent *private* characters. The immediate and presentational, because it takes place *here* in

the theatre, has always been seen as more public than the mediated mimetic, which purports to be happening *there*, in a separated elsewhere.

Dramatic Plot and Ritual Project

The pretextual, quasi-mimetic structures commonly found in comedy often took the form of projects, comparable to the performative projects undertaken by performers at fairs or carnivals, also chosen to suit the display of the celebrant-performers' skills. They often had a loose episodicy (as in Aristophanic comedy), which rendered irrelevant any expectation of causal narrative probability; and the greater flexibility of these essentially presentational constructs made them ideal vehicles for displays of a player's particular skill, be it ironic wit (e.g., by the Aristophanic anti-hero, Pierre Patelin, and Mak in *The Second Shepherds Play*), physical grotesquerie and dexterity (e.g., clown figures such as Hanswurst and the 'masks' of commedia), or, as in a piece such as *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, those of ensemble buffoonery. Most of all, such projects were seen as leading – like games or sports – to a clear physical outcome, involving a demonstrable triumph over clear, physical obstacles.

The very title of *The Taming of the Shrew* suggests to the audience that the taming action is to be presented not as a developed story, but as a simple project: a set of 'tumbling tricks'. The project-performer's objective is not dramatic – i.e., engaging in the ups and downs of a fictive courtship – but presentational: i.e., simply 'taming' her, a very specific, practical task with clear, simple means and parameters, and (as in most ritual projects) a predictable outcome. Entirely lacking the narrative suspense of the conventional mimetic plot, it is simply a vehicle for the display of theatrical skills.

This is amply clear whenever Petruchio and Katherina play together. Their 'scenes' have little or no dramatic interest or development: they are simply sketches providing opportunities for one or another variation on the basic comic routine of intersexual combat, rebellion, and subjugation. The taming

scenario has a form comparable to that of a circus performer's project, where the 'artiste' grandly announces to the audience his intention to bring his 'savage' victim under control; displays his bravado in a first confrontation; demonstrates his contemptuous freedom from conventional restraints as he engages in direct combat; then carries off his victim to his own personal circus ring, where he inflicts further comic humiliations on his stooge, before finally bringing her back to the centre ring for a last triumphant display by his fully tamed victim of the tamer's success.

In essentially the same manner, Petruchio's 'taming act' is boastfully proclaimed (1.2.90–2), embellished with progress reports along the way (2.1.310–13; 3.2.216–28; 4.2.159–82), and rounded off with a statement of triumph (5.2.186–7). How much the audience believes the taming to be a mimetic 'history' is incidental; what matters is their engagement in the immediacy of physical performance. Entirely lacking suspense or complications, the taming scenario displays instead a pattern no less familiar in music hall than in medieval farce: a succession of comic tricks by the clown and his stooge, leading to an entertaining finale and a bow to the audience.

The only possible suspense in such a project would lie in the question: will the performer bring off his feat of derring-do? The question is entirely hypothetical, however, for the conventions of non-mimetic performance (and the play's title) guarantee the outcome. The main action of *The Taming of the Shrew* therefore displays all the characteristics of a straightforward presentational project, virtually none of those of the traditional mimetic plot.

Storytelling on Stage

A common element in Elizabethan drama was storytelling, used both to further the mimetic action and as a means of characterization.¹² Particularly in comedy, stage narration often had an overtly presentational function as well. Launce's first appearance in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (2.3.1–67) is a classic example of a domestic tale as performance routine. Such turns remind us of the long-

standing prominence of the tale-teller as performer/character in folk tales and popular theatre.

In view of the taming plot's source in folk tale,¹³ we are not surprised to find numerous examples of storytelling in the main action of *The Taming of the Shrew*, some brief, others more fully developed.¹⁴ As we would expect, these narratives are given to the more clown-like personae, including Petruchio as the leading clown. At these moments, dramatic enactment is replaced by direct storytelling, accompanied by appropriate physical action by the performer: Gremio's account of the wedding (3.2.148–72) is an instance. Such routines are classic examples of Elizabethan stand-up comedy.

Mating Rituals and Folk Fantasies

The very familiarity of the quasi-mimetic scenarios used in pre-modern comedy – often involving a straightforward plan of deception or physical subjugation – was one of their strengths, for it freed the spectators from too much concern with questions of narrative causality or mimetic credibility, allowing them to focus on the immediacy of presentation. By virtue of their simplicity and similarity to each other, the projects had the quality of ritual, and like ritual they provided a form for the interaction of performers and spectators as co-celebrants.¹⁵ In non-dramatic as in dramatic rituals, the emphasis has usually been on the specific (often prescribed) formalities of the leading player-celebrant's physical action.

For both symbolic and theatrical reasons, ritual performances frequently took the form of practical projects – e.g., the accomplishment of seasonal tasks or religious journeys – which also provided an element of narrative interest, often secondary. Examples can be seen in the fantastic journeys of Aristophanic heroes (to the sky or underworld) and in the symbolic combats of the Lenten carnival and other festivities.

Connections with fertility rituals are also found, and these are of course conspicuous in *The Taming of the Shrew*. Michael West aptly refers to the courtship/taming of Katherina

as 'a kind of mating dance'.¹⁶ With its male strutting, male-female play-fighting and eventual display of harmony, the resemblance to animal courtship is obvious.¹⁷ The obviously ceremonial nature of this action renders modern considerations of sexual or social morality irrelevant. 'Criticism has generally misconstrued the issue of the play as women's rights', West remarks, 'whereas what the audience delightedly responds to are sexual rites.'¹⁸

In mating rituals, the participants are thus assumed to be complementary, different but fundamentally equal co-celebrants. Consequently, the frequent physical action in these rituals – of which Petruchio and Katherina's rough and tumble is a good example – are not representations of violence, but 'tumbling tricks'. What modern sensibilities are likely to perceive as bullying did not trouble un-squeamish Elizabethan audiences. The knock-about in *The Taming of the Shrew* is firmly in the tradition of early popular farce, in which physical conflict, often between male and female characters, was commonplace.¹⁹

Such sequences, only pretextually mimetic in comedy, were perceived by the spectators as effectively a kind of sport (compare the wrestling scene in *As You Like It* or the many swordplays in other plays) rather than as conflicts between a 'real' man and woman. They were seen as bouts playfully performed by male adult and boy players, co-performers well known and admired for their skills at just such stage rough and tumble.

Another ingredient of the quasi-mimetic presentational projects of early comedy was fantasy. Commonly found in folk tales and ritual, as well as in the earliest comedies of Aristophanes and his contemporaries, this often had both seasonal and allegorical significance. Also reflecting this background is the play with dreams (seen as early as in the dream of Pilate's wife in the mysteries), common in earlier Elizabethan comedies and seen again here in the Induction. The fantastic is also evident in the playful quirks of the whimsical Petruchio, with his casual disregard for practical and logical considerations of dress and behaviour. His fantastical appearance at the wedding, along with his 'magical'

transformations of sun to moon and old man to young maid (4.5.1–22, 27–49), recall the proverbial ‘wild man’ of seasonal ritual, as well as the antics of Tarlton or of Diccon in *Gammer Gurton’s Needle*.

Such feats of whimsical transformation are examples of how comedy (like the folk tale) from the earliest times played freely with mimetic or natural logic. Such playfully mimetic fantasies became liberated stage presentations, which incorporated both the inexplicable oddities of daily life and the free-wheeling vagaries of communal dreams, wishes, and fears. Like other elements of theatrical structure, fantasy took the form of casual mock-mimesis, yet another pretext for presentational display.

Character as Self-Fashioning

Just as dramatic characters are the agents of mimetic structure, serving as entities in the overall plot construction and as movers of individual actions, players and personae perform comparable functions in presentational structure. Dramatic characters and stage personae, as related but different kinds of theatrical constructs, interact in a particularly interesting way in pre-modern comedy. This is partly due to the unstable nature of dramatic character in the Elizabethan theatre. The modern notion of character as the fictive construct of a fixed individual and subjective identity did not yet exist.

Several early traditions thus continued to be active, especially in comedy: the classical notion of characters as exemplars of social and moral types was still prevalent, along with the Theophrastian character sketch and the medieval practice of explicitly allegorical characters. Even in life, at least in public life, character remained an essentially performative concept, aptly described by Stephen Greenblatt as ‘self-fashioning’,²⁰ by which is meant the development of a public identity through behaviour presented as performance. A definitive sixteenth-century example was Henry VIII, though his younger daughter was an equally expert ‘self-fashioner’.

In the Elizabethan comic theatre, therefore, character was understood more from a

performative than a mimetic perspective, that is, as what we would now call role: a set of stage actions performed by a player with a name-label attached, rather than the representation of an essentialist, subjective identity. In popular comedy, a theatrical character was perceived as a primarily performative construct. As S. L. Bethell has observed, ‘The Shakespearean character may be thought of as telling his own story, with appropriate gestures and movement, from a standpoint well outside himself.’²¹

Such quasi-narrative characterization involved distinct mimetic and presentational identities, player and character perceived as closely interactive but clearly distinguishable. This mode of perception foregrounded the player, transforming dramatic character into a *theatrical* entity. Even the fictive component of the stage identity was clearly perceived as a presentation by what might be called the character’s alter-ego – that is, the player’s stage persona.

The essential provenance and locus of a persona is of course the stage: not as a platform of direct address nor as the specified imagined place of textual mimesis, but as a reflexive illusion. This becomes clear when we look at the most familiar example of a stage persona, the clown. Even when he was made a character in a play (e.g., Touchstone, Feste), the presentationality of this figure continued to be dominant. The same quality of being performing figures was found in other kinds of stage personae, such as the devils and vices of earlier theatre.

The attachment of a mimetic name and identity was perceived by spectators as a convenience, a vehicle giving the actor-persona new scope for his particular skills, whether of body, voice, or personality. This is evident with figures like Feste and Touchstone, Don Armado and Moth; it is also apparent with Petruchio, Grumio, and others in *The Taming of the Shrew*. Though often given fictional names in the plays in which they appeared, such figures sometimes retained their stage names. (Touchstone’s name in *As You Like It* derived from Robert Armin’s creation of a persona named ‘Tutch’ in popular entertainments and his original profession of goldsmith.)

The designations 'Clown' and 'Fool' are found among the *dramatis personae* of many plays, as are names from the Italian comedy, e.g., Grumio and Gremio. Even when given a mimetic identity, a name and an imaginary place of residence, a known stage persona remained a primarily public, presentational figure. In such cases, character became an obvious vehicle for presentational play.

Particularly in popular comedy, therefore, a character was responded to not primarily in terms of its dramatic credibility, but for its contribution to the stage show – that is, as a performer. Given the contingent nature of performance, mimetic consistency was relatively unimportant: a player could (and did) alter his fictive character to suit the demands and opportunities of performance. As a result, comic character was far more fluid as performed than as written, and more akin to the variable, improvisatory characters of Aristophanic comedy. Even the textual versions of Petruchio and Katherine strongly suggest such flexibility; we may assume that they were probably performed with considerable improvisatory freedom.

In the earlier comedies of the period – even those given a rough neoclassical form – fictional characterization is casual. In Udall's *Roister Doister* (1566/7) or Peele's *The Old Wives' Tale* (c. 1595), for example, plays typically cobbled together from a variety of sources, the characters show little credible consistency. In such cases, of which there were many, the vitality and unpredictability of the stage persona, even in reading, threaten to burst out of the neoclassical framework. In performance they probably did.

A Partnership in Comic Combat

Character as we now understand the concept must necessarily have stayed secondary until, as the century closed, mimesis was increasingly enhanced by a new manner of acting, i.e. 'personation'. In the comedy of the 'nineties, however, audiences did not require either 'believable' motivations or plausible consistency of behaviour. Their overriding interest was in the stage figure's immediate theatrical power, for which mimetic charac-

ter was essentially a vehicle. In the immediacy of performance, therefore, the spectators' engagement with a stage persona (and even with many characters) was not primarily based on empathy with the imagined feelings of an absent imaginary person but on a pleasurable, physical identification with the presence, vitality and skill of the present stage performer.

It was this unmediated identity spectators primarily responded to, their response to the represented character being largely a spill-over from their basic identification with the player. It was the essential theatrical phenomenon of the actor's physical presence, well served by the canny theatricality of the text, which determined the essential nature of the main action of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

The leading figures in this action are pre-eminently presentational personages, given perfunctory mimetic characterizations with traits which were particularly suitable for flamboyant performative display. Making Baptista's eldest daughter shrewish provides an appropriate mimetic vehicle for the performance of aggressive courtship, as well as plentiful opportunities for comic ranting. Petruchio is given the character of a swash-buckling bachelor to place him in a productive performative relationship to Katherine: his braggadocio matches him to her shrewishness and gives him the opportunity to reveal his real theatrical persona of madcap bully-clown.

Their essential interaction is not courtship and marriage, then, but comic combat. For a contemporary audience, they were in the first instance a theatrical partnership of two well-suited stage personae: the adult vice/clown and the boy actor as irascible stooge. The pleasure given by both performers was of course enhanced by their doubleness as both impersonators and players. This duality not only increased the opportunities for exploiting their performative personae, it also allowed them to play these stage identities against the expectations associated with their mimetic roles: 'Of all mad matches never was the like' (4.1.231). Their doubleness enriched the theatrical irony of the contrast between representation and presentation.

Most of the figures of the subplot are more credible and consistent representations, more nearly characters than personae (although the mimetic consistency of some of them is imperfect, particularly the servants and the suitors when they undertake their disguisings). The main theatrical link between the neoclassical subplot and the popular, presentational sphere of Petruchio and Katherina is provided not by the familial connections of the mimesis, but mainly by the 'clownish servants' (the term used in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* applies here). As so often in pre-modern comedy, these are stage personae in barely fictionalized roles, their 'character' limited to their servant function.

In the comic tradition from Aristophanes onwards, servants – being of the 'lower sort' with which (according to Aristotle) comedy was supposed to be concerned – were invariably given greater freedom to violate mimetic consistency and illusion, and to play openly with the spectators. Perceived to be closer to the audience, they were facilitators of the presentational, and their actions were often comparatively independent of the main mimetic action. They often had the task of accompanying and providing a presentational framework for the fictive action.

This function is most familiar in the 'masks' of commedia dell'arte, who, while the *inamorati* carried on the necessary romantic-mimetic plot, had only minor mimetic duties, their main employment being to provide interludes of free-wheeling *lazzi*, sometimes mocking the mimesis, sometimes entirely unrelated to it. These figures were known to the Elizabethans: Heywood's *Apology* speaks of 'all the Doctors, Zawnyes [Zannis], Pantaloons, Harlekeenes, in which the French, but especially the Italians, have been excellent'.²²

In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Grumio, Curtis, and Petruchio's other servants, together with (to a lesser extent) Biondello, are from this theatrical tradition and perform a similar function, though they are kept in a closer subservience to their master's actions than was often the case in the commedia. They remain primarily presentational figures, however, serving as Petruchio's entourage of supporting farceurs – stooges given occasional

opportunities to step forward and perform their own comic *lazzi*, as, for example, does Grumio in the opening scene of Act Four (lines 1-90).

That these 'masks' are less prominent in *The Taming of the Shrew* than in the Italian comedy is due not only to the play's having two plots, but more importantly to the fact that the main plot itself is fundamentally a clown-like performance, consisting as it does largely of a thematically linked series of *lazzi* by two principal figures who are themselves 'masks' elevated to leading roles.

Petruchio

The conventional perception of Petruchio as romantic suitor in the mimetic plot has generally distracted attention from his function as a stage persona. In actuality, he has little in common with the traditional suitors of romantic comedy, being associated rather with the trickster figures of earlier popular performance. His forebears are Mak, Pierre Patelin, and the braggart soldiers of classical, Tudor and Italian comedy. Along with Katherina, he descends from the folk devil (e.g., 3.2.145-6) of so many popular tales and performances.

Perhaps his most obvious ancestor is the Tudor vice (himself among the progeny of the medieval devil). Petruchio performs all the business of the vice: the bombastic entrance, playful audience address, the loud mock-threats, and outlandish gear. His announcement on arrival – 'I have thrust myself into this maze, / Happily to wive and thrive as best I may' (1.2.52-3) – echoes the first line of Mischief in *Mankind*: 'I am cumme hedyr to make yow game.'²³ Arriving at his own wedding in outlandish gear, Petruchio reminds us of the vice Ambidexter in *Cambises*, entering with 'an old capcase on his head, an old pail about his hips for a harness, a scummer and a potlid by his side, and a rake on his shoulder'.²⁴

Like the Vice, too, Petruchio plays blatantly to the audience and takes performative liberties with situation, character, language, and mimetic consistency. His comic aggressiveness echoes not only the vice, but also Herod

and the devil. Most of all, he may well have reminded his audience of their recently departed favourite, another of the vice's descendants, the beloved, belligerent Dick Tarlton, described by one critic as 'a surrogate Lord of Misrule'.²⁵

Petruchio shares another interesting trait with his vice and clown progenitors: he is a travelling figure. After providing perfunctory information about his father and his circumstances, he places himself as someone from an almost fanciful elsewhere, blown by 'such wind as scatters young men through the world' (1.2.47) to stir things up in this ordinary, everyday place – not simply Padua but this stage, which in such moments becomes an illusory self-reflection. The 'Bedlam' Diccon in *Gammer Gurton's Needle* makes a similar arrival ('Many a mile have I walked, divers and sundry ways'),²⁶ as does Ambidexter in Preston's *Cambises*: 'Thus do I run this way and that way.'²⁷ There is the quality of fairy tale and folk farce in Petruchio's free, sweeping movement from place to place. Having ebulliently won his shrew, he dashes off to Venice, makes an Arlecchino-like re-appearance for the wedding, then whisks her off like Bluebeard to his own distant lair.

In his first appearances, Petruchio perfunctorily goes through the motions of the perfectly conventional – if rough – young suitor, but his presentational identity soon takes over. As he casts aside the details of marriage negotiation ('Ay, to the proof . . .', 2.1.136), he ceases to be a character defined by fictional relationships and is seen for what he is, a comic stage persona, defined by performative criteria. This is not a character change, but a purely theatrical shift from mimetic character to presentational persona, with appropriate adjustments of behaviour, language, and particularly of his relationship to on- and offstage spectators.

Thus established early, his explicit presentational interplay with the audience continues to the end of the play. His dramatic character, being of minimal importance in the total make-up of his theatrical identity, is only perfunctorily sketched; his motivation is of the simplest, crudest kind, with no trace of psychological depth or complexity. From the

outset, his wooing is presented as without personal feeling for Katherina ('She moves me not', 1.2.68), for he has only 'come to wive it wealthily in Padua' (1.2.72), though his briefly mentioned interest in wealth seems mere lip service. It is not greed but the challenge of the project that spurs him:

For I will board her though she chide as loud
As thunder when the clouds in autumn crack.
(1.2.91–2)

Like Mak's desire to trick his fellow shepherds or Pierre Patelin's wish to dupe the tailor, which have little to do with hunger or any real need for clothing, this is another example of how popular farce shows no interest in credible psychological motivation. As with all stage personae, Petruchio's prime motivation is to display his skill. His frequent boasts of what he will do (and has done) are not elements of dramatic characterization or plot construction, but simply parts of the performer's self-presentation to the audience. This being so, any tendency spectators might have to identify (and identify with) him as a dramatic character becomes irrelevant.

Neither he nor his mate belong in the mimetic world of Padua, as the reactions of other characters make clear: 'Nay, let them go – a couple of quiet ones!' exclaims Baptista (4.1.229). Standing as he does outside the requirements of mimetic verisimilitude and lacking the feelings an audience might expect in a fully dramatic character, Petruchio's relationships with the other characters (including Katherina) are not 'personal' but professional. To this overwhelmingly presentational performer, they are all stooges, victims, or admiring spectators.

Katherina

Like Petruchio, the figure of Katherina has a double identity, though with an extra dimension. First, there is the difference between two mimetic figures: the shrew and the young gentlewoman described in the Induction and who does emerge in Katherina's final self-presentation (and is imperfectly modelled by Bianca in the interim). This contrast, while it is between two mimetic identities, none the

less has strong presentational implications, since the question of how a woman should be impersonated has been raised in the Induction.

The second dichotomy in the Katherina figure is between the female character and the boy player, including their differences of gender and age (though to Elizabethan spectators the age difference would have seemed slight). The Induction has prepared the audience for both dualities. The foregrounded example of a boy playing a female has reminded them of the actor-character gender difference, while offering them a model of a more properly performed (i.e., well-behaved) woman to contrast with the soon-to-appear and badly behaved (i.e., wrongly performed) shrew.

Once the main action has begun, it becomes immediately clear that, despite what has appeared in the Induction, the leading boy player will not subdue his behaviour to suit the conventions of female impersonation. His performance from the start has a pronounced presentational dimension, for the boy not only presents an outrageously shrewish character, but also displays his stage persona as 'misbehaving boy player'. The first appearance of the Katherina figure is therefore a show not simply of 'shrewish' bad temper, but also (particularly in the vocal and bodily elements of the performance) of a boy player's egregious misconduct. His first words are not only disobedient and ill-tempered, but also spoken considerably louder than those of the others, a delivery that would have been perceived not only as outrageously 'unfeminine' but also performatively dissonant with the other players:

I pray you, sir, is it your will
To make a stale of me amongst these mates?
(1.1.57–8)

Gentlewomen – and boys personating gentlewomen – were expected to speak 'with soft low tongue and lowly courtesy' (Ind. 1.1.10) or keep silent (as Bianca does in this first scene), but here not only the shrew but also the boy player's own performative voice is heard, angrily demanding that he be listened to as well as the character. This young per-

former has clearly declared his difference from the mimetically and theatrically well-behaved Page of the Induction. From Katherina's first entrance, therefore, the audience was shown not only a turbulent female but also a turbulent player.

As a woman with a reputation for outrageous conduct, a shrew was not only a type of disagreeable female but also a person whose bad behaviour provided entertainment for those around her: 'That wench is stark mad, or wonderful froward', says Tranio (1.1.69). The shrew was a public figure, with ancient and familiar theatrical ancestors, the most famous being Noah's wife. Moreover, just as Petruchio belonged to the vice's theatrical family, Katherina was a descendent of the devil. 'From all such devils, good Lord deliver us!' exclaims Hortensio (1.1.66), expressing the common notion that misbehaving women (and other misfits) may actually have been possessed. In view of the duality of character and player, it seems quite possible too that Katherina's devilishness may also have been associated by spectators with the well-known offstage devilry of boy players and apprentices.²⁸

The Boy Player's Project

Katherina's character and its personation paralleled the duality of theatrical traditions found in the play. As Ann Thompson has noted, the 'wench' (like the shrew) is from the folk tradition, the 'maid' from classical comedy.²⁹ The distinction between these two types of female characters expresses and parallels that between the contrasting functions of the boy performer in the Elizabethan theatre: as boy actor, he was a credible personator of women; as boy player, he was a saucy mini-clown, presenting a lively stage persona in the popular tradition.

As also in the playing of such 'unfeminine' Shakespearean women as Tamora, Joan of Arc, and Margaret, the boy player here probably had to have great physical energy and vocal power, along with the ability to convey passion and a sometimes savage irony. These performative powers are consummated in the boy player's representational project by his

ultimate accomplishment of skilfully impersonating Katherina as a proper gentlewoman.

The boy player's performance project involved two parallel tasks. The first, indicated by the title, was to present a rendition of an obstreperous female unwillingly subjected to male correction and control. His second task was to play the stage persona of recalcitrant boy player, presenting a lively burlesque of female impersonation, then 'compelled' to do it correctly. In this context, the Petruchio performer was therefore perceived as both tamer and teacher – not only courting and subduing a fictive shrew, but also taming and training a miscreant boy player. (The latter task is lightly prefigured in the Lord's instructions for Bartholomew: Ind. 1.101–26.)

A contemporary audience may well have seen the Petruchio-Katherina relationship as one between master and apprentice, a common situation in theatre companies at the time. Appropriately enough, the two players also shared a third project: to collaborate effectively in the presentation of a duet of comic combat, for their fundamental presentational objective was to achieve and demonstrate a successful theatrical partnership, as both characters and players. The boy may be thought to have had the harder task: he had not only to show his ability both to mock and eventually emulate the conventional mimesis of female characters, while simultaneously displaying the troublesome irascibility and professional skill of a boy player, he had to do all these while carrying on a sustained comic interplay with his fellow performer (and possible offstage master).

In their partnership, the boy's task was to serve as comic foil and stooge for the adult performer of Petruchio. While the man played the traditional ironic sharp fool,³⁰ the boy was called upon to perform a female equivalent of the braggart-buffoon's role. Its specific tasks were to provide enough loud self-assertion to counterbalance Petruchio's comic power of subjection, enough rough speech to provoke and counterpoint his bombastic rhetoric, and enough impotent rage to set off his displays of satisfied triumphalism.

Together the two figures presented yet another version of the traditional battle of

the sexes found in the Adam–Eve scenes in the twelfth century *Adam* and subsequent medieval mysteries and farces. The woman (i.e., boy), the rebellious one, always shouted angry complaints and always raised new mischief. In the end, in both mimesis and performance, there was always a restoration of amicability and partnership, which was inevitably based on the man's subjugation of the female boy. Both the boy player and the quasi-mimetic character he was playing are presented as apprentices in the art of clowning, both learning to obey and emulate the mad master-clown:

PETRUCHIO: I say it is the moon.

KATHERINE: I know it is the moon . . .

And the moon changes even as your mind.

What you will have it nam'd, even that it is;

And so, it shall be so for Katherine.

(4.5.15, 20–2)

In learning clownery, the boy could now play the female role as the world expected, but without losing his freedom as a player to take liberties, while his character learned how to love and be both obedient and free

Plot Resolution and Ritual Celebration

At the end of the play's penultimate scene, the mimetic plot is conventionally resolved: the young men win their lady loves and the old suitor is shamed and rejected. But in the following, epilogic scene, there is an ironic twist, for neither Bianca nor the Widow behave as mimetic (and worldly) convention requires. A neat crossing of lines has been constructed, Katherina proving a model wife and the 'gentle' Bianca turning disobedient shrew. In a manner appropriate to popular (as opposed to neoclassical) comedy, the improvisatory vitality of performance subverts the literary predictability of conventional mimesis.

Much modern critical discussion has focused on the apparent resolution of the Katherina character, in particular the question of how the long final speech about wifely obedience should be performed. Without retracing familiar arguments, I would like to suggest that this speech, along with the

whole question of the character's resolution, can be better understood when seen as paralleling the boy player's presentational project. To assume that what the Katherina character is doing is both voluntary and sensible provides a key to both the interpretation and the playing of the scene. The character's acceptance of her master's dominance is premised on love, and her final speech is a conventional description of an ideal marriage of the time. Such obedience would have been seen as representing the rightful order of things. Coppelia Kahn asserts that the fictional Katherina is 'outwardly compliant but inwardly independent', and that the play shows that 'woman remains untamed, even in her subjection'.³¹ The boy actor would have displayed this in his performance.

In the boy player's presentational project, an analogous resolution takes place. His playing of the final scene would have been partly perceived by the audience in the context of the task laid out for him in the Induction: to perform a proper impersonation of a gentlewoman. In his performance of his final speech, the young player was giving an ultimate demonstration of his impersonative skills. Starting with a display of outrageous shrewishness, he has moved through a considerable range of comic performance all the way to this composed completion, now showing the audience that he was more than capable of obeying the Lord's prescription in the Induction that the boy player should

bear himself with honourable action
Such as he hath observed in noble ladies
Unto their lords . . .
With soft low tongue and lowly courtesy.
(Ind. 1.106–8, 110).

In defiance of early expectations, he has presented his authoritative impersonation of a gentlewoman. The theatrical irony is similar to that found in Rosalind's epilogue to *As You Like It*, where the boy player toys both with gender and audience.³² In the final analysis, the ironic counterpointing of mimesis and performance in both plays is neat: woman and player alike are expert at simulating obedience, all the while taking subversive liberties with text and audience.

At the end of *The Taming of the Shrew*, we see further evidence of the close link between the presentational tradition and ritual celebration. From Aristophanes through the Renaissance, comedies nearly always ended with a celebrative ritual of some kind – a wedding, a feast, a dance, and sometimes all three. This ritual belongs both to the occasion of theatrical performance and to the comic project itself, for such an ending was a celebration by the hero and/or his associates of its successful completion. Such a traditional conclusion is found in the many epilogues of Elizabethan comedy and in variant form (until about the end of the sixteenth century) in the jig, a theatrical rite celebrating comic vitality and human fertility.

Before and after the time of the jig, these concluding ritual-performative celebrations were frequently incorporated into the mimetic action, often quite loosely, sometimes by having the celebrative epilogue spoken by a dramatic character suddenly become a presentational performer (which accounts for the mimetically rather improbable abruptness of many final scenes in comedy). In such cases, a presentational resolution occurs amounting to a reaffirmation of the celebrative compact made at the outset with the spectators. The final phase of *The Taming of the Shrew* shows the same traditional pattern of final celebration. The main taming action, the play's main presentational project, is effectively concluded with Katherina's kiss (5.1.123) and Petruchio's closing couplet:

Is not this well? Come, my sweet Kate,
Better once than never, for never too late.
(5.1.124–5)

At this point, the presentational project appears to be completed. But the Petruchio and Katherina players must still do a final turn for their offstage and onstage audiences, a conclusive demonstration of their success. While the celebrative final banquet and the wager (yet another game) are superfluous to the mimetic plot, they are important contributions to the satisfactory completion of the presentation. Included in this final display is a sting-in-the-tail epilogue to the subplot, as Bianca and the Widow revert to (it is whim-

sically suggested) woman's natural state of shrewishness, a view of the sex more consistent with folk tales and popular performance than with neoclassical comedy. At the same time, along with the Katherina player's display of impersonative mastery, this constitutes an ironic assertion of the influence and authority of the player, his freedom both to manipulate and mock the conventions of mimetic narrative.

In such testimonies to the players' freedom, *The Taming of the Shrew* plays to its last moments with the irony fundamental to all theatrical performance. To the very end, representation and presentation are intertwined, contrasted, and resolved, their difference and interdependence reaffirmed.

Notes and References

1. Robert Weimann, *Author's Pen and Actor's Voice: Playing and Writing in Shakespeare's Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 5.
2. Michael Bristol, 'The Festive Agon', in *Twelfth Night* ('New Casebooks'), ed. R. S. White (New York: St Martin's Press, 1996), p. 73.
3. Weimann, *Author's Pen and Actor's Voice*, p. 37.
4. John Lyly, Prologue to *Midas*, *The Complete Works of John Lyly*, ed. Warwick Bond (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), III, p. 115.
5. The statement of fictional locale (like the storyteller's opening establishment of place) is also an assertion of authority, for it carries the implication that, as creators of the mimesis, the performers can and will play with it as they wish.
6. Henry Medwall, *Fulgens and Lucrece*, in *English Moral Interludes*, ed. Glynn Wickham (London: Dent, 1976), p. 46.
7. Much more detail about personating a gentlewoman is given in *The Shrew* than in *A Shrew*.
8. Most – but by no means all – such direct addresses are by the more obviously performative figures: the servant clowns, Petruchio, and Sly. See, among many others, Ind. 2.63–9, 121–3; 1.1.78–9; also Grumio's many asides, such as 1.2.13–14, 32–3, 123–4; 4.1.1–8; etc.
9. See for example 1.2.190–204; 2.1.164–77, 291–302; 4.1.159–82; 4.3.165–72; 5.2.116–120.
10. Though Elizabethan players would certainly have taken even more opportunities than these to play to the audience, the following are a few of the most obvious examples: 1.1.105–6, 213; 1.2.5–19, 32–3, 211; 2.1.242–51, 393–400; 3.1.45–47, 59–60, 84–9; 3.2.30–76, 195, 207; 4.1.1–8 ff, 91–158 passim; 4.3.1–14, 190; 4.4.100–3; 4.5.35, 77–9; 5.1.33–4, 113–14; 5.2.136–79, 189.
11. Thomas Heywood, *An Apology for Actors*, with introduction and bibliographical notes by Richard H. Parkinson (Delmar, N.Y.: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1978), B3 verso.
12. See S. L. Bethell, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition* (New York: Staples Press, 1944), p. 72.
13. See Jan Harold Brunvand, 'The Folktale Origin of *The Taming of the Shrew*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, XVII (1966), p. 345–59 for a thorough discussion of these sources.
14. See for example Biondello's account of Petruchio's arrival for the wedding in his outlandish dress (3.2.41–62); Gremio's description of Petruchio's behaviour during the wedding ceremony (3.2.139–72) and Grumio's of the horse-fall incident, in comic competition with Curtis (4.1.38–65).
15. In early comedies, as in many seasonal rituals, the comic project often symbolized an important task: e.g., saving Athens in Aristophanes' *Frogs*, or killing Winter in medieval German carnival.
16. Michael West, 'The Folk Background of Petruchio's Wooing Dance: Male Supremacy in *The Taming of the Shrew*', *Shakespeare Studies* (Albuquerque, N.M.), VII (1974), p. 66.
17. From the choruses of Aristophanes to the *lazzi* of commedia dell'arte mask figures, emulations of animal behaviour have always figured prominently in comic performance.
18. West, 'The Folk Background of Petruchio's Wooing Dance', p. 71.
19. See for example Gammer Gurton's battle with Dame Chat in Mr. W[illiam] S[tevenson], *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, in *Elizabethan and Stuart Plays*, ed. C. R. Baskerville, V. B. Heltzel, and A. H. Nethercot (New York: Holt, 1934), p. 62–3; or Marian May-be-good's beating the vice Ambidexter in Thomas Preston, *A Lamentable Tragedie . . . of Cambises*, *ibid.*, p. 162–3.
20. See Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).
21. Bethell, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition*, p. 72.
22. Heywood, *An Apology for Actors*, E2 verso.
23. Mankind, in *Specimens of the Pre-Shakespearean Drama*, ed. John Matthews Manly (Boston: Ginn, 1897), p. 317.
24. *Cambises*, p. 149.
25. David Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 21.
26. *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, p. i.
27. *Cambises*, p. 150.
28. In 1574, for example, the boys of Merchant Taylors school were stopped from performing because their behaviour entailed 'such an impudente familiaritie with their betters that often tymes greite contempt of maisters, parents, and magistrats followeth thereof': quoted in Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 129. Thomas Heywood remarks on the widespread assumption that the boys 'juniority' was 'a priviledge for any rayling, be it never so violent' (*Apology for Actors*, G3 verso).
29. Ann Thompson, Introduction, *The Taming of the Shrew* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 11.
30. For a description of the sharp fool type, see my *Actor as Anti-Character*, p. 102–7.
31. Coppelia Kahn, *Man's Estate: Masculine Identity in Shakespeare* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), p. 117.
32. See Soule, *Actor as Anti-Character*, p. 162, 167–9.