

Katalin Tabi

Editing Shakespeare for the Stage

A comparative analysis of Act I Scene iv of *Romeo and Juliet*

After the text-based editorial approach of the 17th and 18th centuries, from the end of the 19th century, and even more from the middle of the nineteen-seventies, more and more scholars turned towards the study of stage directions. They started to discover their origins, their meanings, and their impact on the understanding of Shakespeare's plays. These researches led to the fact that Shakespeare criticism could no longer remain within the limited realms of literature, but it had to involve other disciplines such as cultural studies and theatre history in its researches too. The traditions of Elizabethan theatre and the relationship between theatre and literature came into the focus of research. This paper gives a comparative analysis of stage directions in one particular scene, the ballroom-scene (I.iv) of *Romeo and Juliet*, as they are presented in six prominent 20th-century editions. This study is to prove that nearly all the problems an editor has to face are theatrical in nature and therefore it is necessary to re-establish the relation between page and stage and to make performance-based editions that are useful to theatrical personnel as well as academics.

Around the turn of the millennium, the editorial board of the Arden Shakespeare started working on a new scheme to rediscover and re-establish the relation between page and stage, academic research and theatre. They observe and analyse several prominent 20th-century productions of the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford-upon-Avon and use all their observations for the editing of a new series called *Shakespeare at Stratford Series*.¹ While in a classical critical edition the focus of interest would be mainly on the bibliographical and textual his-

1. So far the following volumes have been published: *Richard III*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Merchant of Venice* in November 2001, *Romeo and Juliet* and *As You Like It* in September and December 2002, and *The Tempest* in March 2003.

tory of a given play, the editors of this series concentrate on the narrative focus, the themes and characters, and the scenery and costume in the mirror of stage productions.

In the case of Shakespeare's plays – or of any plays, in fact – theatre and academic research should not be two separate fields since for the more profound understanding of the plays theatre people as well as scholars do need the exchange of thoughts and experience. The first step in this co-operation could probably be that editors should analyse performances for their editions, and directors and actors should consult critical editions for their productions. Another step could then be the sharing of ideas, and a third step the making of collaborative editions beneficial to both scholars and theatre people – and hopefully to the interested readership too.

What literary scholarship can give to the furtherance of communication between theory and practice, page and stage is to provide the historical background information to the plays: to explore the several theatrical and linguistic layers of the play-texts (with all the Renaissance connotations), to map out the characteristics and facilities of the Shakespearean stage as much as possible, and to give analyses of the plays from a literary perspective.

This paper wishes to contribute to the understanding of play-texts by scrutinising the stage directions and thus unravelling problematic points of one particular scene, the ballroom-scene (Act I Scene iv) of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The reason for choosing this is that this scene has a broad spectrum of stage actions and it is divided into two by most editors although it is evident from the Quartos that Romeo and his friends would march from the street to the Capulet house without any change of scene on the Renaissance stage – thus retaining the fluidity of action. *Romeo and Juliet* is unusually rich in stage directions, and it survives in two Quartos, the first of which is, in all probability, a theatrical copy. This play, because of its special textual qualities, has a very rich editorial history, which makes it a good example to show the shift in editorial attitude from the literary to the performance-based.

The paper is divided into two parts. The first, theoretical part is going to discuss the differences and meeting points between theatre and academic research. The second, more pragmatic part is going to analyse stage directions – their changing editorial treatment and their effect on the production of a play – in I.iv of *Romeo and Juliet*.

1 Theoretical background

1.1 *The editorial history and treatment of stage directions*

The idea of watching performances and basing editions on them did not spring out of the blue, of course. The printed versions of Shakespeare's plays were first based on performances in his own time. It would be an exaggeration to say that the editorial history of Shakespeare started in the Renaissance since editorial awareness as such simply did not exist. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the editions of the 16th and 17th centuries were performance-based, and that the editorial attitude from the 1700s onwards diverged towards a more literary direction.

In the 18th century, one derivative folio followed the other. For example, the edition of Nicholas Rowe (1709), the first editor known by name, was a reprint of the Fourth Folio (1685). He was followed by many others like Alexander Pope (1728), Lewis Theobald (1733), Samuel Johnson (1765), Edward Capell (1768), George Steevens (1778), and Edmond Malone (1790), whose merits are invaluable since they established the set of editorial principles, and therefore the classical editorial history of Shakespeare starts with them. This is a positive result of the English literary enlightenment. A negative result, on the other hand, is that the theatre-centred approach of the Renaissance receded into the background. Most of the eighteenth-century editors were poets or literary critics, consequently their editorial practice was merely literary – and not without faults. They concentrated on the creation of pure Shakespearean texts in the most elevated sense, but, as Gary Taylor summarises it, they did not know “much about the circumstances of performance or the mechanics of textual transmission in Shakespeare's time; none had a coherent textual theory.”²

Inspired by the idea of creating a perfect Shakespearean play, from the 18th century, it became widespread to invent new stage directions on the basis of the text. This editorial practice prevailed in the 19th century too, and resulted in several kinds of stage directions, usually one following the other, at places where the Quartos had nothing. For instance, at the beginning of II.i when Romeo enters the Capulet orchard, the following directions ranged: *Exit* (Rowe, 1709);

2. Gary Taylor, “General Introduction,” in *Textual Companion*, general ed. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 55.

leaps the Wall (Capell, 1768); *He climbs the wall, and leaps down* (Malone, 1790); and *He approaches the house* (White, 1857–66). The inventors of these stage directions believed that they had improved the play-text this way. But actually they had created a literary text with a location confined to one single possibility while Shakespeare’s text reserves the symbolism and plurality of the Renaissance stage where everything was possible because nothing was visible. On Shakespeare’s stage there was neither a wall, nor an orchard or a house; Romeo was primarily *on stage*, and he created the location through his words in the audience’s imagination.³ We will see that, with the growing interest in rediscovering Shakespeare’s theatre, twentieth-century editors returned to the authoritative sources, and often preferred adding no stage directions at all to inventing ones perhaps alien to Shakespeare.

It was the Cambridge edition, published in 1862–6, edited by W. G. Clark, W. A. Wright, and J. Glover, that had to come to illuminate an important textual aspect of Shakespeare’s plays: the origins of the early editions. This edition was the first to collate the sixteenth and seventeenth-century editions of the plays, and to define most texts as derivative or substantive by origin. Their efforts showed the way towards the professional academic research of Shakespeare, but it was not until the 20th century that even more significant steps were taken for the better understanding of Shakespeare.

W. W. Greg and R. B. McKerrow, whose names mark the beginning of the “new bibliography,” placed the bibliographical researches of Shakespeare on new bases. Their activities coincided with the appearance of the Oxford English Dictionary that made it possible to understand Shakespeare’s language more profoundly. They paid special attention to the rethinking of editorial practice, and examined meticulously all the contemporary materials available of the plays. Although not all their results had been put into editorial practice – which still followed in many aspects the editorial conventions of the earlier centuries – Greg and McKerrow represented a new scholarly attitude. Their attitude, however, was still mainly literary and text-based.

By the end of the 1970s, textual critics became aware of the significance and consequences of the fact that the plays had been written for the stage. This idea

3. On the emblematic and symbolic nature of the Renaissance stage see Attila Atilla Kiss, “A tanúság szemiotikája az emblematikus színházban,” in *Színház-szemiotográfia: Az angol és olasz reneszánsz dráma és színház ikonográfiája és szemiotikája*, ed. Katalin Demcsák and Attila Atilla Kiss (Szeged: JATEPress, 1999; Ikonológia és Műértelmezés 8), pp. 263–265.

started to develop simultaneously in literary scholars' essays and editors' texts. By this time, the focus of theatre semiotics⁴ – a new field of study growing out of the structuralist and semiotic tradition of the first half of the century – turned from the study of signs of the drama-text to the interpretation of theatrical sign-systems of the performance-text.⁵ The identification and analysis of these sign-systems (that range from the actor's through the visual and acoustic to the textual ones – only to mention the main categories)⁶ made it possible to understand more of the complex communication and meaning-creating process that takes place during a performance. Along with the findings of theatre semiotics (e.g. Jiří Veltrusky, Petr Bogatyrev and Tadeusz Kowzan), the rethinking of plays as performance pieces (Stanley Wells), the implications of stage directions (Alan C. Dessen), and the rise of performance criticism (Bernard Beckerman) all had significant influence on the editing of the Shakespeare plays.

Romeo and Juliet is a good example of this: a definite line can be drawn between the editions before 1980 and after. The 1980 Arden edition by Brian Gibbons is the last edition that can afford to disregard the performative approach. The shift towards this new approach can be seen, for example, in the cover notes to G. Blakemore Evans's 1984 edition of the New Cambridge Shakespeare, which advertises itself as follows:

The New Cambridge Shakespeare aims to be of value to a new generation of playgoers and readers who wish to enjoy fuller access to Shakespeare's poetic and dramatic art. While offering ample academic guidance it reflects current critical interests and is more attentive than some earlier editions have been to the realisation of the plays on the stage, and to their social and cultural settings.

The real break-through, however, was the Oxford Shakespeare edition of the *Complete Works* in 1986, edited by Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett, and William Montgomery. Their volume marks the beginning of a new era in editorial thinking for they based their researches on more theatrical grounds.

Wells, talking of the plays, claims that "it is in performance that the plays lived and had their being." This implies that "it is impossible to recover exactly

4. On the history of theatre semiotics see Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theater and Drama* (London: Methuen, 1980).

5. Cf. Kiss, p. 250.

6. Cf. Martin Esslin, *A dráma vetületei*, trans. Rita Fober *et. al* (Szeged: JATEPress, 1998), p. 103. (Martin Esslin, *The Field of Drama* [London: Methuen, 1988].)

the form in which they stood either in his [i.e. Shakespeare's] own original manuscripts or in those manuscripts, or transcripts of them, after they had been prepared for use in the theatre."⁷ For the Shakespeare plays where only one copy exists we cannot claim for certain that it is the authoritative copy. Today the theory that Elizabethan drama is the product of more than one hand prevails. In Shakespeare's time there was no copyright, so from the author to the printer basically anyone could interpolate anything into the copy of a play. This means that we have no hard evidence that all stage directions are included in the existing copies, and even if they are, they might not be authoritative. And if so, editors can take the challenge, with careful consideration, to insert more stage directions in order to make the text more explicit. This brings about the problem of the editor's responsibility.

Wells deals with this matter in his essay, "The Editor and the Theatre: Editorial Treatment of Stage Directions."⁸ According to Wells, the conscientious editor should always bear in mind that he edits a text written for the stage, and only those changes and emendations should be made which serve the better understanding of the play. The Complete Oxford edition, for example, uses "broken brackets" (e.g. [*The music plays again, and the guests dance*]) instead of the traditional brackets, and Wells explains that with the use of these they want to indicate that their stage directions are not ultimate solutions, only the editor's suggestions, and as such they can be challenged or omitted or accepted.

The editor's responsibility is difficult to define. Editing is creating: editors, through their ideas and decisions, necessarily create a new text. Therefore editing is inevitably subjective (like all creative activities). Alan C. Dessen emphasises that an editor's decisions can have a great influence on other people's interpretations of a play. Discussing the omission of an Elizabethan stage direction in a prominent edition he claims that "Since many readers concentrate upon the text rather than the notes, such an editorial decision (especially in this prestigious series) can have a greater impact upon future interpreters than an equivalent choice by an actor or a critic."⁹ Consequently, editors, even though subjective, should be very cautious about their decisions.

7. Stanley Wells, "General Introduction," in *The Complete Works*, general ed. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. xxxix.

8. In *Re-Editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).

9. Alan C. Dessen, *Elizabethan Stage Conventions and Modern Interpreters* (Cambridge: CUP, 1984), p. 4.

1.2 *The problems of staging*

Before moving on to the analytical part of the paper, let me give a brief summary of some intriguing issues concerning stage production in comparison with the editor's text. The stage obviously provides a more authentic venue for stage directions than do editions. As a matter of fact, the problems present themselves in a completely different manner. The editor's question (of what a stage direction should contain) gets narrowed down for the director to one single aspect: whether the stage direction is feasible or not. If it cannot be put into practice, it is simply omitted.

Editors interpret the works through texts. Directors interpret the works through performances. W. B. Worthen, rethinking our understanding of authority and performance, distinguishes three realisations of a play: the work, the text, and the performance. Defining these terms and their relationships to one another he claims that "Performance dramatizes the complex, concrete decisions made to produce the immaterial work in a given material state (the printed text, the text on the page, the book)." ¹⁰ He also shows these connections graphically: $W - T_1, T_2, T_3 \dots T_n$; and $T_x - P_1, P_2, P_3 \dots P_n$. That is neither texts nor performances represent Shakespeare's works in themselves. The plays were written for the theatre, consequently their written copies are based on performances. These copies have been edited in various ways by different editors thus multiplying the number of existing copies, which are used by directors to create performances, which again have an impact on future editions. This is the circulation of Shakespeare's works.

Stage directions do not belong strictly to the corpus of the Shakespeare oeuvre. As for the main text, editors' aim is to recover the original version as much as possible, but for the stage directions they have fewer demands. They treat them more freely. Similarly, directors deal with stage directions rather liberally. Roger Apfelbaum, in his doctoral dissertation, shows that there are basically two types of directors: one who scrutinises the different editions meticulously to find various interpretations which he can finally build into his own, and the other that starts his directing with the pruning of all directions from the script. ¹¹

10. W. B. Worthen, *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), p. 16.

11. Roger Apfelbaum, "Introduction," in *Author's Pen or Actor's Voice* (Doctoral thesis at The University of Birmingham, 1996).

The scrutinizing director wants to understand all the possible interpretations that settled on a given play in the last 400 years in order to choose the best possible solutions from which he can create his own interpretation of the play. He does so not because of the lack of imagination or originality, but because he wants to discover as many layers of interpretation as possible to possess an extremely rich bank from which he can develop his own conception.

Linda McJannet explains that the latter type finds stage directions unnecessary because he believes that they restrict his artistic creativity: “Whereas the scholar values directions as evidence of the original staging or the ‘virtual performance’ inscribed in the text, performers often see them as mere relics of past performances and obstacles to the exercise of their creative freedom.”¹² Obviously, this type of director is wrong about the judgement of stage directions in the text. He treats the text merely as a skeleton or a starting-point from which he can create his own original work. But there is no such thing as *original* work. Even most creative directors necessarily draw their inspiration from the past, and this raises the question of where the historical boundary is from which performances still affect their work, and from which everything before can be regarded as “mere relics.” There is no such point. Even the Creation has left its mark on our thinking, let alone the Greeks. This is the basis for Worthen’s argument too: there is an eternal interaction between texts and performances that all give interpretations of the immaterial work. In terms of performing arts, there are no old and new forms, only alternatives which come to the foreground and then move into the background again in the course of time, and consequently there is no real reason not to take into consideration the original stage directions (or even the invented ones). This argumentation underpins the importance of making workable editions.

Nevertheless even if a director decides to use the text’s stage directions (hoping to discover something of the Renaissance stage conventions), necessarily he has to observe the work through the editor’s glasses. Dessen argues that the “readers (e.g., theatrical professionals) who do read the plays as scripts often end up viewing the original effects through invisible barriers set up (often unwittingly) by the modern editor.”¹³ Besides the restrictions of the edited text, the director also has to face twentieth-century presuppositions of theatrical condi-

12. Linda McJannet, *The Voice of Elizabethan Stage Directions: The Evolution of a Theatrical Code* (London: Associated University Presses, 1999), p. 17.

13. Dessen, p. 7.

tions and our prevailing logic. Theatrical as well as human logic was remarkably different in the Elizabethan times. Dessen notes that

If the language of the theatre does include more than the words on the page, then editor, director, and critic should recognize that the on-stage language available to Shakespeare included terms and phrases that made excellent sense then but at best are dimly understood today.¹⁴

Whether a director takes the gap of time into account or not depends again on which type of director he belongs to. The pruning type will definitely have no problem with interpreting a text through the wide gap of time: he will follow his own instincts and ideas disregarding the original directions. The scrutinizing type, on the other hand, will probably debate how to interpret, for example, the dated addressing in I.iv of *Romeo* (*ah sirrah*) which can be a self-addressing, addressing of an older person, or a younger one.

So far I have discussed similarities and meeting points of editors' and directors' works, and I partly share Beckerman's view that on most questions of Shakespeare's works editors and directors will probably never agree:

Whereas for the scholar Shakespeare's medium is primarily verbal, for the director, as he works in the contemporary theatre, it is comprehensive: gesture having as much validity and force as speech, both being expressive manifestations of that elusive phenomenon known as 'action.' Thus, while the scholar's activity in regard to Shakespeare is essentially *protective*, the director's activity is *explorative*. Starting from these fundamentally conflicting premises, it is no wonder that these two lovers of Shakespeare frequently disagree, that an uneasy truce exists between them, and that the claims of each remain unreconciled.¹⁵

Yet, despite the fundamental discrepancy between the directors' explorative and the editors' protective attitudes, I believe that the very challenge for editors of the twenty-first century is to create editions that are protective *and* explorative at once. How can this be accomplished? Shakespeare's text, the main corpus has to be protected. Stage directions can be handled (with careful consideration) more freely, but they still have to keep to the Elizabethan staging conditions.

14. Dessen, p. 162.

15. Bernard Beckerman, "The Flowers of Fancy, the Jerks of Invention, or, Directorial Approaches to Shakespeare," in *Shakespeare 1971*, ed. Clifford Leech and J. M. R. Margeson (Toronto and Buffalo, 1972), p. 202.

Regarding these two things (main corpus and directions) the editor's work is protective. The introduction and footnotes (that a critical edition also contains) can however provide room for exploration: the editor can include theatrical pieces of evidence and solutions for certain problematic parts of the text with the help of modern performances. The aim of such notes is obviously not to explore more of the Renaissance staging, which today's productions cannot show anyway, but to enrich and update our understanding of Shakespeare's plays.

2 A comparative analysis of stage directions in I.iv of *Romeo and Juliet*

Romeo and Juliet is one of those "problematic" Shakespeare plays that have so-called "bad" quartos.¹⁶ Scholars generally agree that *Romeo* Q1 is not a typical "bad" quarto, because its text coincides with the "good" quarto (Q2) to a great extent, and it borrows much less from other plays than other "bad" quartos. Critics' theories and opinions vary as to the genesis of Q1 (1597) and Q2 (1599), and the connection between them has also been a subject of debate. There are only two hypotheses that scholars generally agree on. The one is that Q1 was intended for the stage, and the other is that Q2 was printed from Shakespeare's "foul papers."

Most editors use the second quarto as a copy text when editing the play because it is poetically more elaborate, but since it cannot be established for certain to what extent or in what way the two quartos of *Romeo* are authorial, there is no real argument against using Q1 as a copy text along with Q2. The stage directions of Q1 accurately represent the action that occurred on stage, it has more elaborate and descriptive stage directions than Q2, and this feature makes it an excellent material for the modern editor.

This scene consists of two parts: Romeo and his friends prepare for the Capulet ball in the street, then they enter the bustling Capulet house that is

16. The distinction between "good" and "bad" quartos was first suggested by A. W. Pollard (*Shakespeare Folios and Quartos: A Study in the Bibliography of Shakespeare's Plays 1594–1685* [London: Methuen, 1909]). Kathleen O. Irace (*Reforming the 'Bad' Quartos: Performance and Provenance of Six Shakespearean First Editions* [Newark, Del., London, and Toronto, 1994]) argues that the so-called "bad" quartos are from certain aspects (e.g. considering stage directions) better than their "good" counterparts, and therefore Pollard's designation is inappropriate. Irace suggests "short quarto" instead. This name, however, also has its weak point for "short" quartos are often longer than their "long" counterparts.

ready to introduce Juliet to the world of masquerades with all the ladies and guests, music and dance, and Capulet, the perfect host, of course.

To discuss this rather long scene (257 lines in the 2000 Oxford Shakespeare edition), I divided it into nine smaller episodes for the sake of easier handling. I will systematically compare six prominent editions of the 20th century by John Dover Wilson (Cambridge: CUP, 1955), George Walton Williams (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1964), Brian Gibbons (*The Arden Shakespeare*, 1980), G. Blakemore Evans (Cambridge: CUP, 1984), John Jowett (Cambridge: Clarendon Press, 1986), and Jill L. Levenson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).¹⁷ In my comparative analysis I will also refer to the first two Quartos of the text.¹⁸

There are two basic editorial conventions that concern this scene. The first is the use of scene-divisions. The ballroom-scene is a long sequence of different events which are represented in the first and the second Quartos as a continuous flow without the clearing of the stage. Nevertheless, precisely because of its length and variety, most editors, following Steevens (1773), introduce a scene-division between the maskers' dialogue and the entrance of the servants, which may seem obvious at first sight, but in fact causes several editorial problems. Editors' opinions differ about how this scene should be staged – and therefore edited.

This scene-division is supported and inspired by the fact that the maskers' episode takes place in *A street before Capulet's house* (Theobald, 1733) while the servants appear in *A hall in Capulet's house* (Theobald, 1733). Therefore the change of locations may induce the change of scenes. In Shakespeare's theatre, however, there were probably no scene-changes. Q1, in which the servants' episode is missing, reads *Enter old Capulet with the Ladies* (C2v) immediately after Romeo's last words in the street. Q2 reads *They march about the Stage, and Servingmen come forth with Napkins* (C2v). Neither Quarto has exit and re-enter for Romeo and his friends. Wilson notes, agreeing with Chambers,¹⁹ that "marching about" was "a stage-convention to signify a change of locality." He

17. In this paper I will use Jill L. Levenson's edition as a reference point if not indicated otherwise.

18. *Romeo and Juliet 1597*, ed. Jill L. Levenson (facsimile edition, 2000) and *Romeo and Juliet 1599*, ed. W. W. Greg (facsimile edition, 1966).

19. E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford: OUP, 1923, Volume iii) pp. 99–100 and 38; 117 n5.

adds, however, that “since we are supposed to pass from the street into Capulet’s hall, a change of locality . . . is necessary in a reader’s text.” Thus Wilson makes the maskers exit at this point: “*they march into the house.*” Williams, in his “Staging Notes,” also elaborates on the authentic staging practice of an Elizabethan public playhouse, yet he retains the traditional I.iv–I.v division too “for convenience of reference.” He inserts [*and stand aside*] for the maskers into the Q2-direction. Gibbons also employs scene-division here (without changing the original direction), and does not question the validity of this editorial convention. Evans also uses scene-division, and follows Williams in his stage direction. Jowett, similarly to Wilson, clears the stage with *They march about the stage and [exeunt]*.

Levenson is the only one who retains the original fluidity, and refers to Alan C. Dessen who interprets the lack of “marching about the stage” in the Q1-direction as follows:

The shorter text [Q1] . . . does not include a march about the stage and does not bring on any servants; rather, Romeo’s line is followed immediately by ‘*Enter old Capulet with the Ladies,*’ saying ‘Welcome Gentlemen, welcome Gentlemen.’ The effect in Q1 is therefore comparable but simpler and more direct, with fewer personnel required, a more abrupt change of place, and no specifying of physical action by the masquers to suggest, however elliptically, a movement from street to house. In both quartos, then, the ball comes to the masquers; in neither do the masquers *exeunt* and *re-enter* to a new place.²⁰

Levenson discusses the evidence of promptbooks too: “performances have treated the shift in various ways. . . . Many prompt books omit the servants’ dialogue (not in Q1); and most have the masquers exit here, re-entering for the ball.” She also remarks in brackets that the expression “march about” is “ambiguous, because the preposition means both ‘round the outside of’ and ‘across over,’” and therefore this direction allows more than one interpretation.

The second basic editorial convention is the use of location, which has been kept up since the eighteenth-century editions. As it has been expounded earlier, it was only in the nineteen-seventies that bibliographers started to ignore locations on the grounds that “they are the invention of editors and often obscure or

20. A. C. Dessen, “Q1 *Romeo and Juliet* and Elizabethan Theatrical Vocabulary,” in *Shakespeare’s ‘Romeo and Juliet,’* ed. J. L. Halio (Newark, Del., 1995), p. 115.

contradict the principles and practices of the Elizabethan stage.”²¹ From the six editions under discussion, only Wilson uses locations. Williams’s edition, nine years later, is a special case because it is a semi-facsimile edition of *Romeo* based on Q2 and completed with the editor’s directions and notes, and therefore it does not use locations. The idea of re-printing the original quarto and providing “Staging Notes” in an appendix shows how the editorial approach gradually changed direction. Since the Arden Shakespeare edition (1980), critical editions have all disregarded locations, and included them only in the collation. Popular editions, however, still often use them.

2.1 *Romeo and his company’s preparation for the ball (I.iv.1–112)*

When we meet them, Romeo and his friends, Mercutio and Benvolio, and other maskers are in the street (*Without Capulet’s house* as J. D. Wilson inserts at the beginning of this scene). The second quarto prints: *Enter Romeo, Mercutio, Benvolio, with five or six other Maskers, torchbearers*. This direction gives a permissive number for the on-stage players of which there are two possible explanations: the playwright when writing the play either did not know how many hired men would be available for the play, or it was simply not important to him since the point was not the number of the maskers and torchbearers but their presence as attendants on stage.

The stage direction in Q1 reads *Enter Maskers with Romeo and a Page*. Supposing that the compiler of this quarto arranged the play for tour for a reduced cast, we can assume that the word *Maskers* stands for the four speaking parts, and the *Page* (who can possibly hold a torch) stands for the five or six masquers of Q2.

In the Q2 direction there is no “and” between the two last words. This induced some editors to believe that the two groups are the same. Levenson cites R. B. McKerrow’s argument that “this permissive Q2 direction does not require *torchbearers* as well as *masquers*.” The same idea is adopted in Jowett’s edition: *Enter Romeo, Mercutio, and Benvolio, as masquers, with five or six other masquers, [bearing a drum and torches]*. Jowett’s direction, the most detailed of the six editions observed here, is interesting for two reasons. Traditionally, editors agree that considering the usual 12–14 players of an Elizabethan company Shakespeare’s demand for extras is excessive. This corresponds with McKerrow’s

21. Gibbons, p. 26.

opinion which is endorsed by Jowett too, and therefore Jowett interprets this direction requiring five or six other maskers who are torchbearers at the same time. Nevertheless he mentions another possibility in a footnote. He suggests that the number of actors in this first episode together with the entering three or four Serving-men is within the usual limits of a company, which prompts that Shakespeare “was not oblivious to the limitations of staging.” If we accept this suggestion, we can see an example of the doubling of roles, which was a common practice in an Elizabethan theatre company. The second interesting point in Jowett’s direction is the inclusion of “*a drum*” (after Theobald, 1740), since this sequence ends with Benvolio’s command: “Strike, drum.” (l. 112). Thus its indication in a stage direction is logical and useful, yet Jowett is the only editor who uses it.

Williams, Evans and Levenson follow Q2, while Gibbons finds it useful to insert an “*and*” in square brackets in order to clarify – apparently disregarding McKerrow’s suggestion – the relation between the maskers and torchbearers.

In his opening lines Romeo refers to a speech that was traditionally given to the host:²² “What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse? / Or shall we on without apology?”. The demonstrative pronoun he uses indicates that the scene starts *in medias res*, and that at this point he might be pointing at a prop in his hand that is a piece of paper with their speech. The possibility of a prompt-copy onstage as prop in the beginning of the scene seems to be confirmed by Benvolio’s two only-Q1 lines (not included in Levenson’s edition), which most later editors (since Pope, 1728) have inserted into their Q2-edition on the grounds that their omission from Q2 was due to the carelessness of the compositor or to later insertion. Levenson argues that she does not edit these lines into her edition because “Despite various conjectures . . . the omission is unexplained.” These two lines ridicule the tradition of this speech: “Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke / After the prompter, for our entrance.”²³ Romeo’s doubtful questions are continued and culminating in Benvolio’s comic voice, which also tells about the practice of such an apology in Shakespeare’s time. Although editors do not take note of this implied stage direction (that is of the use of a prompt-copy as prop on stage), performances prove that directors do use it occasionally.

22. See Wilson’s note about the tradition of masquerade.

23. Gibbons, ll. 7–8.

Romeo's dejected mood becomes obvious at the very beginning of this sequence. In line 9, he asks for a torch so that he does not have to take part in "this ambling." Wilson explains that "The torchbearers, attendants at all masquing, looked on, but did not participate either in the dance." Gibbons, Evans, and Levenson also expand on this line in footnote.

Levenson adds that Romeo's "request invites stage business." Indeed, a director cannot disregard Romeo's request: he has to be either given a torch or not. Most probably, Romeo will not get the torch after line 9, for he repeats his request: "A torch for me." twenty-three lines later. In this case, a director has to decide how to instruct the actors to react to Romeo's request. Performances prove that Mercutio's speech ("Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance."), immediately after Romeo's lines, provides good opportunity for him to stop Romeo from taking a torch. As for his second reference to the torch (l. 33), directors stage it in different ways: Romeo either gets it or not – both interpretations are meaningful. Editors do not try to interpret this stage business – except for Jowett, who creates a direction for Romeo after line 37: [*He takes a torch*].

We can see that things like the maskers' speech or Romeo's torch may seem unimportant to an editor, while they are crucial on stage where the text starts living, and the director has to decide whether Romeo needs a piece of paper or not, and whether to give him a torch or not. The stage business of giving a torch to Romeo has already been highlighted by Levenson and Jowett, but that of the maskers' prompt-copy has not. Editors must watch performances in order to see the critical points of a play better.

2.2 *The Servingmen's preparation (l.iv.112–128)*

If Romeo and his company remain on stage (as Q2 suggests), they must stand aside to give room to the Servingmen's sixteen-line conversation (not in Q1). This short interlude is to divert the audience's attention from one location to the other. Nevertheless this sequence also indicates a change of pace: after the maskers' rather slow and leisurely conversation the servants' brisk dialogue prepares the lively atmosphere of the ball.

Q2's speech headings are confusing. To denote the entering servants Q2 prints *Ser.*, *1.*, *2.*, and *3.* Wilson, Williams, and Gibbons simply change these headings to *First*, *Second*, *Third*, and *Fourth Servingmen*, and they all leave the stage at the end of their scene. Evans uses the same speech headings, but in his edition the *Second Servingman* exits after "let the porter let in Susan Grindstone

and Nell” (l. 121) – as though obeying the command. Evans edits on a new line “Anthony and Potpan!”; in his interpretation these are the names of the third and fourth servants who enter to this call.

In Jowett’s edition [*Peter*] *and other Servingmen come forth with napkins*. He employs Peter and only two more servants – giving the last line of this sequence (attributed to 3 in Q2) to the first servant (following Folio’s emendation). He considers this a deliberate alteration since the ball-scene “would put severe casting demands on an Elizabethan company; a reduction in the number of Servingmen would save a part.” In the previous scenes we met only two Capulet servants quarrelling with two Montague servants (I.i), and there will be no need to have more than four servants onstage at a time in the rest of the play too. Therefore even if there are only three servants (as Jowett suggests) onstage here, one of them must be “borrowed” from the Montagues: an example of doubling, which was a common practice in the Elizabethan theatre. Jowett also remarks in a footnote that F alters Q2’s false *Enter Romeo* to *Enter Seruant*. This might indicate a separate entrance for Peter before the other servants, “which would be an attractive staging,” concludes Jowett.

Levenson, following Q2, differentiates the [*Chief*] *Serving-man* from the other three. She mentions that some modern editors “tend to identify Anthony and Potpan with Serving-man 2 and Serving-man 3, sometimes providing them with a separate entrance at l. 121 so that they seem to answer to their names.” However, she believes that the lack of directions in Q2 during this sequence allows “different kinds of business in performance.” Indeed, the director must decide whether to employ three or four servants, whether one of them should be Peter or not, and at which point to have them enter at all. Here again, it is the editor’s task to give some possible variations in order to help the director’s work.

Q2 reads *Exeunt* at the end of the servants’ scene. Levenson uses the same direction. Williams and Gibbons also add [*Servingmen*] to make the direction clearer. Wilson’s and Evans’s directions (*Servingmen withdraw*, and *They retire behind*, respectively) go back to Malone (1790) who was the first to edit this scene-change this way. The words “*withdraw*” and “*retire behind*” leave us in uncertainty of whether this movement ends up-stage or off stage. Jowett definitely keeps the servants onstage, as do most performances, and they usually “*come and go, setting forth tables and chairs*” just as Jowett instructs them, while the guests are entering. Jowett’s direction is placed immediately after the servants’ dialogue followed by a direction for the guests’ entrance. While Leven-

son manages to retain the continuity of I.iv by regarding the traditional I.iv and I.v as one scene, Jowett manages to retain the fluidity between the servants' and the guests' parts within one scene. His conjectured direction is obviously based on stage practice.

2.3 *Capulet welcomes the guests (I.iv.129–142)*

After the servants' lead-in the stage is suddenly filled with people. Q1-direction reads *Enter old Capulet with the Ladies*. This is preceded by Romeo's "on lustie Gentlemen" (C3v), and the maskers are immediately welcomed by the entering Capulet: "Welcome, Gentlemen." In Q2 the following direction stands: *Enter all the guests and gentlewomen to the Maskers*. Due to the variations of the two quartos, at this point editors introduce a wide range of stage directions.

Wilson inserts *Capulet and Juliet* into the Q2-direction. Williams and Levenson, following Capell (1768), edit *Capulet and attendants*. Gibbons gives even more details: *Capulet, Lady Capulet, Juliet, Tybalt and Nurse*. Gibbons follows Furness (1871), but Furness added only four characters, and the Nurse seems to be Gibbons' contribution to the stage direction. Evans's direction lists *Capulet, Lady Capulet, Juliet, Tybalt and his Page and Nurse*. He refers to Capell and the Riverside edition (1974). This latter one was also edited by him, but then he had the servants exit, so he had to have them re-enter with the others. Therefore he included *Servingsmen* in his 1974 stage direction, and left Tybalt's page out.

Jowett's stage direction is the most detailed, although inconsistent: he employs broken brackets at some parts and nothing at others, but since he does not give the source of either, it is not clear which parts are his own invention and which are not: [*They come and go, setting forth tables and chairs.*] *Enter* [*Musicians, then*] *at one door Capulet, [his wife,] his Cousin, Juliet, [the Nurse,] Tybalt, his page, Petruccio, and all the guests and gentlewomen; at another door, the masquers: [Romeo, Benvolio, and Mercutio]*. He makes a good observation when he divides the entering characters between the two presumed doors of the Renaissance stage indicating that the two groups arrive from different places: the household and guests from the house, and the maskers from the street. Jowett explains this editorial solution in his footnote to an earlier direction (I.iv.112.1–2): "the formula 'Enter x to y' leaves it unclear whether the masquers enter or are already on stage, but the only other use of this formula in

Romeo, at V.ii.o.1 [*‘Enter Frier Iohn to Frier Lawrence.’* (Q2)], is clearly an example of entry from separate doors.”

From all these variants it is obvious that to imagine the staging of this entrance demands great consideration. Editors have to make sure that they have all the strategically important characters enter the stage for the ball-scene so that the reader is able to imagine it, and does not get lost or confused. Directors do the same as editors, but their main concern is not only to call all the important characters onto stage, but also to create the image of a crowd for the party. This means that they usually employ much more actors than sufficient.

Virtually all directors put Paris into this scene, although, curious enough, neither the quartos nor the editors mention him in their guest-lists. István Géher suggests that Paris’s absence from the ball is strategically important.²⁴ Supposing Paris is there, Juliet has no choice but to be with him according to her parents’ wish. But since he is not, it becomes possible for Juliet to talk to other gentlemen such as Romeo. Paris’s absence also tells a lot about his character. He is a fashionable aristocrat who wants to marry Juliet only because she is *socially* attractive. It is because of his superficiality that he does not attend Capulet’s party: he either forgets about the invitation, or simply ignores it as something superfluous and unnecessary. Although very intriguing, Géher’s suggestion remains only a hypothesis. I am not convinced that the idea of leaving Paris textually out of this scene is strategically important. Theatrical performances prove that Paris’s presence creates a competitive atmosphere in which Romeo’s secret conquering appears to be an especially daring exploit. However, it would be interesting to try out Géher’s version on stage. It would certainly give Paris’s character a turn.

Returning to the beginning of the party, Capulet welcomes the guests and says a few teasing remarks to the ladies. Jowett prints (“*to the masquers*”) before his first words (“Welcome, gentlemen.”). The other editors do not insert any directions here – leaving more to individual interpretation. With his repetitive words Capulet creates a warm and cheerful atmosphere that culminates in the middle of his speech: “Come, musicians, play. / *Music plays and they dance*” (ll. 138–138.1). (Lines 134–139 of Q2 are missing in Q1.) This Q2 stage direction is followed by Williams and Levenson. Jowett extends it as follows: *Music plays, and the masquers, guests, and gentlewomen dance. [Romeo stands apart]*. Wil-

24. I am grateful to Professor Géher for this comment.

son and Gibbons insert the Q2-direction a line later, after “foot it, girls!”. Evans divides the direction into two: “Come musicians, play. / *Music plays.* / A hall, a hall, give room! and foot it, girls. / *And they dance.*” According to the original stage direction, Capulet orders the musicians to play, and the dancers start dancing by themselves. In Wilson’s and Gibbons’ interpretation, however, it is Capulet who gives orders both to the musicians and the dancers, and this way his central managing role is more emphasised.

After Capulet’s asking the Musicians to play, he has a series of orders that demand stage business. His speech is interesting because the different orders are addressed to different people. That is, in performance, he must turn here and there with his sentences making great hustle around himself. His orders require servants, tables and fire. Just like the servant’s orders in lines 118–119, Capulet’s words stand more for the stirring up of the stage creating a fizzy atmosphere than for presenting everything manifested on stage. Nevertheless the tables should probably be present for they have to be moved to give room to the dancers (l. 140).

The various voices of Capulet’s speech are not separated in Q1 and Q2. Most editors use dashes to indicate when Capulet turns to another guest. Levenson edited the speech this way:

A hall, a hall! Give room, and foot it, girls. –
 More light, you knaves, and turn the tables up,
 And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot. –
 Ah sirrah, this unlooked-for sport comes well. –
 Nay sit, nay sit, good cousin Capulet. . .

(I.iv.139–143)

Levenson’s editing is clear. In her interpretation line 139 obviously goes to the guests and ladies, lines 140 and 141 to the servants, and line 142 seems to be a private moment before he turns to his cousin in line 143. As another possibility besides the self-address, Levenson suggests that Capulet may also address “a servant or young male guest (*sirrah* = a man or boy with whom one assumes authority).”

Wilson puts a dash into the middle of line 141 to indicate that the second clause is a private remark that gives reason for Capulet’s request. There is no dash at the end of line 141, because according to Wilson Capulet “hugs himself” with the words of line 142, that is he addresses himself. After line 142 Wilson edits a dash to separate it from the next line when Capulet notices cousin Capulet.

Williams modifies the punctuation of Q2. The Q2 compositor used a comma at the end of line 140. If we accept that the colon stands for a change of addressees, Williams is right to correct it. He changes the punctuation-marks of these two lines, and in this way line 139 can go for the guests while line 140 for the servants. He keeps Q2's colon at the end of line 142.

Gibbons thought it best not to insert any punctuation-marks into the text so he edits out even the two Q2 colons of lines 140 and 142. By this editorial choice he leaves the interpretation to the reader. Evans employs a semicolon instead of Q2's colon at line 140, and leaves the rest to the reader's creativity. Both Wilson and Gibbons make reference to Onions²⁵ who explains that *sirrah* is an "ordinary form of address to inferiors," or "in passages of soliloquy *ah sirrah* is apparently addressed by the speaker to himself." Evans asserts that Capulet is addressing himself, and gives the argument that "Except as self-address, with 'Ah' (see Schmidt), 'sirrah' was used only in addressing social inferiors; this makes it difficult to accept . . . that 'sirrah' . . . refers to 'Cousin Capulet' named in the next line." Indeed, Schmidt, along with Onions, claims that *sirrah* is sometimes "addressed to an imaginary person or rather to the speaker himself (always preceded by *ah*)." ²⁶

Jowett edits this passage in the most articulated way. He provides stage directions before line 140: ("*To Servingmen*"), and before line 142: ("*To his Cousin*"), so he – in contrast with the other editors – does not regard it as a self-address, which coincides with theatrical practice (in performance, line 142 is usually addressed to Cousin Capulet). Looking up old lexicons and scrutinising the origins of a particular expression is typically scholarly work, and even if some directors prefer disregarding such linguistic difficulties and direct them arbitrarily, other directors may be grateful for the illumination of these problems.

2.4 *Capulet and Cousin Capulet (I.iv.143–153); Romeo and a Servant (I.iv.154–166)*

Shakespeare the director organised the ballroom-scene in a cinematic way: totals and close-ups alternate all through the scene. In this chapter I am going to examine the realisations of two 'close-ups' on page and stage: Capulet's talk to

25. C. T. Onions, *A Shakespeare Glossary*, rev. Robert D. Eagleson (Oxford, 1986).

26. Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon* (1923).

cousin Capulet, and Romeo's talk to a servant. Both dialogues are relatively short, and both display a private talk amongst the stir of the ball.

After arranging the dancers Capulet turns to cousin Capulet (at line 143 according to the editions, and at line 142 according to stage practice). Their conversation calls for two items of stage business. One of them is that this conversation has to be brought into focus, which in performance usually means that Capulet and cousin Capulet walk to the front, downstage centre with the dancers behind them. The other is that they need at least one chair (probably a *joint-stool*) so that Capulet's invitation in line 143 makes sense.

The characters' movements are not signified in the editorial footnotes. Wilson, Williams, Gibbons, Evans and Jowett do not make note of the stage business this episode requires. Levenson's edition is the only one where the footnote briefly remarks: "This line [i.e. l. 143] calls for at least one seat near Capulet and a bit of stage business." Only Evans and Levenson call attention to the double meaning of "in a mask" (l. 146): it can either mean the masquerade or the visor. Both editors refer back to line 135 where Capulet speaks about the day when he wore a visor. These lines together make it clear that after a certain age people did not wear masks in the masquerade, that is Capulet and cousin Capulet are not in masks.

But is Juliet masked? After the elderly participants' dialogue the "playwright's camera" swiftly moves onto a completely separate dialogue:

ROMEO (*to a Serving-man*) What lady's that which doth enrich the hand
Of yonder knight?

SER. I know not, sir.

ROMEO O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
As a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear,
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear.
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
The measure is done, I'll watch her place of stand
And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.
Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight,
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

(I.iv.154–166)

With his words Romeo addresses a servant. Only Wilson, Evans, Jowett and Levenson, following Capell (1768), indicate in stage direction to whom Romeo is

speaking. Williams and Gibbons remain faithful to the copy-text (Q2), and use no stage direction. Obviously, after the servant's answer, the dialogue turns into a monologue. This is indicated only in Wilson's edition where Romeo's speech is separated by a round bracket from the servant's line. In Q1 the servant's answer is missing, and thus Romeo's question seems rhetorical, and to be used only to introduce his monologue about Juliet's beauty. Perhaps the Q1 compositor was right because the Q2 dialogue, despite its brevity, is a confusing part of the play. It is strange that a Capulet servant cannot recognize his master's only daughter, yet this could be explained by Juliet's wearing a mask. Accepting this explanation raises another problem: Is Romeo admiring a mask?

Evans was the first editor to notice that there was a logical crux in this situation. He assumes that "the Serving-man here should be identified with one of the Torch-bearers who accompanied the maskers." Levenson agrees with Evans, but she underpins her opinion with theatrical accounts as well: "prompt books since the mid nineteenth century show that some productions have cut this line (not in Q1) or assigned it to a more credible speaker (e.g. Benvolio, Balthazar, Mercutio's page)."

2.5 *Tybalt's rage (l.iv.167–205)*

From an editorial point of view, this part contains three problematic points: Tybalt recognises Romeo's voice (l. 167), he sends his page for his sword (l. 168), and Capulet notices Tybalt's anger and goes to him.

Tybalt overhears Romeo's speech, and this is what makes him realise that "This, by his voice, should be a Montague" (l. 167). Levenson notes wittily: "What identifies a Montague voice is unclear; but the auditory clue seems logical because Romeo, wearing a mask, provides Tybalt with no visual evidence." Later on it is even less explicable how Capulet can see at first sight that he must be Romeo, and why his question makes Tybalt suddenly so sure that he is Romeo.

Following Tybalt's order: "Fetch me my rapier, boy" (l. 168) the quartos indicate no stage directions. All the editors, after Collier (1853), insert *Exit Boy* (Williams and Gibbons) or *Exit Page* (Evans, Jowett and Levenson). Wilson edits *his page goes*. None of the editions indicate when the page should re-enter. This cannot be deciphered from the text. Most stage productions, however, act out the page's re-entrance too, and a well-timed re-entrance with a rapier can add a lot to the dramatic tension of the scene.

Only Jowett employs stage direction for Capulet when he notices Tybalt's anger. Last time we left Capulet sitting and talking with old Capulet. Now *standing* – indicates Jowett – he moves towards Tybalt with line 173: “Why, how now, kinsman, wherefore storm you so?” This part of the text requires particular movements of Romeo, Tybalt and Capulet. Tybalt has to be close enough to Romeo to overhear his speech, but then Romeo has to move on so that he cannot hear Tybalt's fury. Capulet, on the other hand, has to be within earshot to be able to reach Tybalt by the end of his four lines. Their dialogue (ll. 173–198) occurs probably away from the rest of the party.

From line 198 the situation changes. The host starts dominating in Capulet again, and (perhaps to divert the attention from his cousin) he speaks to different people at the same time:

You must contrary me – marry, 'tis time –
 (To the dancers) Well said, my hearts – (to Tybalt) you are a princox, go,
 Be quiet, or – (to Serving-men) more light, more light – for shame –
 (To Tybalt) I'll make you quiet. What! (To dancers) Cheerly, my hearts!
 (I.iv.198–201)

He does the same as in lines 138–143. In Levenson's edition the difference is that while no stage directions are inserted at Capulet's first speech (only dashes), this speech contains both dashes and directions. Excluding editorial inconsistency, the only possible explanation is that in the first speech all the addressees are named in the text (“gentlemen,” “musicians,” “girls,” “knaves,” “Ah sirrah,” and “good cousin Capulet”), so it would be superfluous to indicate them in stage directions. In this second speech, on the other hand, “my hearts” does not reveal too much. Consequently, this speech leaves much to the editors, especially because the quartos do not help but make editors' work even harder. Q1's speech consists of less lines:

Goe too, you are a saucie knaue,
 This tricke will scath you one day I know what.
 Well said my hartes. Be quiet:
 More light Ye knaue, or I will make you quiet. (C3v)

The first two lines obviously go to Tybalt. The first clause of the third line may go to the dancers and the second clause to Tybalt again as it is suggested by Levenson. The punctuation of the fourth line, however, is misleading. It suggests that if the serving-man does not bring more light, Capulet will make him quiet.

Levenson, whose edition contains an edited version of Q1 too, interprets this line as follows: “(To *Serving-man*) More light – ye knave – (To *Tybalt*) or I will make you quiet.”

The punctuation of Q2 is misleading too:

You must contrarie me, marrie tis time,
Well said my hearts, you are a princox, go,
Be quiet, or more light, more light for shame,
Ile make you quiet (what) chearely my hearts.

Evans notes that “[t]he light comma pointing in the early texts makes it difficult to be sure exactly whom Capulet is addressing.” Evans tries to interpret the text with dashes and exclamation marks. In contrast with Levenson, he does not put a dash in the middle of line 198, but he explains in footnote that the second part of the line can either be addressed “to Tybalt, who perhaps indicates with some gesture his unwilling compliance,” or Capulet may remind himself that it is “time to turn his attention to his guests,” which he does in the first half of line 199. Levenson claims that Capulet may address line 198 to Tybalt, the company, or himself. Because of the several possible interpretations she edits this half-line between dashes.

In his 1986 edition, Jowett is the first to use stage directions to puzzle out these problematic lines. His directions are more extended than any other editors’. After line 198 Jowett edits in broken brackets that [*A dance ends. Juliet retires to her place of stand, where Romeo awaits her*]. Naturally, it is not necessary that the dance stops at this point, yet stage productions show that this can have a great dramatic effect that most directors exploit. Jowett edits the rest of Capulet’s speech similarly to Levenson, except that he attaches “What” in line 201 to the clause addressed *To the guests*, and finishes the speech with a direction in broken brackets: [*The music plays again, and the guests dance*]. Jowett considers the text as a theatrical piece more than anyone before in the editorial history of the play. His directions in broken brackets explicitly suggest a possible theatrical interpretation – not the only one, however.

The earlier editors, Wilson, Williams and Gibbons, break up this speech similarly to Evans, Jowett and Levenson, but they do not seem to recognise the interpretative difficulties. Wilson puts a dash to the end of line 198, and to the middle of line 199; links “for shame” to Capulet’s order to the servants, and encourages the dancers with “What, cheerly, my hearts!” – similarly to Jowett. Williams, in his original spelling edition, uses parentheses to separate the differ-

ent sentences, but he chooses basically the same division as Wilson. Gibbons leaves the first line together, and connects “For shame” to “I’ll make you quiet” – as later editors. Nevertheless, he does not separate the last line, which shows editorial inconsistency unless he interprets the whole line as addressed to Tybalt, which would be at least surprising.

The above speculations about the interpretation of Capulet’s lines may well seem complicated or even senseless, but when all these ideas are weighed and finally gathered in one edition, they can be useful for a director in the hands of whom the text suddenly comes to life.

2.6 *The first encounter between Romeo and Juliet (I.iv.206–223)*

This dialogue is competing with the balcony-scene for the title of the most famous part of *Romeo and Juliet*. The staging of this episode requires delicacy because of the sonnet form of its first fourteen lines. The poetic form reinforces the textual content, and creates a special atmosphere for the first encounter of the lovers. Consequently, it is always a challenge for directors to provide proper circumstances for this part. Once provided, a second challenge – both for directors and editors – is the placing of the one or two kisses traditionally inserted into the sonnet. There is no general agreement among editors about this since none of the quartos contains any directions at this point of the play. Williams argues in his “Staging Notes” that

Most editors who provide a direction for Romeo to kiss Juliet place the direction after l. 109 [‘Thus from my lips, by thine, my sin is purged’], but the direction should follow the close of the sonnet and not interrupt the quatrain. Line 109 refers as properly to an event completed as to one anticipated. It is not clear whether or not Shakespeare intended that there should be a second kiss. If the director includes one, it should come after ‘You kisse bith booke’ (not before as editors have it) so as to take advantage of the shock provided by the intrusion of the Nurse.

Apart from Williams, all the editors insert two kisses. Wilson and Evans, following Rowe (1709), place the first kiss after “Thus from my lips, by thine, my sin is purged” (l. 220) – neglecting the structure of the sonnet. Gibbons, Jowett and Levenson insert the first kiss after line 219 – following Williams. None of the editors follow Williams’s suggestion of the “shocking” placing of the second kiss after line 223; they all edit it after Romeo’s last sentence (“Give me my sin again”). Directors, on the other hand, sometimes do take advantage of Williams’s idea.

The lovers' first encounter, however, cannot be confined to two kisses. The rich imagery of their sonnet builds upon the religious symbolism of their hands. The text refers to Romeo's intention to take Juliet's hand earlier in lines 163–164: "The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand / And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand." When they meet, Romeo starts his speech as follows:

If I profane with my unwortheiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this,
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

This text poetically implies Romeo's taking Juliet's hand and kissing it. Presumably he takes her hand at the first line, and kisses it after the fourth, but this stage action is not indicated by all the editors. Wilson inserts, following Capell (1768), *takes Juliet's hand* before Romeo's first line, Evans edits *To Juliet* at the same place, and only Jowett inserts both: *to Juliet, touching her hand*. Yet, even in their editions it is not clear when he kisses her hand (probably after l. 209).

2.7 *The Nurse and Romeo (l.iv.224–231); the farewell (l.iv.232–240)*

The lovers are surprised by the Nurse who comes to call Juliet to her mother. After the Nurse's sentence: "Madam, your mother craves a word with you," the quartos have no directions. Jowett edits: *Juliet departs to her mother*, and Levenson employs a variation of Jowett's direction: *Juliet moves towards her mother*. This direction is necessary so that it makes sense why Romeo asks the Nurse about Juliet, and not the girl herself. It is not indicated in the editions whether after her words with Romeo the Nurse leaves him or not. In performance she usually does, since immediately after her lines Romeo starts speaking to himself, and their conversation does not start again because Benvolio is approaching.

Benvolio proposes that they should leave the party. Probably Mercutio joins them too, and this draws Capulet's attention to the gentlemen. He addresses them with the same hospitality as in the beginning of the ball. In Q2 after "We haue a trifling foolish banquet towards" Capulet continues: "Is it ene so?" (D1v). A link is obviously missing between these two sentences.

This link can be found in Q1: *They whisper in his eare* (C4r) – a detail that reveals something of the Elizabethan stage business. Most editors keep this direction in their Q2-based editions. Wilson rephrases it like this: *The masquers*

excuse themselves, whispering in his ear. Williams keeps the original Q1 stage direction as well as Gibbons, Evans and Jowett. Levenson edits *They signal to Capulet that they must leave.* She explains this alteration in the footnote giving staging information again:

Prompt books stage the moment variously: Benvolio, Mercutio, or the group whispers to Capulet; Mercutio or Benvolio mimes that the gentlemen wish to be excused; the masquers bow a negative; the guests murmur; Capulet's lines are cut and the guests simply depart. (Curiously, many prompt books give no annotations for staging of the polite rebuff, although most of them carefully orchestrate these exits.)

In line 238 Capulet asks for more torches apparently to provide light for the leaving guests. Nevertheless most productions do not finish this scene with "more torches." According to G. I. Duthie, who co-edited the 1955 edition with J. D. Wilson, the torches do arrive at stage. After line 238 he edits *Servants bring torches to escort the masquers out*, and explains in footnote that "The masquers' torches are burned out, or nearly so." Levenson inserts a stage direction before line 238: *To Serving-men.* In line 239 Capulet sighs "Ah, sirrah" again, which has been discussed earlier. Jowett believes that Capulet addresses these words *To his cousin.* Levenson notes that curiously Capulet "gives no further thought to the banquet" after the masquers left.

2.8 Juliet and the Nurse (l.iv.241–257)

In Chapter 2.6 we left Juliet somewhere at the back of the stage (or offstage according to some interpretations) with her mother. Now, as the guests start leaving, she presumably comes forward and calls the Nurse to ask the names of young Tiberio, young Petruccio, and finally Romeo. After line 247 ("Go, ask his name.") no stage direction stands in the quartos; the first and the second clause ("If he be married") of the line is separated by a comma. Williams modifies it to a colon. Wilson and Evans use a dash to indicate that the order and Juliet's aside do not belong together. Gibbons simply puts a full stop to the end of line 147. Levenson, following Jowett, inserts: *The Nurse goes and (returning)* at the beginning of the Nurse's speech (l. 249).

The Nurse is present at Juliet's second aside (ll. 251–254). She obviously does not understand her words that's why she asks "What's tis? What's tis?". This might require stage business: she either has to be a bit further from Juliet, or hard of hearing. Their conversation is interrupted by Lady Capulet's call.

Q2 contains the stage direction *One calls within Juliet* (D1r). Q1 does not have this direction, but the reason why they have to leave the stage is included in the Nurse's last sentence: "Come your mother staies for you, I le goe a long with you" (C4r). Later editors all retain the Q2 direction although the juxtaposition of the two quartos makes it obvious that it is Lady Capulet who calls Juliet offstage. Stage productions prove the same. After the Nurse's final sentence they *Exeunt*, and this is the end of scene I.iv.

3 Conclusion

It is an exciting and amusing task for the editor to ponder how a particular episode *could* be imagined on stage, but it is also a responsible task to decide on how it *should* be edited in the end. The most difficult and delicate part of the editor's job is to find a balance between remaining loyal to the original quartos and adding new directions for the better understanding of the text. On the one hand, providing too many instructions can be restrictive, on the other hand, the lack of stage directions can make the reading of the text cumbersome. From the comparative analysis of the ballroom-scene (I.iv) it is evident that the editing of a play entails fundamentally a theatrical perspective and not a literary one. Although philological and bibliographical research is essential to unearth the different literary and historical layers of the text, all these findings become irrelevant when it comes to the performing of a play – which is "the end to which they were created."²⁷

27. Wells, p. xxxix.