INTRODUCTION

Romance is a twilight zone in studies of late sixteenth-century literary genres in England. Half-way between the nostalgia of medieval chivalry and the enterprising spirit of early modern exploration, piracy and commerce as preludes to a future empire, it is both very old-fashioned and innovatively modern. Appearing in narrative as well as in dramatic forms, romance lays simultaneous claims to history and imagination, which were not necessarily in opposition in the period, and caters for a readership of servants and citizens while equally finding its way into Spenserian epic, Sidneyan pastoral or even late Shakespearian tragicomedy and Miltonian poetry. The three plays grouped in this volume are early modern attempts at conquering that twilight zone in a context of expanding contacts with Muslim lands around the Mediterranean.

ROMANCE AND CONQUEST IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

'The structural core of all fiction' for Northrop Frye, who sees it as a means to translate mythical archetypes into human experience,[1] romance is also 'a notoriously slippery category', as Barbara Fuchs warns.[2] The basic definition with which Helen Cooper starts her authoritative study of the genre is a primarily narrative fiction in the vernacular which appears from the twelfth century onward, characterised by exotic settings, distant in time and/or place, concerned with love and/or chivalry, and involving high-ranking individuals engaged in some ideal quest. It may include such recurrent patterns as encounters with the supernatural, obscured identities or miraculous conversions.[3] Patricia Parker's earlier deconstructionist approach complicates this definition by insisting on the proliferating digressions which form the structure of romance and defer its closure and collective coherence.[4] For Fuchs, this aspect is crucial to the definition of romance, as 'capaciousness and waywardness' are precisely what distinguishes it from 'the single-minded, collective purposefulness of epic'.[5] Adventure, fantasy and personal prowess thus appear to constitute the core of romance, which focuses on individual rather than collective self-fashioning and accomplishment.

Romance's expansiveness and maverick sense of heroism made it a particularly apt literary vehicle to express the ambitions and fantasies of the last decades of the sixteenth century, marked for England by both religious war and cross-cultural encounters achieved through privateering, commerce and early colonial undertakings. The war with Spain, and

especially the Armada crisis of 1587–88, which was perhaps the period's most crucial event for cementing an English national identity, largely translated into the chivalric revival studied by Arthur B. Ferguson and others.[6] Cutting across all strata of society, the trend is exemplified by a monument of courtly literature like Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1590 and 1596) as much as by more popular work like Richard Johnson's *The Seven Champions of Christendom* (part one 1596, part two 1597). Such works largely drew on romance materials, whether Arthurian or crusading in origin, but adapted them to the spirit of protestant patriotism characteristic of the time, with for example Philip II of Spain recognisable in the traits of the evil Sultan of Book 5 of *The Faerie Queene*.

Some critics have associated early modern romance with a discourse of imperial and colonial fantasy accompanying the New World enterprises of the likes of John Hawkins, Francis Drake and Walter Ralegh.[7] But for Benedict S. Robinson romance, as 'the preeminent literary form through which medieval Christendom had imagined its global contacts and conflicts',[8] was also an ideal instrument for encoding early modern England's concepts of religion, race, gender and nation in its contacts with Muslim lands around the Mediterranean. Medieval romances' fantasies of conquest over – or assimilation of – Saracens had already to a large extent accompanied and responded to the failure of the Crusades in various European literatures, taking imaginative possession of what could not be won or kept by military means. Taking the example of the ten metrical romances of the Carolingian tradition surviving in Middle English, Dorothee Metlitzki notes that three were concerned with Fierabras and four with Otinel, both of them Saracen heroes won over to the Christians' side and helping them triumph over their former coreligionists.[9] Overcoming the Saracens through the double means of chivalry and love was also central to the plot of the most popular Middle English romances, *Sir Bevis of Hampton* (c. 1300) and *The Sultan of Babylon* (fifteenth century). Through such stereotypical characters as the converted Saracen won over by the Christians' courtesy or chivalry, the Muslim princess falling in love with a Christian knight and turning her back on her people and faith, or the humbled sultan doubting the efficacy of his gods against the Christian forces, these romances explore other scenarios for conquest besides sheer military victory.[10] In keeping with the etymology of the word 'conquest' (to quest *with*), such plots explore not just the prospect of overcoming and submitting the Muslim others but also the alternative option of accommodating and assimilating them, with such self-questioning corollaries as intermarriages, shared inheritances and divided allegiances.

Such scenarios found a particular resonance in late sixteenth-century England, at a time when an excommunicated Elizabeth I was entertaining

diplomatic correspondence with the Ottoman Sultan Murad III and his wife Safiye, while commercial negotiations with the Turks were soon to lead to the foundation of the Levant Company (1592). Five Moroccan ships famously joined Essex's forces in his raid against Cadiz (1596),[11] while some years before the English recusant mercenary Captain Thomas Stukeley had taken part in the battle of Alcazar (1578) to support the deposed Moroccan ruler Abu Abdallah Muhammad II (the Muly Mahamet of George Peele's dramatised version of the same name).[12] Read against such a background of 'traffic and turning',[13] early modern romances of cross-cultural contacts with the Muslim East are at the heart of that 'space of negation, negotiation and confusion of identity' considered by Daniel Vitkus to be the resolutely non-Saidian marker of late sixteenth-century English literature's reflections on the boundaries of the Self and the Other.[14]

The category of stage romances holds a sometimes contested ground within the larger body of romances in the period. It is true that the term was not applied to plays at the time, and most of the plays now referred to as 'romances' were then simply called 'histories', as in *The History of the Two Valiant Knights, Sir Clyomon of the Golden Shield, Son to the King of Denmark, and Clamydes the White Knight, Son to the King of Suavia*, which is the original title for *Clyomon and Clamydes* in its first printed edition by Thomas Creede in 1599. Even today, Cyrus Mulready remarks, the category of stage romances prior to Shakespeare's late plays remains understudied by critics,[15] while Shakespeare's own so-called 'romances' received that questionable categorisation only in 1875, in Edward Dowden's *Shakspere: A Critical Study of His Mind and Art*. Critical interest in Shakespeare has tended to obscure the centrality and popularity of stage romances for earlier audiences, as well as the fact that many narrative romances found their way to the stage with the rise of commercial theatre in London after the 1570s.[16] *Clyomon and Clamydes*, *Common Conditions* and *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune* may be the only survivors of a much larger group of romantic plays from the 1570–85 period, but, if titles of lost plays are to be accepted as indicative of their contents, Betty J. Littleton surmises that at least 23 out of a body of 63 plays produced during that period were romances.[17] Insisting on the influence and legacy of Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* (part one 1587, part two 1588) for the theatre of the time, Peter Berek notes that 'of the 38 extant plays for the public theatre first performed in England between 1587 and 1593, ten show clear debts to *Tamburlaine*'.[18] The importance of that ground-breaking play cannot be overestimated, yet we need to remember that, despite its undeniable innovations and many iconoclastic statements, that work too owes much to the romance

tradition, with its episodic structure, raging sultan, abducted and enamoured princess, vast and fabulous geography, and mixture of historical and legendary figures.

The title-page of the 1590 edition of the two parts of *Tamburlaine* calls them 'tragicall discourses'. Such generic hesitation, or rather syncretism, was not an exception at the time. As noted above, plays involving romance material often appeared under the title of 'histories', as is the case with Robert Greene's *The History of Orlando Furioso* (1592), itself based on an epic poem by Ludovico Ariosto (1532). Many writers of prose romances like Greene or Thomas Lodge were also playwrights, and adaptations of the same material to various literary forms were most frequent, as is exemplified by the lost ballad of 1592 and the lost play of 1593 based on the famous fifteenth-century romance of *Guy of Warwick*, or the anonymous play *Tom a Lincoln*, based on Richard Johnson's prose romance of the same name (part one 1599, part two 1607). Vitkus's 'space of negation, negotiation and confusion of identity' thus turns out to be as much open to the form and structure of dramatic romances of conquest as it is to their subject matter.

The three plays grouped in this volume all find their place and significance within the extended family of early modern stage romances of conquest over a Muslim East. Probably written just before the Armada, Robert Greene's *The Comical History of Alphonsus, King of Aragon* (c. 1587) can still afford to stage a Spanish hero, albeit an invented one, who in true fashion of the Christian heroes of Saracen romances transforms his military conquest over the Turks into an act of assimilation by marrying the Ottoman sultan's daughter and inheriting his realm. The post-Armada *Tragedy of Soliman and Perseda* (c. 1589), attributable to Thomas Kyd, goes one step further in embracing what Helen Moore recalls as the *historia fingida* (feigned history) trend of many sixteenth-century romances,[19] by revisiting Soliman the Magnificent's historical defeat of the Knights of Rhodes in 1522 and transforming it into the symbolic victory of a fictional Christian woman defending her island and humbling and conquering the Sultan in both love and death. Finally, Thomas Heywood's *The Four Prentices of London* (c. 1594) makes the fantasy of reconquest a homely and popular one, through the *tour de force* of transforming medieval crusading heroes' successes in the Holy Land into contemporary English ones by proxy, by providing them with a background story of apprenticeship in London.

True to the tradition of romance, these plays do not just record 'conquests' in war and love, but more intriguingly 'quest with' the Other in exploring a variety of options for crossing over the religious and national boundaries of the Self. Some of these crossings involve renegades, such

as Belinus, the treacherous king of Naples in *Alphonsus*, who defects to his 'cousin' in kingship, the Great Turk Amurath, preferring his land before his faith. But the scenario of renegadism is made rather more complex for Erastus, the defecting knight of Rhodes in *Soliman and Perseda*. He treads the path of treason only half-way, becoming the Sultan's favourite companion, but keeping his Christian faith and refusing to fight either for or against his homeland. The ethical and spiritual failure of the hero in his untenable choice of neutrality is made explicit through his caricature double in the same play, the braggart Basilisco, whose cutting of the bonds of allegiance to his homeland and faith is materialised in the comic cutting of 'a collop of his tenderest member'. *The Four Prentices of London* offers no such instance of defecting to the Muslim enemy, but experiments with virtually all possible combinations for inter-Christian fights between the various crusading parties from all over Europe before their final union in Jerusalem.

As Robinson reminds us, romance was from its very beginnings in crusading Europe 'a transnational form', a dream of unity in a common quest as well as a cultural inheritance which belonged to no nation in particular and which widely circulated and adapted itself to local traditions along the way.[20] Something of that transcultural background remains in all three plays, with the Great Turk in *Alphonsus* wedded to the queen of the Amazons, advised by the sorceress Medea, and siring a daughter whose very name, Iphigina, recuperates her and her family culturally by revisiting the classical model of the Trojan war. Likewise, notes Jane Hwang Dagenhardt, the plot of *Soliman and Perseda* starts with an international jousting competition in Rhodes which 'invokes the medieval fantasy of a chivalric code that transcends religious and national differences'.[21] As for *The Four Prentices of London*, its action-launching shipwreck separating the brothers results in drawing half a dozen European nations into a common crusading enterprise. If the contract for a play called *The Comical History of Alphonsus* can only be a happy ending and success in the formation of an empire, while *The Tragedy of Soliman and Perseda* announces the failure of the same endeavour from its very title, both plays show in their many reversals of plots how much the process of building a common power and a shared identity can be messy and hazardous, a trait which is shared by the amateurism of the apprentice-crusaders of *The Four Prentices of London*.

If the romance ideal of the absorption of the Muslim adversary prevails in *Alphonsus*, the other two plays also explore the limits of that model by insisting on what ultimately remains unassimilable in the Other, despite the courage and chivalry of which he can at times be capable. *Soliman and Perseda* in particular makes this point clear through the asides given

to the Turkish champion Brusor in the opening tournament, revealing immediately that, despite his tiltyard bravery, his intentions are treacherous, as he has joined the occasion merely to spy on the Christians and prepare the invasion of Rhodes. Likewise, Soliman in the same play may at times display chivalry and magnanimity in his contacts with Erastus and Perseda, but his character as cruel oriental tyrant is predetermined, with his ordering the murder of his own brother in true Ottoman dynastic fashion in the very first scene in which he appears. Through such revisitings of the romance model, our plays position themselves vis-à-vis a long tradition of romance, while questioning the validity and limits of its idealistic resolutions of difference for their own time.

Alex Davis goes further in this direction by insisting on the fact that, despite romance's overall assimilative drive, the genre is also concerned in its early modern iterations with justifying rank and lineage while apparently forwarding valour as the main source of distinction and social advancement.[22] Indeed, the recurrent trope of the hero in disguise or the young nobleman cut off from his inheritance and who regains it by becoming a famous knight is revisited in many forms in our three plays, opening up additional possibilities for exploring the limits of individually achieved heroisms and collectively received identities before a normative scene of recognition overcomes apparent contradictions and resolves the plot. Both *Alphonsus* and *The Four Prentices* experiment with this pattern. This happens early in Greene's play for the rightful heir to the throne of Aragon who learns about his true pedigree from his long-deposed father, while Heywood's disguised aristocrats triumph throughout in their wars both as London apprentices and as true heirs to the deposed earl of Boulogne. Valour and lineage thus ultimately coincide for all these heroes, despite an outward illusion of social promotion for simple folks. In that respect too, the romance model shows the limits of its imaginative resolutions, as the iconoclastic, Tamburlanian schema of promotion through individual valour for supposedly low-born heroes is revealed to be a short-lived illusion in our plays.

The same normative romance resolution is imposed on the female cross-dressers of all three plays, after they have offered ample opportunity for exploring the boundaries of self-definition through gender confusions, and also after they have pushed the heroes dangerously close to harrowing prospects such as fratricide and incest in the extreme case of the four prentices' disguised sister Bella Franca. If Iphigina and Perseda turn the tables on their victors and overcome them, this is ultimately done through feminine charms for both, added to a poisonous kiss in Perseda's case. But be it in a wedding (Iphigina in *Alphonsus*, the French princess in *The Four Prentices*) or in death (Perseda in *Soliman and Perseda*), all female

protagonists in our plays finally regain their full feminine status after a more or less long experimentation with cross-dressing, and they end up united in life or in death to the Christian heroes of the plays. If exogamous desire, a staple of romance plots, has been amply explored in the case of these cultural and sexual go-betweens, the endings of all three plays impose *in extremis* a normative discourse of male domination over that of wayward female sexuality.

A genre of contest and conquest in its tropes, themes and characterisation, romance is also a genre reaching wide to conquer terrain over other genres and assimilating them in its ever expanding scope. It is significant in this respect that all three plays should come complete with a self-reflexive paratext elaborating on their generic indeterminacy, or rather inclusiveness. Offering a blend from its very title, *The Comical History of Alphonsus* punctuates its action with choruses resulting from the alliance of Venus the goddess of love and Calliope the Muse of heroic poetry defending the plot and its hero's fame against the rest of the Muses. A similarly disputatious induction and choruses in *Soliman and Perseda* oppose the principles of Love, Fortune and Death, standing for the contending options of romantic comedy, heroic romance and love tragedy. Death gets the last word on this occasion, but its final tribute to 'sacred Cynthia' and her friend escaping its power suggests that other options remain open to similar plots. The same contention appears to oppose the three prologues of *The Four Prentices*, one pale like death, a second holding an old history book as the authority behind its material and a third willing to excuse the play's shortcomings in the benevolent fashion of comedy. This time they unite in an overall logic of incorporation characteristic of romance. Engaged in an endless pattern of repetitions with a twist, revisiting expected scenarios to envisage subversive developments before an obligatory normative ending, this play, like our other two romances of conquest in this volume, paradoxically articulates both the nostalgia of tradition and the entrepreneurism of innovation.

THE PLAYS

Alphonsus, King of Aragon

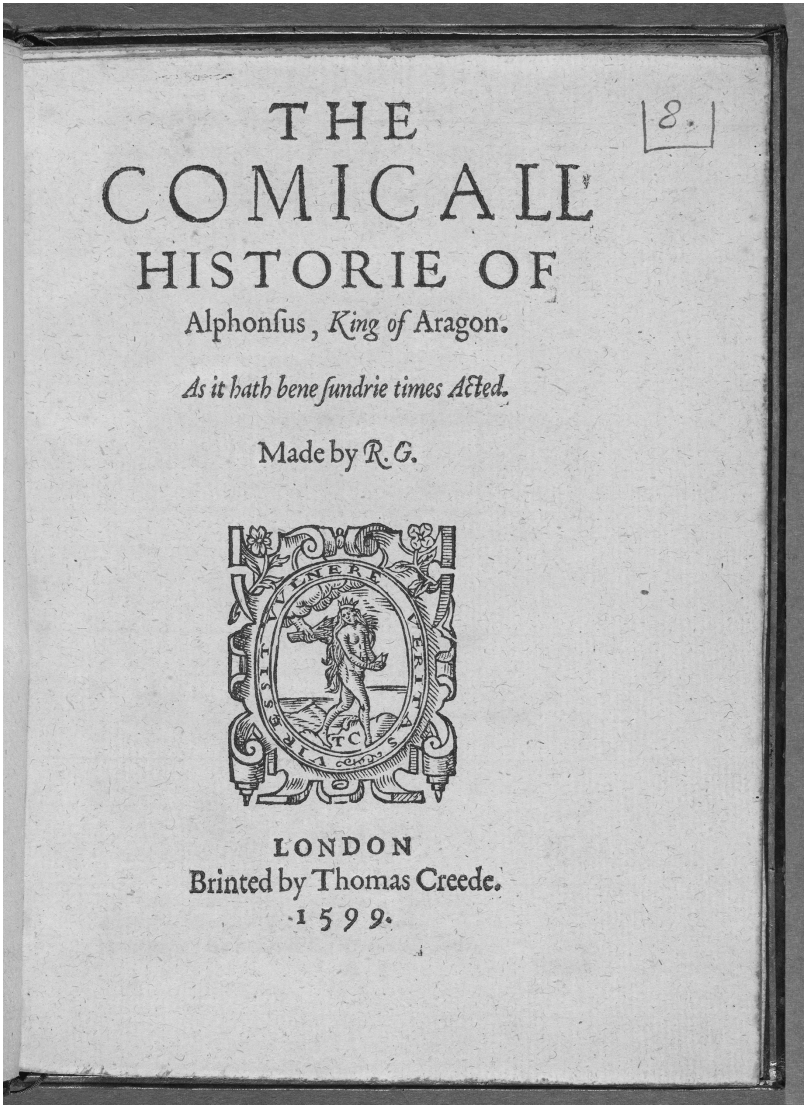
Authorship, date, staging

The Stationers' Register makes no mention of *Alphonsus, King of Aragon*. The play's first known edition is the quarto printed by Thomas Creede in 1599, of which three copies are extant. Nothing is known for certain of the play's staging history, apart from the assertion on Creede's title-page that the play 'hath bene sundrie times Acted'. However, G.M. Pinciss believed that the play may have been in the repertory of the Queen's Men

formed in 1583, on the grounds that 'no acted play entered or printed by Creede before 1600 is claimed on its title page for any company other than the Queen's, and only four plays attributed to this company were not published by him'.[23] Recent scholarship has agreed with this view, with Creede's role being more and more acknowledged as 'a major conduit by which Queen's plays came into print'.[24] The title-page attributes the play to 'R.G.', traditionally identified as Robert Greene,[25] who is known to have written *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* for the Queen's Men, and whose *Gwydonius: The Carde of Fancie* and *Mamillia*, both printed in 1593, had been the first books bearing Creede's imprint.[26] Otherwise *Alphonsus* is not known for certain to have been performed after the reign of Elizabeth. Martin Wiggins mentions a *Tragicomoedia von einem König in Arragona* performed by an English company at the Court of Saxony in Dresden in 1626, but believes Jacob Ayrer's *Comedia von der Schönen Phaenicia*, printed in 1618 and also featuring a king of Aragon, is a likelier candidate for that performance.[27]

Alone among the play's editors, John Churton Collins believed that it must have been composed in 1591, after the publication of Spenser's *Complaints*, to which the prologue in *Alphonsus* bears some similarity.[28] But, as Collins himself acknowledged, manuscripts of Spenser's poems were circulating for some years prior to their publication, so that this argument is far from being conclusive. *Alphonsus* is more likely to have been composed in the wake of the success of Marlowe's *1 Tamburlaine* (c. 1587), which Greene's play imitates rather heavy-handedly. Furthermore, the laboured quality of Greene's blank verse, obtained at the cost of such licence as the persistent use of 'for' before verbal infinitives, archaically lengthened forms (e.g. 'becomen' for 'become', 'whereas' and 'whenas' for 'where' and 'when') and numerous inversions, has led most critics to regard *Alphonsus* as Greene's first theatrical attempt.[29] Similarly contrived end-stopped iambic pentameters are common in the verse sections of Greene's other works published around the same time. Such is the case with 'The description of Siluestros ladie' and 'Lacenas Riddle' in *The Second Part of the Tritameron of Love* (1587).[30]

Greene's dedication 'To the Gentlemen readers' in his *Perimedes the Blacke-Smith* (1588) includes a response to a recent incident involving 'two Gentlemen Poets', who 'had it in derision, for that I could not make my verses iet vpon the stage in tragicall buskins, euerie worde filling the mouth like the faburden of Bo-Bell, daring God out of heauen with that Atheist *Tamburlan*'.[31] This passage is commonly read as a testimony of the cold reception which Greene's awkward imitation of Marlowe's style must have received from fellow University Wits, entailing his temporary retreat from the stage.[32]



1 Title-page of *The Comicall Historie of Alphonsus, King of Aragon* (1599)

An early date of composition, around 1587, would equally agree with the suggestion that George Peele could be alluding to *Alphonsus* in his occasional poem entitled *A Farewell to Sir John Norris and Sir Francis Drake* (1589), in which he indirectly mentions several recently staged plays: 'Bid theatres and proud tragedians, / Bid Mahomet's Pow, and mighty Tamburlaine, / King Charlemagne, Tom Stukeley, and the rest, / Adieu. To arms, to arms, to glorious arms!'[33] As W.W. Greg among others suggests, if 'Mahomet's Pow' (or 'Mahomet's Poo' in the original 1589 edition) is to be understood as 'Mahomet's poll', meaning his head, Peele may be referring to Mahomet's brazen head which appears in *Alphonsus*, 4.1. This could be the same as the 'owld Mahemetes head' listed by Philip Henslowe in his inventory of the properties belonging to the Admiral's Men in 1598.[34] But, Chambers notes, Peele's reference may be to his own lost play of *The Turkish Mahomet and Hiren the Fair Greek*.[35] Sanders rightly objects that the latter play is unlikely to have required the use of a 'Mahomet's head'.[36] Agreeing with both, I believe 'Mahomet's Poo' may simply be a metrical licence or a typesetter's mistake on Mahomet's 'power' or 'pow'r', which would be balanced by the reference to 'mighty Tamburlaine' in the same line. 'Mahomet's pow'r' is certainly less sensational than 'Mahomet's poll', but it is more plausible in context. This reading would make the Peele quotation refer either to *Alphonsus* or to Andrew Gurr's candidate for the *Mahomet* play, *The Battle of Alcazar* (attributed to Peele), in which the central character is the Moor Muly Mahamet.[37]

Starting in 1591, Henslowe's *Diary* provides no record of earlier stagings of *Alphonsus*. But it mentions the revival by the Admiral's Men of a *Mahomet* play, bought from Edward Alleyn. According to Pinciss, this and other Alleyn plays may have been acquired from Strange's Men (in whose repertory a large number of Queen's plays appeared in the early 1590s), when Alleyn worked for that company in 1592.[38] Henslowe's *Mahomet* play was staged several times between 14 August 1594 and 5 February 1595, and again in August 1601.[39] This play could be Greene's *Alphonsus*, but again it could equally be Peele's *Mahomet and Hiren*, *The Battle of Alcazar* or even some other play now lost. Indeed, as Greg rightly remarks, since Mahomet's brazen head merely appears in one scene in *Alphonsus*, the likelihood of having *Mahomet* as an alternative title for Greene's play is not very strong.[40] The 'owld Mahemetes head' of the 1598 inventory is more likely to refer to the brazen head used in *Alphonsus* and, as Jenny Sager argues, capitalised on by the company through its reuse in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (c. 1589), another play by Greene.[41] In all cases, the possibility of revivals by the Admiral's Men in

the second half of the 1590s would agree with the 'sundrie times Acted' of the 1599 title-page.

As may be conjectured from the printed text, *Alphonsus* could be performed by a company of twelve actors for its most crowded scene (5.2), with a few extras for the non-speaking parts. The actors playing the female parts of Venus and the speaking Muses could double as Fausta, Iphigina and Medea. We may further postulate that, since the Duke of Milan surprisingly never appears on the stage at the same time as his confederates Belinus and Amurack, the actor holding that part may also double as either of Alphonsus's two chief adversaries.

The epilogue in *Alphonsus* promises a second part to the play, possibly in imitation of a similar project for *Tamburlaine*. But whether such a second part was ever staged or even composed remains at present subject to doubt. In his edition of *Selimus*, Alexander Grosart makes a rather weak case for that other Turk play being the promised second part of *Alphonsus*.[42] This seems unlikely, for not only do the characters and incidents of *Alphonsus* appear nowhere in *Selimus* but the latter play itself claims to be the first of two parts of *The Tragicall raigne of Selimus*, according to its epilogue and the title-page of its 1594 quarto edition, by the same Thomas Creede who was to print *Alphonsus* five years later.[43]

Sources

The characters and incidents in *Alphonsus* are not directly inspired by any genuine historical figures or events, but result from a series of conflations. Greene's protagonist may be loosely modeled on Alfonso V of Aragon (1396–1458), who was named heir to the kingdom of Naples by Joanna II, before she changed her mind and chose instead René of Anjou, second son of Louis II of France, forcing Alfonso to invade Naples in order to reassert his claim to the crown. But although he was a supporter of the Albanian rebel Scanderbeg in the latter's wars against the Turks, Alfonso V defeated no Turkish sultan and married no Turkish princess. Greene may have conflated this figure with that of Alfonso I of Aragon, nicknamed 'the Battler' (fl. 1104–34). The latter lived long before the Ottoman empire was founded by Osman I at the end of the thirteenth century and had no connection with Italy, but he was famous for his many victories over Muslim armies in Andalusia.[44]

Among the sources for the life of Alfonso V which may have been available to Greene, although not in English, Collins mentions Bartolomeo Facio's *De Rebus Gestis ab Alphonso Primo Neapolitanorum Rege Commentariorum Libri Decem* (1560 and 1563) and Albertus Timannus's *De Alfonso Rege Aragonum … Oratio* (1573).[45] Sanders adds a

third possible source to this list, Vespasiano da Bisticci's fifteenth-century *Vite di Uomini Illustri*, not published until 1839, although it may have circulated in manuscript form.[46] Yet, as both editors acknowledge, even if Greene had access to those works, he kept nothing from them beyond his protagonist's name and a connection with Naples and Milan.

The hero's adversary, the Ottoman Sultan Amurack, may likewise have been named after at least two historical figures: Murad II (reg. 1420–44 and 1446–51), a contemporary of Alfonso V, and Murad III (reg. 1574–95), who ruled the empire at the time when Greene's play was composed. Murad III in particular was commonly referred to as 'Amurack' or 'Amurath' in contemporary accounts, such as Francis Billerbeg's *Most Rare and Straunge Discourses, of Amurathe the Turkish Emperor*, translated into English in 1584.[47] The name was frequently given to Turkish princes or sultans in contemporary plays, as in *Soliman and Perseda*, in which Amurath is one of Sultan Soliman's brothers, or *John of Bordeaux*, in which Ameroth is the sultan who loses his crown, robe and scimitar to English Bacon's magic tricks.

But more than any historical source, Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* is commonly acknowledgd as the chief model for Greene's play. As early as 1878, Nicholas Storojenko recognised that 'from the *dramatis personae* and situations down to the very blank verse, everything in Greene's *Alphonsus* bears the unmistakable sign of being imitated from Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*'.[48] Indeed, like Marlowe's overreaching hero, Alphonsus rises from poverty to vanquish many mighty monarchs, chief among whom is the Turkish Sultan. Like Tamburlaine, he captures his enemy's daughter and persuades her to marry him. Both heroes are accompanied by three faithful lieutenants (Techelles, Usumcasane and Theridamas in Tamburlaine's case, and Lælius, Miles and Albinius in Alphonsus's), whom they crown as their tributary kings. Similarly, in both plays the Turkish Sultan is followed by his tributary kings (the kings of Fez, Morocco and Argier in *Tamburlaine*, and Claramount of Barbary, Arcastus of the Moors, Faustus of Babylon and Crocon of Arabia in *Alphonsus*), who lose their crowns and heads in spectacular manner to the hero and his lieutenants. In both cases, the Turk's fall provides an occasion for imprecations against Mahomet, the false god who has abandoned him (*1 Tamburlaine*, 3.3.269–71, *Alphonsus*, 3.2.129–34).[49] Verbal echoes are equally numerous between the two plays, exemplified by a few samples:

> *Tamburlaine*. I hold the Fates bound fast in iron chains
> And with my hand turn Fortune's wheel about.
> (*1 Tamburlaine*, 1.2.174–5)

Alphonsus. I clap up Fortune in a cage of gold,
To make her turn her wheel as I think best.
(*Alphonsus*, 4.3.129–30)

Tamburlaine. Our quivering lances shaking in the air.
(*1 Tamburlaine*, 2.3.18)

Iphigina. And make their spears to shiver in the air.
(*Alphonsus*, 5.2.26)

Tamburlaine. The host of Xerxes, which by fame is said
To drink the mighty Parthian Araris,
Was but a handful to that we will have.
(*1 Tamburlaine*, 2.3.15–17)

Amurack. So, sir, I hear you, but can scarce believe
That Mahomet would charge them go before
Against Alphonsus with so small a troop,
Whose number far exceeds King Xerxes' troop.
(*Alphonsus*, 4.3.17–20)

Alphonsus shares with *Tamburlaine* its abundant recourse to classical allusions, endless lists of polysyllabic place names and titles, and frequent hyperbolic assertions. There is even a direct allusion to the figure of Tamburlaine, defined by his Homeric epithet 'mighty' in one of Amurack's speeches to his soldiers, in which he mocks and belittles Alphonsus and the Aragonian forces by comparing them to that acknowledged standard: 'remember with yourselves / What foes we have: not mighty Tamburlaine, / Nor soldiers trainèd up amongst the wars' (*Alphonsus*, 4.3.91–3).

But to imitate is of course not to equal. Judging by Greene's bitter words in his address 'To the Gentlemen readers' in *Perimedes the Blacke-Smith*, his attempt at out-Tamburlaining *Tamburlaine*'s style and incidents was not well received by his contemporaries. As for the position of modern critics on Greene's close imitation of *Tamburlaine*, it is perhaps best represented by Irving Ribner's uncharitable summary: 'Marlovian in rhetoric but not in genius'.[50]

Like the other members of the family of Turk and/or Moor plays humorously nicknamed '*Tamburlaine*'s weak sons' by Peter Berek,[51] *Alphonsus* attempts to turn Tamburlanian heroic posture and bombast into an entertaining, marketable formula in its own right, without integrating its predecessor's complex moral substance. By doing so, Berek contends, such works as *Alphonsus*, *The Battle of Alcazar*, *Soliman and Perseda*, *John of Bordeaux* and *Selimus*, all written within five years of *Tamburlaine*'s first staging and following on the heels of either its original production or its revivals,[52] are not so much imitations as interpretations of Marlowe's original along the normative lines of romance.

Conquering the generic margin

Looking at *Alphonsus* through the lens of romance, we realise that many of the dramaturgical shortcomings commonly attributed to the play by modern critics actually correspond to key components of that genre, and by the same token denote the necessary influence of Greene the romance writer over the work of Greene the tyro playwright. Chief among the criticisms against Greene's play as extensively listed and detailed by Werner Senn are its lack of character consistency, shifting motivation and the killing of suspense,[53] all three of which are in fact in keeping with the aforementioned 'capaciousness and waywardness' retained by Fuchs as the essential characteristics of romance.[54] As an example of character inconsistency, Senn cites old Carinus's revenge taken on the Duke of Milan in 4.2, while the character had earlier been portrayed as a stoic pacifist in 1.1. Carinus's motivations appear to Senn as fitful as those of Alphonsus himself, whose revenge against the usurper Flaminius is complete as early as the beginning of 2.1, necessitating the introduction of Tamburlanian ambition as a new driving force for the hero and his plot. As for suspense, Senn considers that it is clumsily and systematically smothered in the choruses and the conjuring scene (3.2), which all anticipate future events by establishing them as inevitable. While all these elements are obviously weaknesses by the standards of *Tamburlaine* with which we are now more familiar, they find their justification in the context of romance, which is focused primarily not on realism and individual emotion but on set situations and spectacle.

Retaining mostly the external qualities of *Tamburlaine*, such as its sensationalism and rhetoric of heroic bombast, but replacing its subversive ideology with the normative heritage of romance, *Alphonsus* and the other 'sons of *Tamburlaine*' do not so much imitate an original as dispute the philosophy of history upheld by Marlowe's unorthodox hero, the 'Atheist *Tamburlan*' of Greene's preface to *Perimedes*. To take but one example, if both Tamburlaine and Alphonsus undergo a from-rags-to-riches conversion, Greene takes pains to make it clear from the beginning that his hero is no genuine outsider or upstart, but the son of a deposed king stereotypically setting out to reclaim honours and possessions which are due to him by reason of his birthright. It follows that, contrary to what happens in such seditious episodes as the defection of the Persian general Theridamas to the Scythians early in *1 Tamburlaine*, his Greenian counterpart Albinius, the Aragonian general of Belinus's army, is not won over by eloquent promises of glory and riches made by Alphonsus, but submits to him in the name of his older knightly oath to his rightful sovereign (1.1.78–99). Triumphant in their superlative military and rhetorical skills, Tamburlaine and Alphonsus boast in nearly identical lines

about their ability to make Fortune turn her wheel at their command (*1 Tamburlaine*, 1.2.174–5, *Alphonsus*, 4.3.129–30, both quoted above). Yet, it is worth noticing that in Alphonsus's case, such a boast is clearly presented as an exercise in verbal virtuosity, rather than a Tamburlainian ideological posturing. Indeed, Venus's opening Prologue, immediately introducing Alphonsus as the minion of gods rather than their challenger ('that man of Jove his seed', 1.Prol.21–5), as well as her other choric interventions are there to make it clear that Providence and Fortune, rather than Alphonsus's individual prowess alone, are to be credited for his triumph over the Great Turk ('at the length, so God and Fates decreed, / Alphonsus was the victor of the field', 5.Prol.15–16). In that sense, framing devices such as the choruses, the conjuring scene, the sorceress Medea's anticipations and the other characters' reactions to them, are not solely attributable to the play's weak dramaturgy and smothering of suspense, but primarily serve to moralise the plot and signpost its development as both inevitable and just:

> *Medea.* In vain it is to strive against the stream;
> Fates must be followed, and the gods' decree
> Must needs take place in every kind of cause.
> (3.2.315–17)
>
> *Fausta.* Iphigina, she sayeth nought but truth:
> Fates must be followed in their just decrees.
> (3.2.341–2)
>
> *Iphigina.* Since Fausta wills, and Fates do so command,
> Iphigina will never it withstand.
> (3.2.346–7)

The explanatory framework of romance imposed on the Tamburlainian material of Greene's play thus results in an ideological positioning which consists in accepting destiny, rather than challenging it.

The framing devices used in *Alphonsus* also allow it to incorporate generic contradiction, which G.K. Hunter sees as the distinctive mark of what he calls 'Greenian comedy', a group of plays written in the late 1580s and early 1590s and attributed or attributable to Greene, including among others *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, *James IV* and *John of Bordeaux*.[55] All these plays are heroic romances hovering between the genres of history and comedy, as stated in the full title of *James IV* in Thomas Creede's edition of 1598: *The Scottish Historie of James IV, Slaine at Flodden. Entermixed with a Pleasant Comedie, Presented by Oboram King of Fayeries*. Like that play, *Alphonsus* is claimed to be a 'comicall historie' on its title-page, and the alliance of Venus the goddess of love and Calliope the Muse of heroic poetry in the opening Prologue serves to

dramatise the play's promised generic mix. Despite the foregrounding of war as the main component of the play's plot, Venus's recurrent interventions serve again the purpose of orienting audience response, by reminding us of the play's original 'contract' as a romantic comedy in which the ultimate victor is expected to be not an overreaching hero but all-conquering Love.

Assuming that the stage directions in the printed text of *Alphonsus* are authorial, modern scholars such as Kirk Melnikoff have commented on the play's mixture of narrative and theatrical stage directions as a further proof of Greene's lack of experience as a playwright and his 'tenuous familiarity' with the conventions of the professional theatre of the late 1580s,[56] in which, according to Linda McJannet, narrative stage directions survived only in vestigial form.[57] Yet, the use of an old-fashioned theatrical vocabulary finds its meaning in the context of the play's overall generic self-consciousness and helps link it to the surviving examples of older dramatic romances printed in the same years, such as *Clyomon and Clamydes* (1599).

In this respect, both Melnikoff and Alan Dessen cite the prevalence of stage directions starting with 'let' in *Alphonsus* as an example of Greene's outdated theatrical vocabulary.[58] Such is the case with the opening '*let* VENUS *be let down from the top of the stage*', which recalls the stage direction at the start of Scene 8 in *Clyomon and Clamydes*: '*Here let them make a noyse as though they were Mariners*' (ll. 718–19).[59] We may add that if *Alphonsus* is claimed for a Queen's Men's play, and if its manuscript was not authorial, but prepared for the printing house by the same person who prepared the printed text of *Clyomon and Clamydes*, then the old-fashioned 'let' of *Alphonsus* further connects it with that specific play in the company's repertory as stated on its 1599 title-page. The same could be said of the permissive stage direction in the epilogue of *Alphonsus*, '*Exit* VENUS*, or if you can conveniently, let a chair come down from the top of the stage and draw her up*' (Epilogue.21.SD), which recalls an equally permissive stage direction at the start of Scene 4 in *Clyomon and Clamydes*: '*Enter King* Alexander the Great*, as valiantly set forth as may be*' (l. 358). Venus's descent at the start of *Alphonsus* and her ascent at the end of the play also possibly echo the same device involving the allegorical figure of Providence in Scene 18 of *Clyomon and Clamydes* (SD ll. 1549 and 1565).

So, more than solely indicating theatrical illiteracy or lack of experience on the part of a novice playwright copying older plays, I believe that the many non-dramatic characteristics and archaisms of *Alphonsus* rather serve the purpose of generic positioning along the normative lines of romance conventions, either by the author or by the people involved in

the printing of his play. This generic choice also has a determining role in the portrayal of Islam and the Turks as one of the major attractions of the play.

Opening the cultural margin[60]

According to Senn's computation, the character of Alphonsus has an overall share of about twenty per cent of the lines in the play bearing his name, compared to Tamburlaine's thirty per cent in Marlowe's play.[61] And it is not just the number of his lines but also their distribution in the play which makes Alphonsus a much less dominating presence in the action than his Marlovian model. The character is absent from the stage for a long central section from 3.2 to 4.3, and when he comes back, late into the final scene of Act 4, he speaks a total of only twenty-five lines before the end of the act. In his absence, the stage has been most spectacularly filled by the Great Turk Amurack, shown with his court, tributary kings and janissaries, his Amazonian wife and marriageable daughter, the sorceress Medea conjuring for them, Mahomet's temple and his misleading prophecy determining the future course of action for all. Except for the desolate no-man's-land of 4.2 in which Carinus finds and kills his old enemy the Duke of Milan, all these scenes appear to take place in Turkish territory which, despite the Aragonian promise of the play's title, becomes its main locale and centre of attention.

One of the features which strike us most when looking at these Turkish scenes in *Alphonsus* is the abundance of the classical and mythological references which they contain. The recourse to Greek and Latin mythological frames of reference is of course a recurrent characteristic of the plays composed by the University Wits, regardless of their subject matter, and Greene, who particularly boasted of his background as 'master of arts in both universities' on the title-pages of many of his published works, could not be expected to be sparing in his use of classical allusions. But it is worth noticing that, in *Alphonsus*, many of the classical references used by or about the Turks recall the Homeric background of the Trojan War, as if the plot was to a certain extent a variation on (or re-enactment of) that archetypal confrontation between Europe and Asia. Trojan references in the play notably include the conjuring of Calchas (3.2.84ff), the soothsayer whose prophesy at the start of Homer's *Iliad* entailed the sacrifice of Agamemnon's daughter Iphigenia, to whom the name and circumstances of Amurack's daughter are somewhat similar, even though Iphigina is not the invader's but the conquered enemy's daughter, and in her case the 'sacrifice' is of her virginity to the victorious enemy rather than her death. Further in the play, the intervention of the Amazonian queen Fausta and her armies in support of the Turks (5.1 and 5.2) can

be seen as reminiscent of Penthesilea's intervention and defeat on the Trojans' side in Homer's epic. Finally, when the Turks are overcome and Amurack has to acknowledge his defeat, he submits himself to Alphonsus by wishing him to 'live King Nestor's years' (5.2.329), a reference to the oldest of the Greek victors of Troy.

As far as I am aware, none of *Alphonsus*'s editors has tried to find an explanation for these persistent Trojan allusions. Collins dismisses their overall effect as 'a phantasmagorical medley',[62] while Storojenko finds fault with the play's 'strange conglomeration of epochs'.[63] But I believe these allusions serve, not just to classicise but also to a certain extent to familiarise the Turks by recalling the legend of their Trojan origin. This was a minority view still held by at least one Renaissance author against the dominant theory of the Turks' more threatening 'obscure and base' origin in Scythia or further east, which is better known to the readers of Richard Knolles's *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603).[64] According to Terence Spencer, besides the fact that from the late thirteenth century the Turks occupied a geographical space formerly inhabited by the Trojans, the confusion between the two nations may have had its origin in the similarity of the terms *Teucri*, used by Virgil to refer to the Trojans, and *Turci*, which is the Latin word for 'Turks'. An early example of this conflation quoted by Spencer is Isidore of Kiev's account of the siege of Constantinople (1453), which contains a description of Mahomet II as 'Teucrorum princeps et dominus' ('prince and chief of the Trojans').[65] Following the rise and decline of this legend in fifteenth-century European thinking, James G. Harper believes that, for a time, it may have served both the purpose of dignifying the new victors with a noble origin, and of making them less terrifying by suggesting that, once the Turks had fulfilled their destiny as the descendants of the Trojans, they might settle down.[66] By the end of the sixteenth century, the hope had of course long vanished, but vestiges of this alternative myth of origins are still visible in some Elizabethan works. In this respect, it is worth noticing that, besides accounting for the Trojan connections of the Turks in *Alphonsus*, the legend may also explain a number of similarly neglected allusions in the drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. One may think, for example, of Pistol's 'Base Phrygian Turks!' in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1.3.83),[67] which many editors either acknowledge for 'one of the "Phrygian mysteries"'[68] or rather uninformatively gloss as 'a term of abuse'.[69]

The classicised and romanticised Turks of *Alphonsus* convey very little of the fear which accompanies the portrayals of the 'present terror[s] of the world' in contemporary accounts of wars on the fringes of Europe.

At the most, Calchas's surplice and cardinal's mitre as his ghost is conjured at the court of the Great Turk (3.2.91SD) may briefly evoke Luther's assimilation of the Pope and the Turk as two incarnations of Antichrist, within and without Christendom.[70] But this markedly Roman Catholic note is as fleeting in the play as the appearance put in by the Turk's janissaries, merely providing local colour here in a single stage direction at the start of 4.3.

The costumes for Amurack and his janissaries, the elite corps admired and feared in the reports of the sultan's armies, may have introduced additional Turkish stereotypes onstage, in the same way as the 'Turkish cap, / A black mustachio and a fauchion' mentioned by Hieronimo as the costume notes needed for the part of Soliman in the play-within-the-play of *The Spanish Tragedy* (4.1.144–5),[71] or 'thy croune thy robe / & semeter' which Bacon snatches away from the Great Turk Amurack/Amewroth in *John of Bordeaux* (ll. 171–2).[72] But as it is, neither the stage directions nor the dialogues in *Alphonsus* provide any such explicit details about the Turks and their costumes.

The one characteristic that is foregrounded in the portrayal of the Turks in *Alphonsus* is their religious faith, introduced as early as Amurack's first speech, in which he invokes Mahomet in his words of welcome and comfort to Belinus (3.2.6). But, as noted by Matthew Dimmock, Greene 'chooses to return to an essentially "medieval" conception of the Ottomans and Islam in order that simpler oppositions may be imposed'.[73] By 'medieval' is meant a representation of Muslim beliefs mostly inherited from propagandist writings dating back to the Crusades, such as Raoul de Caen's *Gesta Tancredi* (c. 1112–31), describing how Tancred's armies found and destroyed a silver idol of Mahomet in the temple of Solomon in Jerusalem.[74] In such accounts, as well as in the Carolingian *Chansons de Geste* translated into English in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Islam is not the aniconic (and anti-iconic), priestless religion of the prophet called Muhammad, but either an extension of ancient paganism or a heretical distortion of Christianity, based on the worship of an unholy trinity of idols, Apollyon, Tervagant and Mahomet.[75] Accordingly, the 'medievalised' Mahomet of *Alphonsus* (4.1) is a fire-breathing, oracle-pronouncing idol served by two terrified priests. His apparent function is to help the Turks by giving them superior knowledge about the future, but as in many Saracen romances, such as the anonymous fifteenth-century *Sultan of Babylone*, the one and only true function of this false god is to lead his own people to their defeat.[76] At once fantastic and menacing with his fire-spitting appearance, and comic and down-to-earth through his propensity to take offence and his consulting with his priests over the

prophecy which will make him even with Amurack (4.1.24ff), Mahomet's intervention discredits the Turks and provides from the start the vicious circle which renders their defeat inevitable. Indeed, it is because Amurack, foreseeing his god's treacherous prophecy in a dream magically inspired by Medea, curses Mahomet in his sleep (3.2.129–30) that the latter takes offence and decides to prophesy in such a treacherous manner. Beyond his spectacular appearance, Mahomet's main contribution to the play is therefore to provide the conditions for what Daniel calls the 'Tervagant convention' in Saracen romances, that is to say an obligatory scene of renunciation in which the Muslim leader, disappointed by his gods, publicly rejects them and offers to destroy their statues as a preliminary to (or an acknowledgement of) the Christians' utter triumph.[77] As an illustration, Chew quotes the following passage from *The Sultan of Babylone*, in which the defeated Sultan Laban orders his idols to be brought before him and beaten: 'Fye upon thee, Appolyn. Thou shalt have an evil end. And much sorrow shall come to thee also, Termagant. And as for thee, Mahound, Lord of all the rest, thou art not worth a mouse's turd.'[78] A similar fate awaits Mahomet in Amurack's prescient dream in *Alphonsus*:

> And dost thou think, thou proud, injurious god,
> Mahound I mean, since thy vain prophecies
> Led Amurack into this doleful case,
> To have his princely feet in irons clapped,
> Which erst the proudest kings were forced to kiss,
> That thou shall scape unpunished for the same?
> No, no, as soon as by the help of Jove
> I scape this bondage, down go all thy groves,
> Thy altars tumble round about the streets,
> And whereas erst we sacrificed to thee,
> Now all the Turks thy mortal foes shall be!
> (3.2.129–39)

This preordained renunciation is what makes the Turks assimilable on Christian terms and paves the way for the happy union of Iphigina and Alphonsus, through which the Christian hero legitimately inherits Amurack's empire.

Many of the images of Islam in early modern works of fiction are 'imaginary resolutions of real anxieties about Islamic wealth and might', writes Daniel Vitkus.[79] By reversing the actual Ottoman advances on Europe in the sixteenth century into both a territorial and a cultural conquest of his classicised Turks and medievalised Muslims by a largely fabricated Christian hero, Greene's rewriting of history offers such a resolution to his audiences within the realms of fantasy and romance.

Forays into the Shakespearean margin

This survey of *Alphonsus* in its cultural context would not be complete without a reference to a possible parodic reworking of the main character and his style in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, composed around the time of Creede's publication of Greene's play in 1599. Even the head title *The Comicall History of the Merchant of Venice* in the first quarto version of 1600 (sig. A2r) could be considered a generic nod to *The Comical History of Alphonsus, King of Aragon*.

In fact, few of Greene's contemporary dramatists could be said to have borrowed more from his works than the 'upstart crow' whom he venomously accused of 'beautifying' himself with the University Wits' feathers.[80] A well-known later example of this debt is of course the plot of *The Winter's Tale*, largely based on that of Greene's *Pandosto*, and several other passing references to Greene, including *Hamlet*'s 'beautified Ophelia' (2.2.109), are suspected by Stephen Greenblatt.[81] But Shakespeare's earlier production also contains many nodding references, mostly in parodic form, to both the material and the style of *Tamburlaine* and his 'weak sons', as in 2 *Henry IV*, in which Pistol's bombastic outbursts contain rather explicit mocking references to *Tamburlaine*'s 'pampered jades of Asia', 'Hiren the Greek' of Peele's lost play of *The Turkish Mahomet and Hiren the Fair Greek*, and the 'fair Caliopolis' episode of *The Battle of Alcazar* (2.4.161, 172, 176).

In *The Merchant of Venice*, Nicholas Brooke sees parodic renderings of Marlovian heroism through the characters of Portia's ineffectual suitors, the Princes of Morocco and Aragon.[82] In his opinion, Morocco's self-identification with Hercules/Alcides (2.1.35) recalls Marlowe's 'Herculean hero' Tamburlaine,[83] while Aragon's confidence in his own deserts evokes Guise's 'What glory is there in a common good, / That hangs for every peasant to achieve?' (*The Massacre at Paris*, Scene 2, ll. 97–8). Though finding his suggestions plausible, I believe that Morocco's offer to 'mock the lion when a roars for prey, / To win the lady' (2.1.29–31) more closely parodies the abovementioned 'fair Caliopolis' episode in *The Battle of Alcazar*, in which Muly Mahamet, the usurper of the throne of Morocco, steals a lion's prey to feed his fainting lady while they are stranded in the desert (2.3.70ff).[84] Following on the heels of Morocco in Belmont, the Prince of Aragon can in turn be seen to complete the picture, both as another of Tamburlaine's epigones making a cameo appearance in the play and as one more inappropriate stereotyped suitor for Portia. 'Brisk, assertive, and ludicrously (because so wrongheadedly) sententious' in the words of Lawrence Danson,[85] Aragon recalls the worst of Greene's hero in his conceitedness. But his many metrical imperfections, with nearly half his pentameters being out of joint, and his excessive taste for

anaphoras and parallel structures also evoke some of the most blatant of Greene's stylistic failures in *Alphonsus*, as is exemplified by the following quotations:

> Alphonsus' fame unto the heavens should climb,
> Alphonsus' fame, that man of Jove his seed.
> (*Alphonsus*, 1.Prol.20–1)

> How much unlike thou art to Portia!
> How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!
> (*The Merchant of Venice*, 2.9.55–6)

> And all his acts drowned in oblivion.
> And all his acts drowned in oblivion?
> (*Alphonsus*, 1.Prol.30–1)

> How many then should cover that stand bare,
> How many be commanded that command?
> (*The Merchant of Venice*, 2.9.55–6)

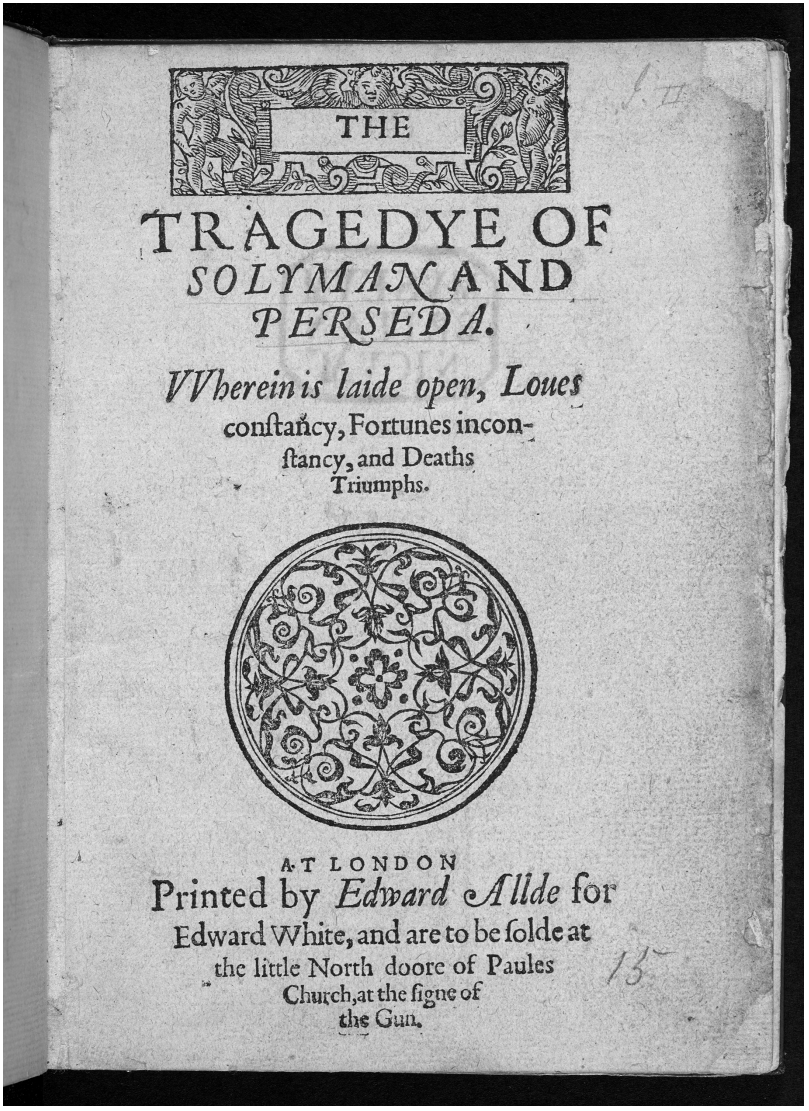
In the latter part of his scene in *The Merchant of Venice*, Aragon's propensity to pick up the doggerel rhythm and rhymes of the scroll in the casket and to speak his final lines in that style may further be construed as a parodic nod to Greene's well-remembered knack for plagiarising other authors' successful recipes.

One overall effect of Morocco and Aragon's scenes in Shakespeare's play may thus be to evoke two inferior standards parodied from the well-known works of rival predecessors, so as to invite us to measure against these foils the superiority of both Shakespeare's own style and his alternative suitor for Portia.

Soliman and Perseda

Authorship, date, staging

Soliman and Perseda was first entered on the Stationers' Register on 20 November 1592. The undated quarto of the play, on which the present edition is based, is generally assumed to have been printed not long after this entry. It was printed by Edward Allde and published by Edward White. It is worth noticing that *The Spanish Tragedy*, entered only a few weeks before *Soliman*, on 6 October 1592, has a similarly undated edition printed by Allde and published by White.[86] This is only the first of a long series of connections and coincidences linking the two plays together and constituting the basis for the attribution of *Soliman* to Thomas Kyd who has been considered, ever since an allusion in Thomas Heywood's *Apology for Actors* (1612), as the probable author of *The Spanish Tragedy*.


THE

TRAGEDYE OF
SOLYMAN AND
PERSEDA.

VVherein is laide open, Loues
constancy, Fortunes incon-
stancy, and Deaths
Triumphs.

AT LONDON
Printed by *Edward Allde* for
Edward White, and are to be solde at
the little North doore of Paules
Church, at the signe of
the Gun.

2 Title-page of *The Tragedye of Solyman and Perseda* (n.d.)

Kyd's authorship of *Soliman* was first specifically suggested by Thomas Hawkins in his 1773 *The Origin of the English Drama*.[87] His claim was founded on the coincidence of the play's plot with that of Hieronimo's play-within-the-play of 'Soliman and Perseda' in *The Spanish Tragedy*. Both versions are based on the first of the five tales in *A Courtlie Controversie of Cupids Cautels* (1578), itself an English translation by Henry Wotton of Jacques Yver's *Printemps d'Yver* (Paris, 1572). Also arguing for Kyd's authorship, Frederick Boas noted that Francis Coldocke, who, along with Henry Bynneman, printed *Cupid's Cautels*, was a close friend of Thomas Kyd's father, a scrivener.[88] Arthur Freeman adds to this argument by noticing that no other playwright of the era uses either Wotton's compilation or its continental original as a source.[89]

Although by no means unconvincing, the case for attributing *Soliman* to Kyd primarily rests on Heywood's allusion and is mostly supported by internal evidence. In this respect, Boas mentions various parallels in dramatic structure between *Soliman* and *The Spanish Tragedy*, for example with the repartee between Erastus and Perseda (*Soliman*, 2.1) and between Balthazar and Bel-Imperia (*The Spanish Tragedy*, 1.4), or with the rescue at the point of death of Perseda (*Soliman*, 4.1) and of Alexandro (*The Spanish Tragedy*, 3.1).[90] He further notices how both works depart from Wotton's plot in their conclusions with, for example, Perseda/Bel-Imperia not getting killed by Turkish bullets as in the original source, but contriving more directly the means both of Soliman/Balthazar's death and her own. The two plays are equally similar in their choice of a superstructure of allegorical figures (Love, Fortune and Death in *Soliman*, Revenge keeping company with Andrea's ghost in *The Spanish Tragedy*) acting as chorus and returning regularly to comment on the action. Both Boas and Félix Carrère (although the latter does not believe in Kyd's authorship of *Soliman*)[91] also provide long lists of verbal echoes between the two plays, as well as between *Soliman* and *Cornelia* (1594), Kyd's translation of a French original by Robert Garnier (Paris, 1574). Most of those verbal coincidences are included in the notes to the present edition. It would be tedious to repeat them all, but a few meaningful examples can be quoted here:

> What boots complaining where's no remedy?
> (*Soliman*, 5.2.86)

> What boots complaint, when there's no remedy?
> (*The Spanish Tragedy*, 1.4.92)[92]

> Ah no, my nightly dreams foretold me this.
> (*Soliman*, 5.3.25)

Ay, ay, my nightly dreams have told me this.
(*The Spanish Tragedy*, 1.3.76)

Fair springing rose, ill-plucked before thy time!
(*Soliman*, 5.4.81)

Sweet lovely rose, ill-pluck'd before thy time.
(*The Spanish Tragedy*, 2.5.46)

For whom weep you?
Ah, for Fernando's dying!
For whom mourn you?
Ah, for Erastus' flying!
(*Soliman*, 3.2.17–18)

'Tis I that love.
Whom?
Bel-Imperia.
But I that fear.
Whom?
Bel-Imperia.
(*The Spanish Tragedy*, 3.10.96–7)

Both Boas and James E. Routh underline that metrical characteristics, such as the frequency of three regular rhyme schemes (*aca*, *abab* and *aaa*) in *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Soliman and Perseda* and *Cornelia*, strengthen the argument in favour of Kyd's authorship of all three works.[93] Routh attributes the unusual frequency of these rhyme patterns to the influence of Garnier's French strophes on Kyd, not just in his translation but also in his two earlier works.[94] Further arguments in favour of Kyd's authorship of *Soliman* have been put forward in recent years by Thomas Merriam and MacDonald Jackson, based on computer-assisted analysis.[95]

To conclude on the issue of authorship, in the absence of any definitive external proof, we can tentatively, yet plausibly, attribute *Soliman* to Kyd. The attribution is equally accepted as the most likely option by the play's latest editor, Lukas Erne for the Malone Society Reprints.[96] The only alternative name suggested as the author of *Soliman* is that of George Peele.[97] The hypothesis is based on a single passage in the apocryphal *The Merry Conceited Jests of George Peele* (published in 1607), in which Peele's persona reports that, while he was short of money in Bristol, he made the citizens pay to watch a play of his called *The Knight of Rhodes*, a title which may be reminiscent of *Soliman and Perseda*. But the jest ends in Peele's fleeing with the money while the play does not actually get performed, so that its very existence remains debatable.[98]

Closely related to the issue of *Soliman*'s authorship is the question of the order of composition of *Soliman* and *The Spanish Tragedy*. One could

be tempted to believe that Hieronimo's playlet in *The Spanish Tragedy* takes up a recent stage success possibly written by the same author. Yet a closer look at the playlet's details reveals a greater proximity to Wotton's original than to *Soliman*, such as the fact that the Bashaw (whose part is played by Hieronimo himself) remains a stereotyped villain as in Wotton's version, rather than receiving the more complex and, if not quite sympathetic, at least duly motivated characterisation with which Brusor is provided in *Soliman*. Therefore, following Boas's persuasive argument on the more elaborate treatment of Wotton's material in *Soliman*,[99] I agree with him and most later critics, including Freeman and Erne, who believe that *Soliman* is likely to have been an attempt to capitalise on the prior success of *The Spanish Tragedy*.[100] Erne further suggests that the publication of the two plays by the same stationer at close interval may have been motivated by Kyd's selling the two manuscripts to White at the same time, since the two plays were unlikely to have been owned by the same company.[101] Performances of *The Spanish Tragedy* by the Lord Strange's Men (probably at the Rose Theatre) are recorded in 1592 in Henslowe's *Diary*,[102] while *Soliman and Perseda* is never mentioned by him and is likely to have been owned by the Earl of Pembroke's Men, who may have played it at Court, as is suggested by the compliment to the Queen as 'sacred Cynthia' in the play's epilogue.[103]

Beyond its obvious connection with *The Spanish Tragedy* (c. 1582–92), *Soliman* offers a whole network of echoes linking it to plays both before and after it, and those echoes help us date it more closely than just through the *terminus a quo* of the publication of *Cupids Cautels* (1578) and the *terminus ad quem* of the Stationers' Register's entry (1592). Chief among those plays is again Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*. Several scholars, including Freeman and Erne, note that a comic episode in *Soliman* involving the braggart knight Basilisco and the mischievous servant Piston pricking his backside with a pin could be a parody of the very solemn passage in 2 *Tamburlaine* in which the eponymous hero evokes the dart of death about to hit him:[104]

> *Tamburlaine.* See where my slave, the ugly monster Death
> Shaking and quivering, pale and wan for fear,
> Stands aiming at me with his murdering dart,
> Who flies away at every glance I give,
> And when I look away, comes stealing on.
> (2 *Tamburlaine*, 5.3.67–71)

> *Basilisco.* Why, sawst thou not how Cupid, god of love,
> Not daring look me in the martial face,
> Came like a coward stealing after me,
> And with his pointed dart pricked my posteriors?
> (*Soliman*, 4.2.45–8)

Another possible parody is worth mentioning here, with Techelles's line 'Our swords shall play the orators for us' in *1 Tamburlaine* (1.2.132) which seems to me to be remembered in Basilisco's boast at the opening tournament, as he points to his sword with the following words: 'I fight not with my tongue: this is my oratrix' (*Soliman*, 1.2.69).

Erne further notices that the reference to the siege of Rhodes in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* (c. 1589) could have been inspired by *Soliman*.[105] Indeed, the Spanish admiral Del Bosco's 'not a man survived / To bring the hapless news to Christendom' (*The Jew of Malta*, 2.2.50–1) is not consistent with the historical accounts of the siege, at the end of which the knights surrendered on terms and were allowed by the Turks to leave Rhodes.[106] It is rather reminiscent of the ending in *Soliman* in which the dying Sultan orders a general massacre: 'Let me see Rhodes recovered ere I die! / Soldiers, assault the town on every side, / Spoil all, kill all, let none escape your fury!' (5.4.119–21).

It has also been suggested, by both Freeman and Erne, that *Soliman*'s framing chorus of Love, Fortune and Death may have been inspired by a similar choric device in the anonymous *Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*, an older romance play (c. 1582) which was first printed in 1589, also for Edward White.[107] The argument is not conclusive in itself since, as Freeman acknowledges, the frame story in *Soliman* could equally be an elaboration on the following lines from the lovers' epitaph at the end of Wotton's version of their story: 'By *Fortune*, *Envie*, and by *Death*, / This couple caughte their bane.'[108] Yet, corroborated by the *Jew of Malta* allusion, this reference can encourage us to consider 1589 as a possible date of composition for *Soliman*. This hypothesis is strengthened by a potential echo of *The Battle of Alcazar* (c. 1589) in *Soliman*, with Erastus's description of 'The Moor upon his hot barbarian horse' (1.1.56) recalling the Soldier's account of Muly Mahamet's last moments in *Alcazar*: 'He mounteth on a hot Barbarian horse' (5.1.239).

Freeman's other suggested echoes and parallels, which seem less convincing to me, include the names of the Sultan's brothers Haleb and Amurath in *Soliman* (1.4) which according to him may find a parallel in the names of two secondary characters in *Selimus* (c. 1590–91), the courtier Hali Bassa and Selimus's nephew Amurath.[109] But besides the fact that the borrowing could work both ways between the two plays, the two names are fairly commonplace in the writings of the time, especially since Murad III (reg. 1574–95) was the incumbent sultan.

Almost alone among scholars who have worked on the dating of *Soliman*, T.W. Baldwin attributes to its composition a much earlier, pre-Armada date, on the grounds that the Spanish Knight and Spanish bravery could not be praised (as he contends they are in 1.2) in a play written after 1587–88.[110] But his argument does not seem convincing to me, as

it would hardly have been conceivable to see the tournament in Rhodes with its representatives of the prominent nations of the West without the presence of a single Spaniard in it. As it is, in *Soliman* the Spanish Knight enters after both the English and the French knights, preceding only the Turkish Brusor. As for the single feat he mentions, that is to say his killing of a German challenger with a single shot at the age of fourteen, it is much less impressive than the others' achievements, such as the Englishman's taking the standard from the King of France on the battlefield, or Brusor's having thrice been commander in chief against the Sophy's armies and having marched in conquest over both Asia and Africa, a passage which, again, could be reminiscent of *2 Tamburlaine*, in particular of Techelles's description of his African triumphs (1.3.186–205).

Death's reference to 'Cynthia's friend' in the closing lines of *Soliman* (Epilogue.34–41) has suggested Court performance to both Baldwin and Erne, but it is not in itself indicative of any specific date for the play. Following his hypothesis of an early date, Baldwin claims the play for the Admiral's Men, whose last recorded pre-Armada performances at Court took place on 27 December 1585 and 6 January 1586, allowing a twenty-year-old Edward Alleyn to play the part of a twenty-year-old Erastus.[111] Meanwhile, Erne argues for a Court performance on either 26 December 1592 or 6 January 1593, with Pembroke's Men acting it shortly after the play was entered on the Stationers' Register (on 20 November 1592), which could explain why the Court performance was not advertised on the title-page.[112] His suggestion is based on inter-play borrowings connecting *Soliman* to the *True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* printed in 1595 and claiming on its title-page to have been acted by Pembroke's Men.[113] Erne's hypothesis would agree with a late reference in Thomas Dekker's *Satiromastix* (1601), in which the character of Tucca claims he played 'Zulziman' (a possible deformation of 'Soliman') at Paris Garden, that is to say the Swan Theatre built in 1595, where Pembroke's Men acted from 1597 on and where a revival of *Soliman* could have been staged by its then proprietors. But there is no indication of auspices on the title-pages of either *Soliman*'s undated edition or its 1599 edition. Another character from the play, Basilisco, is also remembered in a line spoken by the Bastard in Shakespeare's *King John*, composed sometime in the mid-1590s: 'Knight, knight, good mother, Basilisco-like!' (1.1.244).

One last connection links the play to a non-dramatic text, which is John Donne's 'Elegy 11: The Bracelet'. Helen Gardner, following Herbert Grierson, considers that Donne's poem may contain references to the loss and recovery of Perseda's chain offered to Erastus, in particular

with this evocation of the Crier recalling a similar episode in *Soliman*, 1.3.26–58:[114]

> Oh be content that some loud squeaking crier
> Well-pleased with one lean threadbare groat, for hire,
> May like a devil roar through every street,
> And gall the finder's conscience, if they meet.
> (ll. 55–8)

Gardner uses this element in conjunction with the poem's other reference to 'libells, or some interdicted thing, / Which negligently kept, thy ruine bringe' (ll. 101–2), which she considers to be a reference to the notorious case of Kyd's arrest in 1593 and the charge of atheism brought against him after compromising documents were found in his possession. This brings her to assign the date of 1593–94 to Donne's poem, and it also strengthens the case in favour of Kyd's authorship of *Soliman*, but the poem's other allusions to the current political situation in France, Scotland and the Low Countries are too vague to help us any further in dating *Soliman*.

In conclusion, if the *terminus ad quem* for *Soliman* remains the 1592 entry in the Stationers' Register, we can take the play's belonging to the post-Tamburlainian vogue of Turkish plays, as well as its direct parody of 2 *Tamburlaine* as indicative of a *terminus a quo* in 1588, with the *Jew of Malta* and *Battle of Alcazar* references suggesting 1589 as the likeliest date for its composition.

Sources

As seen in the above section, the main source for *Soliman* is the first tale in Henry Wotton's *A Courtlie Controversie of Cupid's Cautels* (1578), itself a translation from the French *Printemps d'Yver* (1572) by Jacques Yver, with its earlier versions going back to Jacques Fontaine's *De Bello Rhodio* (1524).[115] Yet the play offers a number of significant additions to Wotton's storyline, which suggest the presence of some secondary influences.

As mentioned earlier, the presence of the framing chorus in *Soliman* may have been motivated by a similar device in *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*. Yet we must remember that framing choruses, especially those involving a generic contention between allegorical figures representing tragedy, history or romantic comedy, are frequent throughout the Elizabethan period. The chorus of Venus and the Muses in *Alphonsus*, written in the same years as *Soliman* and also edited in this volume, is another example of that trend, and so is the somewhat later disputation of Comedy, History and Tragedy in the anonymous *A Warning for Fair Women* (1599).[116]

Among the other additions to Wotton's storyline in *Soliman* are 1.4 briefly introducing the Sultan's brothers and staging a double fratricide which has no historical grounding, and 4.2 describing Basilisco's conversion to Islam and his circumcision. Such sensational details of the Turks' cruelties and religious customs are common in sixteenth-century accounts of them, such as Hugh Gough's translation of Bartholomew Georgiewitz's *The Ofspring of the House of Ottomanno* (1569), which besides an account of the rituals related to a circumcision (sig. D1r–D3v), has an appendix devoted to 'The horrible acte, and wicked offence of Soltan Solimam [*sic*] Emperour of the Turkes, in murtheringe his eldest sonne Mustapha, the yeare of our Lorde. 1553' (sig. J5r–M3v). Closer to the date of *Soliman*, we may also think of the English edition of Francis Billerbeg's *Most Rare and Straunge Discourses, of Amurathe the Turkish Emperor* (1584) and its appendix devoted to 'The true description of the magnificall Tryumphes and Pastimes, represented at Constantinople, at the solemnizing of the Circumcision of the *Soldan Mauhmet* [*sic*], the sonne of *Amurath*, the thyrd of that name, in the yeere of our Lorde God 1582'. It may also be worth mentioning, as a dramatic analogue to the fratricide in *Soliman*, the one taking place in the contemporary play of *Selimus* which, as we saw above, has also two character names closely resembling those of the Sultan's brothers in our play. Other accounts of circumcisions or Turk-turning ceremonies are found in much later plays, most notably Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turned Turk* (c. 1609–10) and Philip Massinger's *The Renegado* (c. 1623–24), but I have not seen any earlier example.

The most important additions of *Soliman* to the material in *Cupid's Cautels* are the episodes involving the comic characters of Basilisco and Piston, in whom Erne sees distant descendants of Plautus's *miles gloriosus* (later the Capitano of *commedia dell'arte*) and the witty slave of Roman comedy.[117] Closer to home, the two characters recall the mock-hero Ralph Roister Doister in Nicholas Udall's eponymous play (c. 1553), accompanied by the parasite Matthew Merrygreek. Freeman notes as an additional influence Luigi Pasqualigo's *Il Fedele* (1576), translated into English before 1584 by Anthony Munday under the title of *Two Italian Gentlemen*, or *Fedele and Fortunio*, in which the bragging, but cowardly character of Captain Crack-stone wooing the heroine Victoria closely resembles Basilisco, while Pedante the parasite, servant to Fedele, may have served as a model for Piston.[118] We may add to this hypothesis by mentioning that at least one mock-salutation, '*Basilus* Codpeece for an olde *Manus*' in Munday's play (1.1.50, sig. B1v),[119] may involve a similar joke to 'I meant nothing but a Basolus Manus' in *Soliman* (4.2.36), when Piston gives Basilisco 'the privy stab' (l. 37).

Although connections are hard to establish for plays with both uncertain dates and disputed authors, we cannot help but notice that Basilisco and Piston have their equivalents in *Locrine* (c. 1591), with the two comic characters of the braggart Strumbo and his man Trompart. Commenting on the many comic coinages of these different characters, such as Trompart's 'you cockatrices and you bablatrices' (*Locrine*, l. 911),[120] Strumbo's 'Ile giue you a canuasado with a bastinano' (*Locrine*, ll. 632–3), Piston's 'Ferdinando had the prickado' (*Soliman*, 2.2.22) and Basilisco's 'this is my oratrix' (*Soliman*, 1.2.69), Nick de Somogyi sees in them an English merging of the type figures of the Braggart and the Pedant, or the Capitano and the Dottore of *commedia dell'arte*, announcing also Shakespeare's Falstaff and Pistol to come in the following years.[121] Don Armado in *Love's Labour's Lost* also comes to mind as another example of that merging.

All these additional elements greatly contribute to *Soliman*'s peculiar generic mix, for which Erne even coins a new term, 'comitragic', implying the use of comic material to reach a tragic outcome.[122]

Launching at the 'comitragic' frontier

Much of the dramatic force of *Soliman and Perseda* is paradoxically based on its being, as Jeremy Lopez aptly calls it, a 'drama of disappointment', introducing stereotypes mostly to deconstruct them so as to break new ground in dramatic potentialities and pathos.[123] The play's opening revisits the chivalric and romantic fantasy of an international tournament transcending the cultural boundaries of difference, but it undermines it from the start by revealing the Turkish champion to be a spy. Erastus's victory establishes him as the heroic knightly figure, only to change him into a traitor who turns his back on his homeland and serves the Turks. The play also introduces Perseda as the stock figure of the delicate and loving heroine, but the vengeful cruelty she eventually exercises in stabbing Lucina when learning how the latter's beloved Brusor caused Erastus's fall, jars with that picture. The barbarousness of the act in 5.3 is felt even more through the contrasting attitude of Basilisco, whose refusal to commit the murder pushes Perseda to do it herself. For Freeman, this mixed scene brings out both the seriousness of Perseda's transgression and 'the essential humaneness of the comic crew, caught up in the web of tragic intrigue'.[124]

What is true of Basilisco, an essentially comic character cast in a tragic context, equally applies to the other comic character of the play, Erastus's servant Piston. Accompanying Perseda on her final confrontation with Soliman, both sidekicks offer not comic relief but downright pathos. As Erne notes, Basilisco dies with Perseda's kiss and Kyd's iambic pentameter

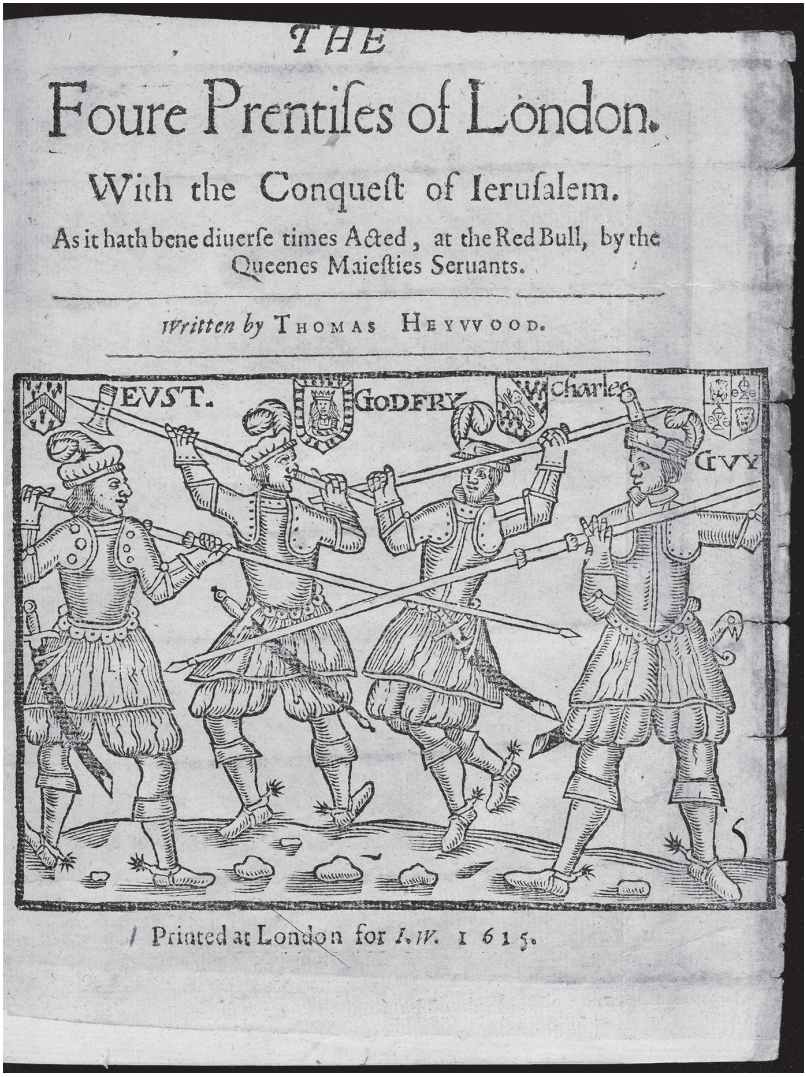
on his lips,[125] while Piston dares a moving, albeit short, lament (5.4.75–7) for which he pays with his life. The unprepared and unmotivated killings of the two clownish characters make us go even further in horror by showing how triumphant tragedy swallows even those very last helpless patches of comedy.

Building on this reading, Lopez notes a parallel in both structure and content between Basilisco's 'Where is … where is …' speech following the death of Lucina (5.3.63–81) and Death's own final 'Where is … where is …' triumph over Love and Fortune (Epilogue.14–29).[126] His suggestion that the two parts may have been played by the same actor is most tempting.[127] It would add a twist beyond the completion of the plot itself, putting in perspective the seemingly utter victory of the allegorical character of Death, who on the one hand can be said to have subsumed even a comic figure turned into its final spokesperson, and on the other hand can be considered paradoxically downplayed by that comic figure brought back to life in order to speak the play's epilogue while wearing Death's own robes. Keeping to the end a precarious balance between the principles of life and death, comedy and tragedy, with the allegorical figure of Death both triumphing and bowing down before 'sacred Cynthia's friend' in the final line of the epilogue, *Soliman and Perseda* thus proves a fascinating experiment in 'con-quering' (querying with) generic boundaries and pushing them back.

The Four Prentices of London

Authorship, date, staging

The earliest known edition of *The Four Prentices of London* is the 1615 quarto printed for I.W. (John Wright) and naming Thomas Heywood as the author on its title-page, as well as including an epistle to the reader signed by Heywood himself. Used as copy text for the present edition, it will henceforth be referred to as Q_1. A second edition, referred to here as Q_2, was printed by Nicholas Okes in 1632, and claimed on its title-page to be 'Written and newly revised by THOMAS HEYWOOD'. Despite this claim, it presents few departures from the Q_1 text. The changes mostly concern simple corrections in spelling and sense, which could be attributable to the printer or the typesetter, making Q_2 qualify overall as a reprint, rather than a fully revised edition. In the introduction to her edition of the play, Mary Ann Weber Gasior discusses the most significant of those changes, which is the substitution of an 'Ey' for a 'Zounds' (6.21), in accordance with the 1606 Statute against profanity on stage.[128] No other early modern edition is known.


THE
Foure Prentiſes of London.
With the Conqueſt of Ieruſalem.
As it hath bene diuerſe times Acted, at the Red Bull, by the Queenes Maieſties Seruants.
Written by THOMAS HEYVVOOD.
EVST.
GODFRY
Charles
GVY
Printed at London for *I. W.* 1615.

3 Title-page of *The Foure Prentises of London* (1615)

If Heywood's authorship is beyond doubt, the play's date is subject to conjecture. According to the 1615 epistle, *The Four Prentices of London* was Heywood's very first play, since the author explicitly refers to it as 'my infancy of judgement in this kind of poetry, and my first practice'. He excuses the play's (many) shortcomings on the grounds that 'as plays were then some fifteen or sixteen years ago, it was in the fashion'. This quotation has sometimes been taken to mean that the play was actually written around 1599, while it merely states that it was successful at that time. The date could very well correspond to a revival, which may or may not have involved rewriting of the play's original material.

An earlier date of composition could relate the play to a 19 June 1594 entry in the Stationers' Register, at a time when Heywood would have been in his early twenties and at the very start of his career as a writer: 'an enterlude entituled Godfrey of Bulloigne with the Conquest of Jerusalem', registered for John Danter, a printer best remembered for the first edition of *Titus Andronicus* in 1594 and the pirate, bad quarto of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1597. Danter's registered title is close to the full title that we now have for Heywood's play, that is to say *The Four Prentices of London, with the Conquest of Jerusalem*, but both are different from the title included in Q1's prologue, which is *True and Strange, or The Four Prentices of London*. If Heywood himself was responsible for the later change of title, this leaves room for the possibility of his revising the material over the years, while the play registered by Danter is not likely to be *The Four Prentices* in its final form, all the more since the 1615 epistle deplores its hasty publication 'in such a forwardness ere it came to my knowledge, that it was past prevention'. Still according to the epistle, the publication came 'short of that accurateness both in plot and style' that the author would have wished later in his career. All this suggests a first publication in the play's current form in 1615, rather than a re-edition of a work already available in print many years before and that the author would have had ample time to revise.

But Danter's registered title from 1594 is also very similar to two play titles appearing in Henslowe's *Diary*. The first is 'Jerusalem', mentioned as performed by the Lord Strange's Men at the Rose Theatre on 22 March and 25 April 1592.[129] The second is the '2 pte of godfrey of bullen', first performed by the Admiral's Men at the Rose on 19 July 1594, and marked by Henslowe as 'ne', possibly meaning 'new'.[130] If this was indeed a new play, it may have been timed to capitalise on the success of an old Jerusalem play (not marked 'ne' even in 1592) which Danter had registered shortly before. Could the new 1594 play be a first version of Heywood's *The Four Prentices*, or did he later revise either or both the 1592 and 1594 plays to produce the one that we have today and which could have

been staged around 1599? Did Danter print the play which he had registered, and which may or may not have included part of Heywood's material?

All this is subject to conjecture, but an additional element which may plead in favour of an early date of composition for *The Four Prentices* is Frances Meres's inclusion of Heywood's name among our 'best for Comedy' in his *Palladis Tamia* of 1598.[131] If Heywood's reputation as a dramatist was established by 1598, and if by his own confession in the 1615 epistle *The Four Prentices* was his first theatrical attempt, then the play must have existed in some form early in his career, around the time when he allegedly composed the narrative poem *Oenone and Paris*. Significantly, the 1594 edition of *Oenone and Paris* also opens with an epistle to the reader signed 'T.H.', in which the author presents his work in terms similar to those of *The Four Prentices*'s 1615 epistle, referring to it as 'the first fruits of my indeuours, and the Maiden heade of my Pen'.

Therefore, in the absence of more conclusive evidence, we may risk the hypothesis that Heywood composed at least a first version of *The Four Prentices*, his first play, by 1594, as a response to a different 'Jerusalem' play already existing in 1592, which may or may not have been printed by John Danter following the Stationers' Register's entry in 1594. *The Four Prentices* was possibly revised, or at least revived, around 1599, before being finally published for the first time in its current form in 1615.

If 1594 is retained as the likely date for the composition of *The Four Prentices*, the twelve performances of '2 pte of godfrey of bullen' by the Admiral's Men at the Rose correspond to the play's first stagings, starting on 19 July, for which the highest of the collected sums for this play – £3 11s – is recorded by Henslowe, and running till 16 September 1595.[132] Several revivals can be inferred from surviving documents left over the subsequent years. One possible revival is sometimes inferred from the 8s loan to the company that Henslowe records on 3 September 1602 'to bye iiij Lances for the comody of thomas hewedes & m^{r} smythes'.[133] That 'Mr Smith' is possibly Wentworth Smith, known to have collaborated with Heywood on a number of other plays in 1602,[134] but his name is nowhere else associated to *The Four Prentices*, so the purchase is more likely to have concerned another play. A more convincing proof of revival is the abovementioned 1615 epistle to the reader in Q1, recalling that the play was in fashion 'some fifteen or sixteen years ago'. Q1's title-page also boasts that the play 'hath bene diuerse times Acted, at the Red Bull, by the Queenes Maiesties Seruants'. This is consistent with the often quoted reference to Heywoood's play in Francis Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1607), in which the Citizen advises a boy actor to 'read the play of the *Foure Prentices of London*, where they tosse their pikes

so' (4.1.53–5).[135] The quotation refers to the lances episode from *The Four Prentices* which appears to have enjoyed fame long before being pictured on the title-page of the 1615 edition. A revival around 1606 at the Red Bull, a theatre which was specifically associated with rowdy apprentice audiences, could also suggest interesting connections with another adventure play set in the East, that is to say Day, Wilkins and Rowley's *The Travels of the Three English Brothers*, first revived there on 29 June 1607. The latter play shares with *The Four Prentices* its episodic nature and the trope of the brothers separated in their travels and discovered in dumb show in different parts of the Earth. The finale of *The Travels of the Three English Brothers*, with its promise of the forthcoming christening of Robert Sherley's child with the Sophy acting as godfather, is also remembered in the same scene in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (4.1.32–5). It is further worth noticing that the induction in *The Four Prentices* requires three doors for three prologues, just as the epilogue in *The Travels of the Three English Brothers* necessitates the use of three doors for the three brothers. If the Red Bull was a theatre with three doors, this could buttress Martin Wiggins's hypothesis that *The Four Prentices*'s induction was added at the occasion of such a revival, since the rest of the play suggests the use of only two doors.[136] Several decades later, the Red Bull revival of *The Four Prentices* – or its fame at least – finds its way into *A Satire Against Separatists*, a pseudonymous anti-Puritan pamphlet attributed to Peter Hausted or Abraham Cowley and first published in 1660, which contains the following mockery: 'Go on brave *Heroes*, and performe the rost [*sic*], / Increase your fame each day a yard at least, / 'Till your high names are growne as glorious full / As the foure *London* Prentises at the *Red bull*.'[137]

No other staging is recorded after the Red Bull performances satirised by Beaumont and remembered in *A Satire*, and the play seems indeed to have stopped being 'in the fashion' at that point, as stated in the Q1 epistle. It is not known to have been revived in modern times.

Sources

It would be tempting to think of Torquato Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered* (*La Gerusalemme liberata*), first published in Ferrara in 1581, as the play's most readily available source, all the more since Thomas Carew's English translation of the first five cantos of Tasso's poem appeared in 1594 under the title *Godfrey of Bulloigne, or the Recouerie of Hierusalem*. But despite their both having the major episodes of the First Crusade as their general background, the two works have little in common in terms of style or details, so that it is difficult to prove a direct connection between the two. Such sensational staples as a maiden cross-dressing to

follow her beloved and being attacked by enemies in the wilderness (Erminia following Tancredi in Tasso, the French Lady following Guy in Heywood), or her finding refuge in the Christian camp and causing the knights to fight each other over her love (Armida in Tasso, Bella Franca in Heywood) are common features in heroical romances and do not link the two works in a conclusive way. The lost *Jerusalem* play may have included Tasso among its sources and may have in turn inspired Heywood's enterprise, but all this remains conjectural.

Equally difficult to establish is the status of the 'manuscript, a book writ in parchment' mentioned by the character of the Second Prologue in Heywood's play as its direct source. But if such a manuscript did exist, its material must have been related in some way to William of Tyre's history of the First Crusade, the standard authority on the subject throughout the Middle Ages. The original Latin version of that work was composed in Palestine between 1163 and 1183, and it was first printed in English translation by William Caxton in 1481. Caxton's translated version, entitled *Godfrey of Bologne, or the Siege and Conqueste of Jerusalem*, shares many features with Heywood's *Four Prentices* besides, obviously, its episodic format involving the heroic deeds of different figures put in parallel in their journeys and adventures through Europe and the Holy Land. Among the specific circumstances shared by Caxton's and Heywood's Godfreys is the attribution of three brothers to the hero, rather than the historical two mentioned in other sources such as Raoul de Caen's *Gesta Tancredi* (before 1118).[138] In Caxton's version, Baldwin and Eustace accompany Godfrey to the Holy Land, while the youngest brother William stays in Boulogne to look after their old mother (chapter 195). Also shared by the two versions is Godfrey's refusal to be crowned with anything but a wreath of thorn upon his accepting to become King of Jerusalem (chapter 199 in Caxton, final scene in Heywood). All the same, *The Four Prentices* is not a dramatic transposition of Caxton's *Godfrey of Bologne*, which is a work of much larger scope, starting with an account of the Nine Worthies before focusing on Godfrey and following his adventures to his death, with digressions on Peter the Hermit and other major figures from the First Crusade who do not appear in Heywood's play.

The story of the Nine Worthies is a recurring background to several heroic works in prose or verse appearing in the 1590s and specifically targeting the same audience of London apprentices as *The Four Prentices*, though it is impossible to establish with any degree of certainty whether they are sources or mere analogues to Heywood's play. Chief among them is Richard Johnson's *The Nine Worthies of London* (1592), which unambiguously identifies its preferred readership on its title-page:

'Pleasant for Gentlemen, not vnseemely for Magistrates, and most profitable for Prentises'. Accordingly, the preface, not unlike Heywood's in the 1615 edition of his play dedicated to 'the honest and high-spirited Prentises', is addressed 'To the Gentlemen Readers, as well Prentices as others'.[139] The book is an account in verse of the life and achievements of nine London apprentices from different periods, who rose to fame and glory through their heroic deeds. The ninth and last, the grocer Henry Malevert surnamed Henry of Cornhill, who fought in the Holy Land at the time of Henry IV, particularly recalls the brothers in Heywood's play, and his profession is the same as that of the youngest of them, Eustace.

A later prose work by the same author, *The Seven Champions of Christendom* (first part 1596, second part 1597), includes among its characters a cruel Sultan of Persia and a sympathetic, though heathen, King of Babylon, but their circumstances have little in common with those of the Sultan of Babylon and the Sophy of Persia who become the Crusaders' adversaries in Heywood's play.[140] The name and character of Heywood's Sultan of Babylon are likelier to have derived, directly or indirectly, from the anonymous fifteenth-century *Sultan of Babylon*, a romance staging the defeat and humiliation of a fictitious Saracen ruler by Christian heroes.[141] Mary Ann Weber Gasior also mentions a possible analogue in Thomas Lodge's *The Famous, True and Historicall Life of Robert Second Duke of Normandy* (1591).[142] That book is not concerned with the life of the same Robert of Normandy as in Heywood's play, yet its plot involves a Sultan of Babylon, although the latter invades Rome rather than being invaded by Christians in his own land. He does it in the hope of winning the hand of the Holy Roman Emperor's daughter, before being overcome by Robert and leaving in shame.

Occasions and contexts

The prologue in *The Four Prentices of London* invites the spectators to 'see Jerusalem ye never saw, [rather] than London that ye see hourly' (l. 34–5). Based on that promise, one might be tempted to consider the play primarily as an escapist romance for apprentices largely obliterating the context of the crisis of wages in the 1590s, entailing riots and Elizabeth I's proclamations specifically imposing curfews on apprentices with a view to curbing social unrest.[143] Indeed, the play makes very few references to its time and place of production, a rare exception being Eustace's wistfully remembering his old friends from 'Eastcheap, Canwick Street and London Stone' (5.226) while he is stranded in Ireland. But this would be a reductive view of the play's original contexts of reception.

A first element firmly grounding the play in the London life of its time is the occasion for its publication, made explicit in its 1615 epistle to the readers. With references to 'the honour of the City' (l. 42–43) and the Artillery Garden (l. 18), the epistle motivates the publication by timing it with the revival of the Honourable Artillery Company. First chartered by Henry VIII in 1537 and revived under James I with a new charter in 1612, that urban military company, supported by a group of London citizens praised in Heywood's epistle, was instrumental in promoting civic and national sentiments as a means to increase social cohesion and divert youthful energies from random riots. Training in an area next to Moorfields known as Artillery Garden, the Company drew enthusiasts from all ranks in the City, even and especially apprentices, to practise 'artillery', that is to say light weapons like the pike, the musket and the 'caliver', which was a light harquebus. In August and September 1615 the Company held spectacular musters remembered in several occasional works, such as Richard Niccols's *London's Artillery* (1616), dedicated to Sir John Jolles, a draper and merchant who had just been appointed Lord Mayor of London. The publication of *The Four Prentices* tunes well with the mood of civic chivalry and English patriotism characteristic of the London guild culture of the time in general, and of the Artillery Company and its 1615 musters in particular.[144] Its frontispiece, showing the four brothers wielding their pikes, adds even more to the occasional dimension of the publication. Mixing the chivalric and the civil, the engraving shows the brothers wearing medieval armour while keeping their apprentices' flat caps, thus clearly accommodating chivalric romance to the tastes and interests of London's guild culture of the likes of Sir John Jolles.

Fenella MacFarlane sees further signs of this accommodation of chivalric material to the mercantile interests of London by considering the geographic scope of the play.[145] She points out that the plot takes us both to Ireland, where Eustace materialises a fantasy of easy colonial rule by making the mourning Irish immediately trust him and serve under his command, and the Levant which holds promises of spiritual as well as material fulfilment. The apprentices' trades, dealing with textiles (mercer and haberdasher) and spices (grocer), also chime with the commercial interests of the English merchants in an area where the Levant Company, chartered in 1592, was highly active and aroused public interest at the time of the play's composition and first staging. The choice of the play's locations thus tunes itself to an English spirit of expansionism in both colonial and commercial forms, envisioning overseas territories as a terrain to conquer for English ambitions and encouraging the upward social aspiration of the trades' apprentices in that context. Even if the

plot dresses apprentice ambitions in the borrowed robes of nobility since the four brothers are actually an earl's sons, a tale of aristocratic chivalry is appropriated to celebrate the City and its guilds, with the brothers' scutcheons regularly recalling that background presence throughout the action, as well as featuring prominently on the frontispiece engraving.

Ultimately, the two-part structure of the full title of the play, *The Four Prentices of London, with the Conquest of Jerusalem*, well renders the ambiguity of a plot as well as of a genre balanced between the here and now of mercantile London and expansionist England, and the there and then of a spiritual and chivalric ideal. The link between the two remains the scope of the romance itself as a terrain preordained for conquest.

THE TEXTS

Alphonsus, King of Aragon

There is only one extant quarto edition of *Alphonsus, King of Aragon*, printed by Thomas Creede in 1599 (STC 12233). The three known surviving copies are Victoria and Albert Dyce 4248.26.Box.16.5, Huntington 31188 (accessible on EEBO) and Folger co.1578 (formerly known as the Devonshire copy). For this edition, I have relied on W.W. Greg's Malone Society Reprint of the Dyce copy, which he completes by using the Huntington copy for the missing leaf A4. Fewer than a dozen minor press variants between the three copies are listed by Norman Sanders.[146]

Three published modern editions are cited in the textual collation. Alexander Dyce's modernised text, in *The Dramatic and Poetical Works of Robert Greene and George Peele* (1861), is based on the Dyce copy. Alexander Grosart's edition, in volume 13 of *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene* (1881–86), though in old spelling and based on the Devonshire/Folger copy, follows most of Dyce's emendations regarding metre and lineation. The same is true of John Churton Collins's old-spelling text, in volume 1 of *The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene* (1905), which collates Dyce's copy and Grosart's Devonshire/Folger copy. Norman Sanders's unpublished edition (submitted for PhD in 1957) is an old-spelling collation of all remaining copies of the original quarto. Since the three copies offer very few press variants and since his edition has not been published, I have chosen not to collate it, though I cite his work in the commentary, mostly in connection with the presswork and typesetting cruces.

The Q text has headings for acts, but no divisions for scenes. The divisions in the present edition follow Greg's suggestions, and are based upon the clearing of the stage. I have regularised all speech headings, supplying and commenting on a few missing ones. The stage directions

have been kept in their original form (mostly optative and sometimes narrative), as likely to be indicative of authorial work. Original lineation has been preserved, but blank verse lines set up as half lines are pointed out and glossed, and some previous editors' suggestions for emendations are listed. Nevertheless, no attempt has been made in this edition to correct and improve the metrical shortcomings of Greene's verse in *Alphonsus*, famously remembered for its failing to 'iet vpon the stage in tragicall buskins'.[147]

The spelling and punctuation have been modernised as consistently as possible. Among the exceptions are the verb terminations for the second person singular, which I have chosen to keep for the needed extra syllable they provide in verse, and a few archaisms rendered necessary by the metre or offering an alliterative or rhyming effect, such as 'king nor kaiser' rather than 'king nor Caesar' (2.2.22), or 'sain' rather than 'said', rhyming with 'train' (2.1.165–6).

Soliman and Perseda

Soliman and Perseda was entered in the Stationers' Register on 20 November 1592. The entry reads: 'Ent. E. White: lic. the Bisshop of London: the tragedye of Salamon and Perseda'. The undated quarto printed by Edward Allde for Edward White, of which only one copy (British Library C.34.b.44) is extant, may reasonably be assumed to correspond to that entry, and therefore be tentatively dated 1592 (STC 22894). I have retained that quarto as the Q1 text and the basis for the present edition. The copy is reproduced on EEBO.

A 1599 edition, printed after Kyd's death in 1594, was also printed by Allde for White. Sixteen copies of that edition are listed in Pollard and Redgrave's *Short Title Catalogue*, six of them with the phrase 'Newly corrected and amended' added on the title-page (respectively STC 22895 and 22895a). I have collated the Huntington Library copies of the two variants of this edition as the Q2 text, using the reproductions available on EEBO.

Q1 and Q2 differ greatly in matters of spelling and punctuation, and on a couple of occasions, of lineation as well. Overall, Q2 tries to correct some of the most blatant mispunctuations and mislineations in Q1, as well as some typesetting mistakes, although it introduces some of its own. I have retained about a dozen of Q2's emendations, indicating them in the textual collations and explaining them in the notes.

I have also collated the two available modern editions produced by Frederick S. Boas (*The Works of Thomas Kyd*, 1901) and John J. Murray (Garland's Renaissance Imagination series, 1991), both of which are old-spelling editions. Boas's edition relies on Q1 and a British Library copy

of Q2 (161.b.4), as well as a third British Library quarto (c.57.c.15, formerly British Museum 11773.c.11) which he believed was another 1599 edition, but which has since been proved a modern reprint by W.W. Greg.[148] Murray's edition mostly reproduces Boas's collations of Q1 and Q2 (although there are many typographical and other mistakes in his edition), but he discards the forgery. The two editions differ on matters of lineation, with Boas choosing to keep the original lineation, while Murray substitutes prose whenever the verse becomes consistently irregular.

Lineation is a difficult issue to settle for *Soliman and Perseda*. With a few exceptions (which I have reproduced), the text is printed as verse, but the frontier between prose and verse is not clear, in terms either of printing or of distribution between the different characters. Since parody plays a major role in this play, especially in the scenes involving the vainglorious knight Basilisco and the crafty servant Piston, I have chosen to keep in its original form any passage that could qualify as doggerel verse, rather than normalising it into prose or rearranging it into iambic pentameters.

I have taken into account both Boas's and Murray's notes, as well as the notes accompanying a recent translation of the play into French by Yves Peyré.[149] Peyré's translation is entirely in prose. I have obviously not collated it, although I have consulted and used some of his editorial choices, which I mention in the notes.

Except an opening 'Actus primus', neither Q1 nor Q2 has headings for acts or divisions for scenes. I have supplied the divisions, based on the clearing of the stage. I have also regularised the speech headings. The stage directions I have mostly kept in their original form, modifying only a couple of past tenses for the sake of consistency with the dominant present tense. The spelling and punctuation have been modernised as consistently as possible.

The Four Prentices of London

There are eight known copies of the 1615 edition (STC 13321) of *The Four Prentices* (Q1) listed by Pollard and Redgrave. These are located at the Dyce collection (V&A), Bodleian (2 copies), National Library of Scotland (Edinburgh), Petworth House (Sussex), Folger, Huntington (title-page only), Newberry Library (Chicago). Comparing the Folger, Library of Congress and Bodleian copies for her edition, Gasior has found no press variant between them.[150] For this edition I have used the Bodleian copy available on EEBO as copy text. I have collated it with the Harvard and Huntington copies of the 1632 Q2 (STC 13322) also available on EEBO, and have retained twenty-four of the emendations that Q2 offers on Q1. Gasior's old-spelling edition (1980) has also been collated. There has been no modern spelling edition before this one.

There are no act and scene divisions in Q1 beyond the opening 'Actus primus, Scoena prima'. Given the essentially episodic nature of this heroic romance, it has proved difficult to divide it into acts. I have therefore supplied scene divisions only, based on the clearing of the stage. The stage directions have been kept in their original form, except for occasional Latin locutions ('exeunt omnes' changed to 'exeunt all', 'manet' changed to 'remains', according to the practice of the Revels Plays Companion Library series). Abbreviated speech prefixes have been expanded, but otherwise kept in their original forms except in cases of manifest typographical error. Spelling and punctuation have been modernised as consistently as possible. Distinction between passages in verse and prose is generally clearly marked in Q1, except where lines are broken up so as to be distributed evenly between the brothers, and where cramming on the printed page has been needed in Q1 to gain space. I have expanded those into verse lines, but have otherwise followed the lineation as it appears in Q1.

NOTES

1 Northrop Frye, *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 15, 139, 142.
2 Barbara Fuchs, *Romance* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 1.
3 Helen Cooper, *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 9–10.
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5 Fuchs, *Romance*, p. 69.
6 Arthur B. Ferguson, *The Indian Summer of English Chivalry: Studies in the Decline and Transformation of Chivalric Idealism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1960) and *The Chivalric Tradition in Renaissance England* (Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1986).
7 See for example Jennifer R. Goodman, *Chivalry and Exploration, 1298–1630* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1998), and Joan Pong Linton, *The Romance of the New World: Gender and Literary Formations of English Colonialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
8 Benedict S. Robinson, *Islam and Early Modern English Literature: The Politics of Romance from Spenser to Milton* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 2.
9 Dorothee Metlitzki, *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 120.
10 For more on each of those categories, see the various chapters in Norman Daniel, *Heroes and Saracens: An Interpretation of the* Chansons de Geste (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1984).
11 For more on this, see Jane Pettegree, *Foreign and Native on the English Stage, 1588–1611: Metaphor and National Identity* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 130.

12 See Charles Edelman's introduction to his edition of the play, *The Stukeley plays*, Revels Plays Companion Library (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).
13 I am borrowing the phrase from Jonathan Burton's title *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579–1624* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005).
14 Daniel Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570–1630* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003), p. 13.
15 Cyrus Mulready, *Romance on the Early Modern Stage: English Expansion before and after Shakespeare* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 20.
16 Mulready cites several examples, including *Guy of Warwick*, *Old Fortunatus* and *The Seven Wise Masters* (p. 20).
17 See Appendix B ('The Romantic Play 1570–1585') in her edition of *Clyomon and Clamydes* (Paris and The Hague: Mouton, 1968), pp. 195–8.
18 Peter Berek, '*Tamburlaine*'s Weak Sons: Imitation as Interpretation before 1593', *Renaissance Drama* 13 (1982): 55–82, p. 58.
19 Helen Moore, 'The Eastern Mediterranean in the English *Amadis* Cycle, Book V', *Yearbook of English Studies* 41.1 (2011): 113–25, p. 116. Moore focuses in particular on the Spanish *Amadis de Gaula* cycle, with Amadis's son Esplandian refighting the battle for Constantinople to make the Christian side victorious.
20 Robinson, *Islam and Early Modern English Literature*, p. 16.
21 Jane Hwang Dagenhardt, *Islamic Conversion and Christian Resistance on the Early Modern Stage* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), p. 162.
22 Alex Davis, *Chivalry and Romance in the English Renaissance* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2003), p. 3.
23 G.M. Pinciss, 'Thomas Creede and the Repertory of the Queen's Men, 1583–1592', *Modern Philology* 67 (1970): 321–30, p. 322.
24 Roslyn L. Knutson, *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare's Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 66. See also Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean, *The Queen's Men and Their Plays: William Shakespeare's Early Career and the Acting Companies, 1577–1594* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
25 'Alphonsus', in Chambers, vol. 3, p. 327.
26 Akihiro Yamada, 'Thomas Creede', in *The British Literary Book Trade, 1475–1700*, ed. James K. Bracken and Joel Silver, Dictionary of Literary Biography 170 (Detroit: Gale Research, 1996), pp. 65–70, p. 65.
27 Martin Wiggins, *British Drama 1533–1642: A Catalogue*, 10 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), vol. 2 (*1567–1589*), p. 384.
28 *The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene*, ed. John Churton Collins, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), vol. 1, pp. 70–1.
29 For a summary of critical arguments on this aspect, see Norman Sanders, 'An Edition of *Greene's Farewell to Folly* and *Alphonsus, King of Aragon*', unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Birmingham (October 1957), p. lv.
30 *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, 15 vols (New York: Russell and Russell, 1964; first published 1881–86), vol. 13, pp. 123, 125.
31 Grosart, *The Life and Complete Works*, vol. 3, pp. 7–8.
32 See Charles Crupi, *Robert Greene* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1986), p. 18.
33 *The Works of George Peele*, ed. A.H. Bullen, 2 vols (London: John C. Nimmo, 1888), vol. 2, p. 238.
34 This argument is summarised by W.W. Greg in the introduction of his Malone Society edition of *Alphonsus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1926), pp. viii–ix.

The reference can be found in *Henslowe's Diary*, ed. R.A. Foakes, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 319.

35 Chambers, vol. 3, p. 327.
36 Sanders, pp. xxvii–xxviii.
37 Andrew Gurr, *Shakespeare's Opposites: The Admiral's Company 1594–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 206, n. 16.
38 Pinciss, 'Thomas Creede', p. 324.
39 Henslowe, pp. 23–7, 178, 180.
40 Greg, *Alphonsus*, p. ix.
41 Jenny Sager, *The Aesthetics of Spectacle in Early Modern Drama and Modern Cinema: Robert Greene's Theatre of Attractions* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 85.
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43 *The Tragical Reign of Selimus*, ed. W. Bang, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Chiswick Press, 1908; 1964).
44 See for details David Abulafia, *The Western Mediterranean Kingdoms 1200–1500: The Struggle for Dominion* (London and New York: Longman, 1997), pp. 195–245.
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50 Irving Ribner, 'Greene's Attack on Marlowe: Some Light on *Alphonsus* and *Selimus*', *Studies in Philology* 52 (1955): 162–71, p. 163.
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52 On this aspect, see also Roslyn L. Knutson, 'Marlowe Reruns: Repertorial Commerce and Marlowe's Plays in Revival', in *Marlowe's Empery: Expanding His Critical Contexts*, ed. Sara Munson Deats and Robert A. Logan (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2002), pp. 25–42.
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55 G. K. Hunter, *English Drama 1586–1642: The Age of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 101–2.
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62 Collins, vol. 3, p. 73.
63 Storojenko, *Robert Greene*, p. 174, n. 138.
64 Richard Knolles, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603), sig. A4r.
65 Terence Spencer, 'Turks and Trojans in the Renaissance', *Modern Language Review* 47 (1952): 330–3. Isidore's account quoted on p. 331 is taken from the version of his letter in Bernard von Breydenbach's *Peregrinatio ad terram sanctam* (1486). For more details on the alleged Trojan origins of the Turks in Renaissance writings, see Robert Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk (1453–1517)* (Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1967), pp. 148–9.
66 James G. Harper, 'Turks as Trojans; Trojans as Turks: Visual Imagery of the Trojan War and the Politics of Cultural Identity in Fifteenth-Century Europe', in *Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures*, ed. Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 151–79, p. 157.
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69 *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd edition, ed. G. Blakemore Evans et al. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), p. 329, fn. 88.
70 See Samuel Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England during the Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), pp. 101–2, and more recently Stephen Schmuck, 'The "Turk" Antichrist and Elizabeth I: Reformation Politics and "The Turkes Storye" from John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (1570)', *Reformation* 10 (2005): 1–24.
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72 *John of Bordeaux or the Second Part of Friar Bacon*, ed. William Lindsay Renwick, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936).
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76 Anon., 'The Romance of the Sowdone of Babylone and of Ferumbas His Sone who Conquered Rome', in *Three Middle English Charlemagne Romances*, ed. Alan Lupack (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1990).
77 Daniel, *Heroes and Saracens*, p. 141.
78 Quoted in modernised English in Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose*, p. 392.
79 Daniel Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 7.
80 'For there is an vpstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hide*, supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blanke

verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Iohannes fac totum*, is in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrie.' (*Greenes Groats-worth of Wit*, in Grosart, *The Life and Complete Works*, vol. 12, p. 144).

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93 For the full list of occurrences in all three plays, see James E. Routh Jr, 'Thomas Kyd's Rime Schemes and the Authorship of *Soliman and Perseda* and *The First Part of Jeronimo*', *Modern Language Notes* 20.2 (February 1905): 49–51.

94 Routh, p. 51.

95 Thomas Merriam, 'Possible Light on a Kyd Canon', *Notes and Queries* 240, n.s. 42 (1995): 340–1; MacDonald P. Jackson, 'New Research on the Dramatic Canon of Thomas Kyd', *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama* 47 (2008): 107–27.

96 *Soliman and Perseda*, ed. Lukas Erne, Malone Society Reprints (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), p. xi.

97 See Chambers, vol. 4, pp. 46–7. But, choosing not to take sides in the authorship debate, Chambers lists the play as anonymous.

98 George Peele, 'The Jest of George Peele at Bristow', in Bullen, *The Works of George Peele*, vol. 2, pp. 389–90.

99 Boas, p. lvii.

100 Freeman, p. 150; Lukas Erne, *Beyond* The Spanish Tragedy*: A Study of the Works of Thomas Kyd* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 160.

101 Erne, *Soliman and Perseda*, p. xvi.

102 Henslowe, pp. 16–19.

103 The argument for this attribution, based on inter-play borrowings, is developed in Alfred Hart, *Stolne and Surreptitious Copies: A Comparative Study of Shakespeare's Bad Quartos* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press in association with Oxford University Press, 1942), pp. 352–90, quoted by Erne, *Soliman and Perseda*, p. xi.

104 Freeman, p. 149; Erne, *Beyond* The Spanish Tragedy, p. 158.

105 Erne, *Beyond* The Spanish Tragedy, p. 159.

106 Details of the fall of Rhodes in 1522 and the Knights' leaving on terms were available in England as early as 1524, with Robert Copland's translation of Jacques de Bourbon's account (possibly from a manuscript version) in *The Begynnynge and Foundacyon of the Holy Hospytall*, to which *The Syege, Cruell Oppugnacyon and Lamentable Takynge of the Cyte of Rodes* is appended. The earliest known printed version of Jacques's account in French, of which a copy is kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (B.N. Rés K 1311), is dated 1525.
107 Freeman, p. 148; Erne, *Beyond* The Spanish Tragedy, p. 164.
108 Jacques Yver, *A Courtlie Controuersie of Cupids Cautels*, trans. Henry Wotton (1578), p. 71 (misnumbered 69).
109 Freeman, p. 149.
110 T.W. Baldwin, 'On the Chronology of Thomas Kyd's Plays', *Modern Language Notes* 40.6 (June 1925): 343–9.
111 *Ibid.*, pp. 347–8.
112 Erne, *Beyond* The Spanish Tragedy, p. 163.
113 *Ibid.*, p. 163.
114 John Donne, *The* Elegies *and the* Songs and Sonnets, ed. Helen Gardner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), pp. 112–13.
115 For a compilation of sources on the siege of Rhodes and their correspondences, see Jean-Luc Nardone (ed.), *La Prise de Rhodes par Soliman le Magnifique: Chroniques et textes turcs, français, italiens, anglais et espagnols (XVIe–XVIIe siècles) traduits et commentés* (Cahors: Louve, 2010).
116 For more details on generic debates in Elizabethan framing choruses, see Hunter, *English Drama*, p. 99.
117 Erne, *Beyond* The Spanish Tragedy, pp. 193–5.
118 Freeman, pp. 147–8.
119 Anthony Munday, *Fidele and Fortunio, the Two Italian Gentlemen*, ed. Percy Simpson, Malone Society Reprints (London: Chiswick Press, 1909).
120 Anon., *The Tragedy of Locrine*, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow, Malone Society Reprints (London: Chiswick Press, 1908).
121 Nick de Somogyi, *Shakespeare's Theatre of War* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 146–54.
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123 Jeremy Lopez, *Theatrical Convention and Audience Response in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 134.
124 Freeman, p. 166.
125 Erne, *Beyond* The Spanish Tragedy, p. 197.
126 Lopez, p. 145.
127 *Ibid.*, p. 146.
128 Mary Ann Weber Gasior, *Thomas Heywood's* The Four Prentices of London*: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland, 1980), p. liii.
129 Henslowe, p. 17.
130 *Ibid.*, p. 22.
131 Frances Meres, *Palladis Tamia* (1598), fol. 283v.
132 Henslowe, pp. 22–31.
133 *Ibid.*, p. 215.
134 Alfred Harbage, rev. Samuel Schoenbaum and Sylvia Stoler Wagonheim, *Annals of English Drama, 975–1700*, 3rd edition (London and New York, 1964; 1989), pp. 86–7.
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136 Wiggins, p. 408.
137 A.C., *A Satyre Against Separatists* (1660), p. 7.
138 *The* Gesta Tancredi *of Ralph of Caen: A History of the Normans on the First Crusade*, trans. and ed. Bernard S. Bachrach and David S. Bachrach (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 60.
139 Richard Johnson, *The Nine Worthies of London* (1592), sig. A3r.
140 Richard Johnson, *The Seven Champions of Christendom (1596–7)*, ed. Jennifer Fellows (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003). The Souldan of Persia is introduced in part 1, chapter 3, and the King of Babylon in part 2, chapter 11.
141 'The Romance of the Sowdone of Babylone and of Ferumbas His Sone who Conquered Rome', in Lupack, *Three Middle English Charlemagne Romances*, pp. 1–103.
142 Gasior, pp. xxii–xxiii.
143 For more on this, see Mihoko Suzuki, 'The London Apprentice Riots of the 1590s and the Fiction of Thomas Deloney', *Criticism* 38.2 (Spring 1996): 181–217.
144 See for more details William Hunt, 'Civic Chivalry and the English Civil War', in *The Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Grafton and Ann Blair (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), pp. 204–37, pp. 213–17.
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