



Università  
Ca'Foscari  
Venezia

Department of Linguistics and  
Comparative Cultural Studies

Master's Degree programme –  
Second Cycle (*D.M. 270/2004*)  
in European, American and  
Postcolonial Languages and  
Literatures

Final Thesis

Shakespeare's "The  
Taming of the Shrew",  
between its anonymous  
source and Fletcher's  
"The Tamer Tamed".

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**Academic Year**

**2014 / 2015**



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*“My tongue will tell the anger of mine heart,  
Or else my heart, concealing it, will break.”*  
*(Shakespeare, TS, 4.3.79-80)*



## INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of my thesis is to compare three English comedies of the XVI-XVII centuries, in order to apprehend their possible relationship. My work starts with the famous *The Taming of The Shrew*, written by William Shakespeare, which is my basis for comparison. At the time of the play's publication the reactions were various, but the judgments were significant, especially from the feminine public, who did not hesitate to stand up against the openly declared misogyny of the play.

One of the most important themes of the play revolves around the condition of the woman in that period. With the aim of illustrating a theme which is both current and complex, I then decided to compare it with an anonymous play, whose title differs only for one word from its Shakespearean counterpart and which has always been labelled as a possible source: *The Taming of a Shrew*. I also compared Shakespeare's play with a probable sequel, John Fletcher's *The Tamer Tamed, or The Woman's Prize*, a comedy that drew the attention of the public of that period for its feminist subject, and that gives us a completely different portrait of the relation between the sexes.

To complete the project and build the comparison I have worked on different levels. Firstly, I closely examined the three plays, taking into consideration the plots, the dialogues, the characters, time and place, and their major themes. Secondly, both in the university library and in the web, I have read a lot of discussions about the various themes and the cultural period, as well as various scholars' critiques, from which I gathered useful information reported on my thesis.

Among others, I also took inspiration from the book of Alessandro Serpieri *Nel laboratorio di Shakespeare: Dalle fonti ai drammi. Vol. I: Il quadro teorico*, for the creation of a definite and clear comparison between the two "Shrew plays".

Going back to the project, my thesis is structured in four chapters, which will be able to give the reader a clear idea about the interdependence of the three plays.

In the first chapter I will present the primary text, *The Taming of The Shrew*, analysing its structure, its language, time and setting, as well as its historical and cultural context.

In the second chapter I will compare the plot of Shakespeare's play with the anonymous one, in order to highlight analogies and differences.

In the third chapter, I will explain in detail the textual comparison, analysing in depth the structures, the dialogues and the characters of the two plays.

To conclude, in the final chapter, I will compare *The Taming of the Shrew* with John Fletcher's famous and brilliant sequel, a supposed response to Shakespeare's play.

As the titles of the three plays were obviously often named inside the project, I decided to use some abbreviations, which the reader might find as follows:

- "TS" or "*The Shrew*": *The Taming of the Shrew*
- "AS" or "*A Shrew*": *The Taming of a Shrew*
- "TT": *The Tamer Tamed, or The Woman's Prize*



## CHAPTER ONE

### “THE TAMING OF THE SHREW”

When William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* was first performed, nobody could have guessed a so successful future. The comedy was first published in the First Folio of 1623 and as a quarto version by William Stansby for the bookseller John Smethwick in 1631, but it was probably written around 1590-1594, although there are no reliable sources to prove it exactly.

The play follows the traditional pattern for dramatic presentations: it is written in five acts<sup>1</sup>, but it begins with an introduction containing two framing scenes, often referred to as 'induction'. The structure of the play is based on the theatrical technique of the metatheatre: it consists in a 2 scenes-introductory frame and a 5 acts play-within-the-play, with a missing final frame. Furthermore, we can as well analyse the play as consisting of three plots: an introductory Sly's frame, in which a drunken tinker is deceived by a Lord, who makes him believe he is a nobleman; the shrew's main plot, in which Katherina is tamed by Petruccio, and the subplot, which recounts the events of the shrew's sister Bianca, courted by three men.

#### 1.1 PLOT AND STRUCTURE

##### 1.1.1 THE FRAME

Normally the induction determines the reasons for having the play: In Elizabethan time the term was used “in the sense of a short dramatic action introducing a full-length play, normally performed by two or more actors and creating a fictional situation different from that of the play itself.”<sup>2</sup>

The induction begins in an alehouse of England, where a Lord and his servants, after returning from hunting, notice a drunken fellow sleeping: it is

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<sup>1</sup> The scene division was made by the curator of the in folio for all Shakespeare's literary works, but we do not know if it follows the real division made by Shakespeare. Unfortunately, it is not possible to refer to the in quarto version, which is the real manuscript written by the author.

<sup>2</sup> HOSLEY, Richard, “Was there a Dramatic Epilogue to *The Taming of the Shrew*?”, in *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Rice University, 1961.

Christopher Sly, a poor tinker, who, after quarrelling with the barmaid had fallen asleep. The Lord decides to play a trick and orders his servants to take the poor man to his house and dress him like a nobleman, making him believe he had been sleeping for years. This story forms also a well-known episode of the *Arabian Nights*.

At a certain point, a play is performed for Sly, who is now totally convinced to be of noble birth.

The frame consists of only two scenes at the beginning of the play, but it does not appear again once the play-within-the play starts. It is only mentioned for the last time at the end of scene 1.1, when there is a short cross talk between Sly, "his" servant and Bartholomew:

Servant: My lord, you nod; you do not mind the play.

Sly: Yes, by Saint Anne do I – a good matter, surely. Comes there any more of it?

Bartholomew: My lord, 'tis but begun.

Sly: 'Tis a very excellent piece of work, madam lady. Would 'twere done.

(They sit and mark)<sup>3</sup>

It is not clear whether the real purpose of Shakespeare was to have the frame only at the beginning of the play or not: we might suppose this could have been either a deliberate intention or there might have existed a final frame, which could have been lost. In the first case we might suppose this was due to a simplification of the stage performance, as in this way some actors of the induction could easily act as characters of the play-within-the-play. Another reason could be that the author's aim was to use the frame only as a sort of prelude to present the main story. As a matter of fact, some connections can be observed between the induction and the rest of his play, because some elements of the former echo also later, like an anticipation of themes and elements. For example, in the induction there is a long speech delivered by the Lord about the ideal woman "with a soft low tongue" <sup>4</sup>, echoing

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<sup>3</sup> TS, 1.1.247-252

<sup>4</sup> TS, Induction, 1.113

Petruccio's taming strategies and anticipating Katherina's obedience; hawking and hunting are mentioned as aristocratic sports, as Petruccio will use hawking terms to explain his taming plan. Furthermore, Sly is tempted with those goods (like food, drink and fine raiment), that Petruccio will prohibit to Katherina during his taming plan and he is trained how to address his "wife" (Sly: "What must I call her?"<sup>5</sup>), as Katherina will be taught to speak like a proper obedient woman. Moreover, Sly orders his servants to leave him and his "wife" alone, underlining a distinction between private and public that can be found also later, for instance when Petruccio claims that he and Katherina have decided in private, that she will always be shrewish in public (TS, 2.1.308-309), or when Katherina is ashamed to kiss Petruccio in public:

Petruccio: First kiss me, Kate, and we will.

Katherina: What, in the midst of the street?

Petruccio: What, art thou ashamed of me?

Katherina: No sir, God forbid – but ashamed to kiss.

Petruccio: Why then, let's home again. – Come, sirrah, let's away.

Katherina: Nay, I will give you a kiss. (She kisses him.) Now pray thee love, stay.<sup>6</sup>

Likewise, the idea of a bet over a dog in the induction (Lord: "I would not lose the dog for twenty pound"<sup>7</sup>), is connected to the wager over wives in the last scene of the play, where the bet begins at twenty crowns (Petruccio: "Twenty crowns! I'll venture so much of my hawk or hound, but twenty times so much over my wife."<sup>8</sup>)

Lastly, two phrases of Bartholomew in the induction, disguised as Sly's wife, echo during the play in Katherina's words:

INDUCTION:

Bartholomew: Here, noble lord. What is thy will with her?<sup>9</sup>

PLAY:

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<sup>5</sup> TS, Induction, 2.105

<sup>6</sup> TS, 5.1.134-140

<sup>7</sup> TS, Induction, 1.20

<sup>8</sup> TS, 5.2.66-76

<sup>9</sup> TS, Induction, 2.100

Katherina: What is your will, that you send for me?<sup>10</sup>

INDUCTION:

Bartholomew: [...] I am your wife in all obedience.<sup>11</sup>

PLAY:

Katherina: Thy husband is thy lord [...] and craves no other tribute at thy hands but love, fair looks and true obedience.<sup>12</sup>

The frame is important when speaking about the tone of the play, as the induction gives the inset play a farcical note. In fact, in this way Shakespeare put Sly at the same level of the audience, giving the main story a more distant inclination from reality and presenting it with a light tone, as if it were a comedy performed just to amuse a drunken man.

Beyond the clear connections between the induction and the main play, Margie Burns found connections<sup>13</sup> also between the induction and the final scene, affirming that a final frame was not necessary; she even compares the figure of Sly with that of Katherina, as they are seen as the weakest characters in the play, who both undergo some kind of manipulation. Margie Burns thinks in fact that "both the Induction and the final scene necessitate [...] an atmosphere of communal festivity. [...] In each scene the festivity celebrate a marriage and/or the reaffirmation of a marriage; [...] the Induction bestows a rejoicing wife to the semi-sentient Christopher Sly. [...] So complete a happy ending, indeed, almost obviates any other ending."<sup>14</sup> Not only Margie Burns, but also other critics are of the opinion that Shakespeare did not provide a final frame, among these we can find Raymond Hook and Richard Hosley: the latter besides accounting for the limitations of actors at disposal, adds that "a dramatic epilogue, being of its very nature anticlimactic, would have tended to spoil the effect of the play proper."<sup>15</sup> He

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<sup>10</sup> TS, 5.2.106

<sup>11</sup> TS, Induction, 2.104

<sup>12</sup> TS, 5.2.152-159

<sup>13</sup> BURNS, Margie, "The ending of *The Shrew*", in Dana E. Aspinall, *The Taming of the Shrew: Critical Essays*, New York, Routledge, 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> HOSLEY, Richard, "Was there a Dramatic Epilogue to *The Taming of the Shrew*?", in *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Rice University, 1961.

also adds that in those times most of the Elizabethan plays with an induction did not provide a dramatic epilogue.

As supporters of the opposite side we find scholars like Sir Walter Greg and Peter Alexander, who think that Shakespeare did provide a final frame that was even performed but then for unknown reasons failed to be printed.

### 1.1.2 THE PLAY-WITHIN-THE-PLAY

The play proper contains the main “shrew” plot and the sister's subplot, which intertwine various times, finally converging in the last scene. The play proper identifies “the main drama following an induction. For this some critics have used the term *play within the play*, but the term begs the question of the existence of an action concluding that begun in an induction (as do also the terms *frame play* and *enveloping action*)”.<sup>16</sup>

In the first act, usually called “exposition”, the characters and the setting are introduced and the plots of both the main plot and the subplot are established: Baptista Minola, a rich merchant from Padua, has two daughters: the eldest, Katherina (sometimes called Katherine or Kate), is known for her shrewish character, while the youngest, Bianca, is of mild and gentle nature. Katherina has no suitors, while Bianca has two: the conflict is thus determined by Baptista's decision not to give permission to marry Bianca, until Katherina is married. The arrival of Petruccio from Verona is fundamental for the development of the main plot. In the sister's subplot Gremio and Hortensio agree to collaborate to find a man willing to court and marry her sister. In the meanwhile a third suitor, Lucentio, immediately falls in love with Bianca: he then decides to disguise himself as the private tutor Cambio in order to court Bianca, while his servant Tranio takes his identity. Also Hortensio uses the same trick, disguising as the music tutor Licio.

The second act contains the rising action, i.e. those actions leading to the climax:

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<sup>16</sup> HOSLEY, Richard, “Was there a Dramatic Epilogue to *The Taming of the Shrew*?”, in *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Rice University, 1961.

it focuses on the meeting between Petruccio and Katherina, his courtship and wedding arrangement. Bianca's subplot also advances, as her suitors go to Baptista's house in order to court her in disguise.

The third act contains the climax, i.e. the turning point, a fact that changes the protagonists' destiny: the marriage between Katherina and Petruccio is celebrated and thus his taming action can begin. He elaborates a specific taming device: he comes basely attired at the wedding and he escapes immediately from the wedding feast to his country house, underlining that Kate is now his property. In the meanwhile, Lucentio reveals his real identity while tutoring Bianca, and Baptista arranges her wedding with Tranio (as Lucentio).

The fourth act contains the falling action, i.e. those actions leading to the final conclusion, at this point the protagonist can win or lose against the antagonist: Katherina is brought to Petruccio's house where her taming is completed. The main part of Petruccio's plan consists in depriving Katherina of food and sleep, until she finally submits to his will. In the subplot, Hortensio (as Licio) gives up courting Bianca because he understands that she is in love with her tutor Lucentio (as Cambio), and ends up marrying a rich widow. On the contrary Lucentio is able to win Bianca's love.

The fifth act contains the denouement and the conclusion: the true identities of all the characters are revealed and all the problems solved. Katherina also gives a life lesson to the other wives with a long speech.

The main plot, regarding the shrew and the relation between sexes, was a common topic in the literature of that period in almost every country in Europe, for instance F. S. Boas found<sup>17</sup> some plot similarities even with a Danish story contained in *Shakespeare Jahrbuch vol. III* and with a Spanish story contained in *El conde Lucanor*. The centrality of the topic did not include only stories and plays, but also ballads, proverbs, jokes and oral folklore. John Harold Brunvald even made a study on the literary and oral versions of tales

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<sup>17</sup> BOAS, Frederick Samuel, *The Taming of a Shrew: Being the Original of Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew*, London: Chatto and Windus, New York: Duffield and Company, 1908.

treating the “shrew” topic and representing thirty countries back to medieval times, and discovered some common features, which are unquestionably present in every tale. The recurring motifs were:

- The taming is a play within a play or story within a story.
- The shrew is usually the elder of two daughters and is identified with the devil.
- The father, a wealthy man, warns the prospective suitor and offers a large dowry.
- The suitor claims that he can tame the shrew and lays a bet that he can do so.
- At the wedding, the groom arrives late, is dressed poorly and rides an old nag; he has a falcon, he behaves boorishly and refuses to stay before beginning the trip home, during which bride and groom ride on one horse or the husband rides while the wife walks.
- The taming occurs at the couple's home or on a trip to visit the wife's parents. The husband beats his servants and/or punishes his dog for a supposed fault as a warning to his wife.
- There is a school where husbands learn shrew-taming.
- Taming tactics include depriving the wife of food and getting her to agree to her husband's absurd statements: several tales include the husband calling the sun the moon and a man a woman.
- The test of the wife's obedience takes place after dinner at the father-in-law's house; during the test, the wife looks over some new clothes; the reward is a prize offered by the father-in-law.
- The wife comes at once when called and is polite to all; she throws her cap on the floor and steps on it, pulls off her husband's boots to clean them, places her hand under his foot, brings others wives in and lectures them, kisses her husband.
- Others concede that the shrew's husband has won the victory.<sup>18</sup>

We can easily notice that Shakespeare conformed almost in everything to these common features: although there is no certain proof that Shakespeare took hints from the traditional taming folklore, it is obvious that the 'shrew taming' was a central and recurrent subject of those times.

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<sup>18</sup> SHAKESPEARE, William, *The Taming of the Shrew*, edited by Barbara Hodgdon, The Arden Shakespeare, London, 2010.

## 1.2 INCONSISTENCIES

The text presents some inconsistencies at the level of characters, but these incongruities take place only in the sister's subplot and not in the induction or the main plot. These inconsistencies lead scholars to believe that Shakespeare's text could have been revised, adapted or even the result of a collaboration.

On his wedding day Petruccio is late and Tranio (as Lucentio) tries to reassure Baptista and his daughter:

Tranio: Patience, good Katherine, and Baptista too, upon my life, Petruccio means but well; whatever fortune stays him from his word, though he be blunt, I know him passing wise, though he be merry, yet withal he's honest.<sup>19</sup>

Tranio's comment seems inappropriate and should have been uttered by Hortensio, which is presented in the play as Petruccio's friend from the beginning (Petruccio: "Verona, for a while I take my leave to see my friend in Padua, but of all my best-beloved and approved friend Hortensio"<sup>20</sup>). We might suppose that Tranio has known Petruccio since maximum two or three days, therefore it is quite impossible that he could know the peculiarities of his character. Moreover, when Petruccio arrives, Tranio even scolds him for his shameful attire, showing a familiarity between the two that is extremely improbable: again, the same words would be perfectly suitable in Hortensio's mouth:

Tranio: Not so well apparelled as I wish you were.<sup>21</sup>

Tranio: See not your bride in these unreverent robes; go to my chamber; put on clothes of mine.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> TS, 3.2.21-25

<sup>20</sup> TS, 1.2.1-4

<sup>21</sup> TS, 3.2.89

<sup>22</sup> TS, 3.2.111-112



As Hortensio in that moment of the play is disguised as Licio, he could not take part to the ceremony, therefore we might suppose that Shakespeare had to find someone else to speak as Petruccio's friend. Nevertheless, these inconsistencies made some scholars, in particular J. Dover Wilson, believe that Shakespeare might have taken inspiration from an earlier draft of the play, where Hortensio was not one of Bianca's suitors and thus he could be present at the wedding and speak in that way. Shakespeare might have then developed the scene, by transforming Hortensio in a new suitor and making him disguise as a music teacher: this might be a probable justification for transferring Hortensio's words to Tranio.

Another scene that could prove the fact that in origin Hortensio was not supposed to be one of Bianca's suitors occurs when Lucentio, disguised as Cambio, reveals his real identity to Bianca during his lesson: he tells that he is Lucentio, disguised to obtain her love, and that Lucentio is in reality his man Tranio, so that "we might beguile the old pantaloons"<sup>23</sup>. In this way Lucentio admits that he counts as his rival only the old Gremio, although he knew at the beginning that Bianca had already two suitors. When Baptista is deciding which one between Tranio (as Lucentio) and Gremio should win Bianca's love, there is no mention of Hortensio as well, even though Baptista knew that Hortensio was one of his daughter's wooers.

Moreover, it is strange that, when in the fourth act Licio reveals to Tranio to be the real Hortensio, Tranio replies "Signor Hortensio, I have often heard of your entire affection to Bianca [...]"<sup>24</sup>, as if he had never met him before and was speaking only by hearsay. This is not possible, as we know that in the first act Grumio and Hortensio meet Tranio (as Lucentio) on the road to Baptista's house and they ask the latter to bear the expenses of Petruccio's wooing, if he wants to be Bianca's suitor as well. After this, they even go eating and drinking together: it is thus not possible that Tranio acts later as if he has never met Hortensio before.

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<sup>23</sup> TS, 3.1.36

<sup>24</sup> TS, 4.2.22-23

G. I. Duthie conjectures that "in *The Shrew* Shakespeare's only interest in having Hortensio as a suitor to Bianca is to motivate his disguising himself as Licio, a procedure that produces comic situations."<sup>25</sup> Effectively, after Hortensio's disguise takes place, nobody seems to count him among the wooers anymore and after his disguise has been revealed, a widow is immediately procured to Hortensio, about whom anybody in the play has never heard before. G. I. Duthie noticed that "Gremio [...] is the incongruous suitor who is very properly to be rejected and left isolated at the end: but it would be clumsy to leave Hortensio also unattached at the end"<sup>26</sup>. Shakespeare probably did not want to come to a standstill, and thus he was induced to create a new character: the Widow only appears in the last scene of the play and just in time to act as the third wife on the wives wager. Another little incongruity lies in the fact that at a certain point Tranio tells Bianca and Lucentio that Hortensio has decided to go to Petruccio's house to learn how to tame a shrew. However, there are no references to this in the play, as if something was missing in the previous dialogue between Tranio and Hortensio.

Similarly, in act 4.5, Petruccio informs Vincentio that Kate's sister has married his son Lucentio and Hortensio swears the same thing. Nevertheless, neither Petruccio nor Hortensio can know this, as it has not occurred yet. Since Baptista in the second act had affirmed that the Sunday after Kate's wedding shall be the day of Bianca's wedding, we only might suppose that day has arrived and thus the two characters conjecture that the ceremony has been celebrated. However, the fact that Bianca is marrying with Lucentio is for Petruccio a mere supposition. On the other hand, Hortensio's confirmation of Bianca marrying Lucentio is a real contradiction: to his knowledge, both him and Tranio (as Lucentio) had previously forsworn Bianca.

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<sup>25</sup> DUTHIE, George Ian, "*The Taming of a Shrew and The Taming of the Shrew*", in *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 19, no. 76, Oxford University Press, 1943.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

To conclude, two other inconsistencies appear when Baptista in the second act explicitly invites Bianca's suitors for dinner, but then says good-bye and everybody goes his own way; and also when Petruccio, on the first wedding night, reveals that "last night she slept not, nor tonight she shall not"<sup>27</sup>: this is not possible as the night before he did not sleep with Kate as they were not married, therefore he cannot know whether she slept or not.

Raymond Houk took defence for the integrity of *The Shrew* and tried to dismantle the hypothesis of an adaptation or collaboration, by justifying Tranio's questioned behaviour in *The Shrew*. He says that "as the prospective son-in-law to Baptista, Tranio functions as Baptista's right-hand man. [...] The honour of Baptista's house is threatened; [...] Tranio, true to his role as Lucentio, can only reassure Baptista and Katherine."<sup>28</sup> He also adds that in Tranio's place "any bystander who had a sense of decorum, and some little sympathy for the situation of Baptista and the outraged Katherine, would have felt justified in adding his expostulations to those of Baptista and Katherine [...]"<sup>29</sup>.

Moreover, it is not improbable that after Tranio's invitation to carouse in the first act, he could have had the chance to know better Petruccio and thus he could have been in the right position to declare those statements later. In addition, it must be taken into consideration that such incongruities were not easy to notice during the performances and that even if recognized, the audience knew that characters could also meet and talk other times beyond what was performed in front of them.

### 1.3 TIME AND SETTING

The play is set in England and Italy. The induction scene takes place in a tavern of the English countryside, from where the tinker Sly is carried to a Lord's estate, where he watches the performed play. In the original stage directions, Shakespeare specified that Sly and his "wife" Bartholomew

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<sup>27</sup> TS, 4.1.187

<sup>28</sup> HOUK, Raymond A., "The Integrity of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*", in *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, Vol. 39, No. 2, University of Illinois Press, 1940.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

watched the performance “aloft”, so they might have sat in the upper stage, thus reminding the public that Christopher Sly is both an actor and a spectator.

On the other hand, the play-within-the-play is set in Italy, and more precisely mostly in Padua, where Baptista Minola lives with his daughters. The protagonists of the inset play are in fact rich merchants and this city perfectly represents the rising upper-middle-class of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Padua, “nursery of arts”<sup>30</sup>, was also well known for its illustrious university, thus it is not by chance that the play is based on the topics of learning and teaching. Other Italian northern cities are mentioned in the play: Pisa, native town of Lucentio and his father, Florence, the city where Lucentio was raised, Verona, which is Petruccio’s home town and finally Mantua, the city where the merchant of the fourth act comes from.

One of the reasons for which Shakespeare might have chosen to set the play in Italy is because in the 16<sup>th</sup> century the English collective consciousness saw Italy as a prestigious destination where to perfect artistic education. Italy was the seat of the Humanist learning and Lucentio tells clearly at the beginning of the play that his father has sent him to Italy for studying. In particular, Padua was an important centre of Aristotelianism and in the first scene we can easily find references to Aristotle:

Lucentio: Virtue and that part of philosophy will I apply that treats of happiness by virtue specially to be achieved.<sup>31</sup>

Tranio: Let’s be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray, or so devote to Aristotle’s checks as Ovid be an outcast quite abjured.<sup>32</sup>

The central idea of Aristotle was in fact that man’s happiness could only be achieved by practising its own higher virtues and not by devoting to riches and pleasures.

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<sup>30</sup> TS, 1.1.2

<sup>31</sup> TS, 1.1.18-20

<sup>32</sup> TS, 1.1.31-33

Although the inset play is set in Italy and the protagonists are supposed to be Italian, the characters seem to be the mirror of the 16<sup>th</sup> century English merchant class: they are interested only in pursuing money and business and they even treat marriage in business terms.

As regards the time, it is difficult to establish a definite scheme, as time indications in the play are really sporadic. Therefore I will principally follow P. A. Daniel's theory.<sup>33</sup>

- *Day 1* comprehends the first act, and therefore Lucentio and Tranio's arrival, Baptista's prohibition to marry Bianca and Petruccio's arrival. The only time reference regards Tranio's invitation to the other suitors to 'contrive *this afternoon* and quaff carouses to our mistress' health'<sup>34</sup>: thus, that day ends probably with the suitor's meeting. Nevertheless, Petruccio reveals to Hortensio that he would like to see Kate before going to sleep: 'I will not sleep, Hortensio, till I see her'<sup>35</sup>.
- *Day 2* consists of the second act: Baptista's meeting with Petruccio, Bianca's suitors and schoolmasters, Kate and Petruccio's meeting and the wedding arrangement. After having sent the tutors to his daughters, Baptista invites Bianca's wooers to dinner: "We will go walk a little in the orchard. And then to *dinner*"<sup>36</sup>, even though at the end of the scene he thanks everybody and takes his leave without mentioning the dinner again.

On this day they also arrange Kate's wedding, which is confirmed by Petruccio to be next Sunday ("upon *Sunday* is the wedding day"<sup>37</sup>, "we will be married on *Sunday*"<sup>38</sup>). He also adds that he is leaving for Venice to buy some clothes for the wedding. Baptista decides also that Bianca shall wed the Sunday after Kate's wedding: "on *Sunday* next you know,

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<sup>33</sup> DANIEL, Peter Augustin, *A time-analysis of the plots of Shakespeare's plays*, Trübner and Co., London, 1879.

<sup>34</sup> TS, 1.2.275-276

<sup>35</sup> TS, 1.2.102

<sup>36</sup> TS, 2.1.110-111

<sup>37</sup> TS, 2.1.301

<sup>38</sup> TS, 2.1.328

my daughter Katherine is to be married. – Now on *the Sunday following* shall Bianca be bride to you”<sup>39</sup>.

- Day 3 includes the first scene of the third act: we are at Baptista's house and the schoolmaster Cambio and Licio are tutoring Bianca. This day could occur some days after Day 2, but it is undoubtedly Saturday, as Bianca at a certain point is called to help with the organization of the wedding and a servant remarks her: “you know *tomorrow* is the wedding day”<sup>40</sup>.
- Day 4 comprehends the second scene of the third act, in which Kate's wedding takes place, and the first scene of the fourth act, when the newlyweds arrive at Petruccio's country house (the house lies in an indefinite place about four or five hours from Padua<sup>41</sup>). When the newlyweds abandon the wedding banquet, Petruccio specifies that he “must away *today before night* come”<sup>42</sup>.
- Day 5 includes the second scene of the fourth act: Tranio and Hortensio forswear Bianca while she is flirting with Lucentio, in the meanwhile the merchant arrives. This scene could take place the day after Kate's wedding or two-three days after it.
- Day 6 comprehends various scenes, but the actions all occurs in the same day and more precisely on the Sunday after Kate's wedding, on the basis of what Baptista has told in the first scene of the second act. The action shifts from Petruccio's country house of act 4.3, to Padua in act 4.4, when the Merchant meets Baptista. In act 4.5 Kate and Petruccio are on their way to Padua with Hortensio and Grumio; act 5.1 and act 5.2 are the final scenes, set in Padua again.

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<sup>39</sup> TS, 2.1.396-399

<sup>40</sup> TS, 3.1.82

<sup>41</sup> When Petruccio and Katherine are talking about how long it takes to reach her father's house, he says: “I think 'tis now some seven o'clock, and well we may come there by dinner-time” (TS, 4.3.186-187). Since dinnertime is between 11 and noon, we can conjecture that Petruccio's house lies four or five hours from Padua.

<sup>42</sup> TS, 3.2.189

According to this scheme, the play performs six days, but it can also be supposed that *Day 1* and *Day 2* are the same day, thus conceiving that the play is based on five days and not six. This is due to the lacking of clear time indications: the fact that Tranio invites the other suitors to meet in the afternoon in the first act, and that Baptista invites them to dinner in the second act, seems to prove that we are talking of two different days. As P. A. Daniel explained, "Petruccio's resolve to see Katherine *before he sleeps* is in favour of one day, and would be conclusive but for the *afternoon's* carouse proposed by Tranio".<sup>43</sup> However, this might be a possible reliable scheme of time and setting:

DAY	ACT/SCENE	SETTING
DAY 1	Act 1.1 Act 1.2	- Padua (somewhere in the road near Baptista's house and at Hortensio's house)
DAY 2	Act 2	- Padua (at Baptista's house)
Probable interval of a day or two		
DAY 3 Saturday, the eve of Kate's wedding	Act 3.1	- Padua (at Baptista's house)
DAY 4 Sunday, Kate's wedding day	Act 3.2 Act 4.1	- Padua - at Petruccio's country house
Probable interval		
DAY 5 Day after Kate's wedding or two-three days after	Act 4.2	Padua (at Baptista's house)
Probable interval		

<sup>43</sup> DANIEL, Peter Augustin, *A time-analysis of the plots of Shakespeare's plays*, Trübner and Co., London, 1879.

<p style="text-align: center;">DAY 6 Sunday after Kate's wedding: Bianca's wedding day</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Act 4.3 Act 4.4 Act 4.5 Act 5.1 Act 5.2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-Petruccio's country house - Padua (at Baptista's and Lucentio's house) - somewhere on the road to Padua - Padua (at Lucentio's house)</p>
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#### 1.4 GENRE

*The Taming of the Shrew* can be surely defined a comedy, as it contains the basic rules of this genre: as a comedy it shares humorous characters, witty dialogues, the exploration of serious issues through comic misunderstandings, controversial love stories, family conflicts, confusion and disguises, and finally the happy ending.

Shakespeare did borrow also from the Italian *Commedia dell'arte*, with the figure of Gremio, who is defined a "pantaloon": *Pantalone* represented in fact the typical foolish Venetian merchant, an old and depraved man, interested in money and young women.

In the induction the play is presented also like a "kind of history"<sup>44</sup>, as in Elizabethan time this term could be used also with the meaning of "modern story" rather than of a proper history play: the play is in fact a portrait of that time, with the central theme of the role of women within family and marriage. Some critics also suggest some similarities with the Gothic drama, although it was still an unknown genre at that time, as the play presents some obscure undertones: Petruccio's conduct is sometimes extreme and brutal and his taming strategies also involve some kind of tortures.

*The Taming of the Shrew* also takes something from the farce, due to the presence of a frame but also as the figure of Petruccio is sometimes too extravagant and improbable, for instance when he dresses up like a fool for his wedding, or when he rejects the tailor's work with absurd explanations.

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<sup>44</sup> TS, Induction, 2.137



## 1.5 LANGUAGE AND TEXT

The play is written both in prose and in verse. The choice of a register rather than another suggests sometimes different social classes, for example, when in the induction Sly starts to believe in his noble ancestry, he moves from a plain coarse prose to an elegant unrhymed iambic pentameter, even using the royal plural.

Nevertheless also some low-class figures such as the servants, show a good mastering of the language, for example Tranio uttering Latin sentences, even if in an imperfect way.

Most of the characters, especially Lucentio, speak a literary and conventional language often consisting of proverbs, set phrases, references to books or Latin citations, on the contrary, Petruccio and Katherina speak in a more direct, witty and spontaneous language, which seems more real than the hypocrite conversations between Bianca and her suitors.

The tone of the play is humorous and playful, for example when Petruccio taunts Kate while taming her, but it is also introspective, as Shakespeare gives his audience various causes for reflection, for example the theme of women's subjugation of that time. The play thus shows an alternation of dramatic and comic registers.

During Petruccio and Katherina's first meeting, the dialogue is full of word plays, jibes and implied allusions:

Petruccio: You lie, in faith, for you are called plain Kate, and bonny Kate, and sometimes 'Kate the Curst'; but Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom, Kate of the Kate Hall, my super-dainty Kate, for dainties are all cates, and therefore 'Kate' –take this of me, Kate of my consolation: hearing thy mildness praised in every town, thy virtues spoke of and thy beauty sounded –yet not so deeply as to thee belongs –myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.

Katherina: 'Moved'. In good time, let him that moved you hither re-move you hence. I knew you at the first you were a movable.

Petruccio: Why, what's a movable?

Katherina: A joint stool.<sup>45</sup>

Petruccio: A herald, Kate? O, put me in thy books.

Katherina: What is your crest –a coxcomb?

Petruccio: A combless cock, so Kate will be my hen.

Katherina: No cock of mine: you crow too like a craven.<sup>46</sup>

Petruccio: Nay, come, Kate, come; you must not look so sour.

Katherina: It is in my fashion when I see a crab.

Petruccio: Why, there's no crab, and therefore look not sour.

Katherina: There is, there is.

Petruccio: Then show it me.

Katherina: Had I a glass, I would.

Petruccio: What, you mean my face?

Katherina: Well aimed of such a young one.<sup>47</sup>

## 1.6 CITATIONS

Throughout the text we can easily find allusions and references to literature and philosophy, for example with Sly's bad Spanish "paucas pallabris" from Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*. In the induction there is an important reference to the *Metamorphoses* by Ovid, with the figures of Adonis, Io and Daphne. *Metamorphoses* was a popular source of erotic tales that Shakespeare knew both in Latin and English, and anticipates the theme of transformation. Ovid is also mentioned with *The art of Love*<sup>48</sup> while Lucentio as Cambio gives a lecture on literature to Bianca in the second scene of the fourth act: the book teaches men and women how to win somebody's love.

In the play we find a strong influence of Gascoigne's *Supposes*, as for instance in the first act, Lucentio is introduced having two servants, like in *Supposes*, where Philogano (Lucentio's equivalent) has two servants, Dulipo and Lytio. In the fourth act the work is alluded as well, as a merchant is carrying bills for money by exchange from Florence, which was the financial centre of Italy, like his counterpart in Gascoigne's *Supposes*.

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<sup>45</sup> TS, 2.1.184-198

<sup>46</sup> TS, 2.1.226-229

<sup>47</sup> TS, 2.1.230.237

<sup>48</sup> *Ars Amatoria* of Ovid.

Nevertheless the most explicit reference to Gascoigne's work takes place in the second act, with Tranio's sentence that "I see no reason but supposed Lucentio must get a father called supposed Vincentio"<sup>49</sup>.

Other references are for example the citation of Grissel, as the model of the ideal, patient and obedient wife, which is a character found in Boccaccio's *Decameron* and in Chaucer's *Clerk's tale*.

In addition to references to popular literature, we can also find a few religious citations coming from the Bible, in the induction and in the final scene, and more precisely from the Genesis, the Ephesians and Peter. In the last scene, Katherina's speech refers also to some Homilies.

In the induction, Sly also mentions two historical figures, although he misquotes them: he says "Go by, *Saint Jeronimy*", confusing Saint Jerome with Hieronimo of the *Spanish Tragedy* and he also claims that his family comes from 'Richard Conqueror', probably referring to William the Conqueror.

## 1.7 TITLE

It is easy to understand that the title alludes to a typical unruly and disobedient wife who in the opinion of the society of that time had to be curbed and dominated by her husband.

However, the term "shrew" is applied not only to Katherina, but later also to Petruccio, as he turns out to act in a very cruel way to tame Katherina.

The term "taming", i.e. the process of domestication of the woman, is used by Petruccio throughout the play to explain his strategy to change Katherina from a scold to the perfect woman. His methods are of the maximum cruelty and involve starvation and sleep deprivation; Kate is as well compared to an animal, as Petruccio describes his strategy like the training of a wild falcon.

## 1.8 THEMES

### 1.8.1 FEMALE SUBMISSION AND MALE SUPREMACY

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<sup>49</sup> TS, 2.1.410-411

The main theme of the play revolves around the role of the woman within the family and marriage. The protagonist Katherina is in fact subjected first to her father and then to her husband: she has not control over her father's decision to marry her to the surly Petruccio and once married she is totally controlled and dominated by her husband at home. Her husband's taming devices involve real tortures, like food and sleep deprivation, as well as psychological abuse: Katherina is in fact obliged to speak like a proper compliant wife and even to say whatever her husband wants her to say, culminating at the moment when she is forced to agree that the sun is the moon. The most evident admission of female submission is described in the longest speech of the play, delivered by Katherina in the last scene: she reveals, from a patriarchal point of view, the appropriate behaviour of the ideal wife, underlining women's duties to their husbands, at the end even kneeling down and fondling Petruccio's feet. The speech contains various Elizabethan-Jacobean commonplaces, as well as biblical references, for example by declaring that 'thy husband is thy Lord'<sup>50</sup> from Genesis. *The Shrew's* final speech is grounded also on some books of that age: the *Book of Common Prayer*, the *Homily of the State of Matrimony* and the *Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion*.

### 1.8.2 MONEY AND MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE

Another important theme is money, which turns out to be of the greatest importance in the upper-middle-class: money is the reason of Petruccio and Katherina's wedding, as Petruccio is attracted by the large dowry of her father, and money is as well the reason for Lucentio and Bianca's wedding, as Lucentio is able to win over the other suitors because of his powerful affluence. Bianca's wooing is in fact mainly based on a sort of challenge between her suitors, to prove her father which of them has the best dowry to offer. It must be underlined anyway, that Bianca and Lucentio's love is reciprocated, while the one of her sister is not: Petruccio decides in fact to

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<sup>50</sup> Genesis, 3.16

marry Katherina even before ever seeing her, in a marriage of convenience organised by his father without her approval. Petruccio and Katherina are in fact the mirror of the couples of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when people mostly did not marry for love, but they probably learned to know and love each other in the course of time. Also in *The Taming of the Shrew* Katherina seems to be happy at the end, uttering a long speech about the ideal wife and even kissing Petruccio; but we do not know if Katherina has really undergone a real transformation or if she is just lying and saying what her husband wants to hear. Hortensio as well decides to marry a wealthy widow for money, as in those times a woman, after her husband's death, could be able to inherit a considerable amount of land and riches, which would later pass to her second husband once remarried. Consequently, it seems clear that the male characters of the play consider marriage as a mere business deal and women as wares to be negotiated.

Money is mentioned also referring to wagers, as in the induction the Lord alludes to a bet over dogs, while in the last scene takes place the famous bet over wives for a hundred crowns.

### 1.8.3 ILLUSION AND DISGUISE

With the Lord's joke, another of the main themes of the play is clear from the beginning of the frame: illusion. In *The Taming of the Shrew* in fact, all the characters live in a fake reality, which is different from the real one, or they transform themselves, so nothing seems to be what it truly is: Sly believes immediately to be someone else, forgetting his real self, Bianca's suitors disguise themselves as tutors, the servant Tranio disguises himself as his master and also Baptista seems to be a lovely father but in reality he only wants to marry his daughters for money. Even Katherina, behind her shrewish character, which is probably just a 'barrier' from a father who only appreciates her sister (we can see in the play that Baptista always takes Bianca's side and never that of Kate), demonstrates at the end that she can be an obedient and faithful wife. Illusion is so strong in this play that the characters seem to become what they are acting, for example Tranio. In the

fourth act Biondello addresses Lucentio as Cambio and refers to Tranio as “his master”:

Biondello: Cambio.

Lucentio: What sayst thou, Biondello?

Biondello: You saw my master wink and laugh upon you?<sup>51</sup>

The reality appears at the end, when all the disguises are revealed, and Bianca and the widow, starting to show their real characters, come out to be the real shrews. Thus, the transformations during the play can involve physical disguise, as well as behaviour and psychological changes.

#### 1.8.4 EDUCATION AND SOCIAL ROLES

The play is based on the process of learning and teaching, but this should not be interpreted only as academic learning, as two of the protagonists disguise themselves as tutors, but also as learning from a real experience. During the play, in fact, unruly characters such as Sly and Katherina are taught by mocking and humiliation what is their place in society. This is an important hint, as the painful situations suffered by Kate and Sly set the two characters closer, underlining that in Elizabethan times women, even if noble, could be treated like low class figures. Throughout the play is shown the disparity between the high and low classes, especially in the induction, with the Lord's joke, but also in Petruccio and Katherina's relationship: she accuses him of treating her worse than a beggar.

#### 1.9 CRITICISM

The audience of that time was divided about the real meaning of *The Shrew*, as one part was amused by the play's twists and Katherina's harsh treatment, while the other part, especially the feminine side, did not tolerate this and often highlighted the presumed misogynistic and patriarchal nature of the play, in particular as regards Petruccio's taming strategy and Katherina's final

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<sup>51</sup> TS, 4.4.72-75

speech. With the rising of the feminist movements during the ages the debate was spread also among modern readers.

The historians often describe the English culture of the 16th and 17th century as a “culture of violence”: public lashings, hangings, burnings and beheadings were really common both for reasons related to public order and to contrast delinquency. Therefore, it is not difficult to believe that it was usual also inside the household to impose violence to maintain the order: wife beating in early Modern England was based on the popular belief that it was a man's right to beat his wife if this was aimed to correct her and to prevent her from being rebellious to her husband's commands. Wife beating was only punished when claimed to be outrageously brutal, which made non-lethal violence to be slowly accepted as a normal ritual.

Some apologists of Shakespeare have defended the comedy by underlining the existence of the induction as a proof that the play has not to be taken literally, but contains a moral meaning achieved through exaggeration effects, while other critics have argued that Shakespeare did add the induction on purpose to defend himself, so that the audience would not react in a bad way but could take the benefit of the doubt about his intentions. Nevertheless, we must underline that Petruccio does not use any kind of violence on Katherina, except the fact of humiliating her, so if he was so devious in his plan, he could have been much more abusive. On the other hand, she is the one slapping and insulting him during their first meeting.

Even if a vast part of *The Shrew's* readers found Kate's taming process shocking, Frances E. Dolan highlights how domestic violence intended as wife-beating does not occur in *The Shrew*, although some other kinds of domestic violence do occur, for instance the beating of servants by both master and mistress. He claims that Petruccio's taming strategy “relies on physical violence, directed at those near her and enacted before her eyes’ and thus that ‘he directs his violence at his subordinates [...] to remind

Katharine that she, too, is his subordinate and that he could beat her if he chose."<sup>52</sup>

We can see in fact that Petruccio does use some kinds of physical violence in the play but never against Kate: in the first act he wrings Grumio's ear when he does not understand his order, during the wedding ceremony he slaps the priest and throws sops<sup>53</sup> in the sexton's face, he beats Grumio on their way home because Kate's horse has fallen, and once at home he hits his servants. Another debate involves the meaning of Katherina's final speech in the second scene of the fifth act. Some scholars have theorized it can be interpreted in two ways: the audience can either believe in a truly change of behaviour and thus in the sincere position of Katherina, or suppose that she is just lying and saying what her husband wants her to say. In the former case, Petruccio would have really succeeded in taming her wife, or Kate might have truly understood that her conduct was not suited for a good wife, thus sincerely believing that the only way to be happy within marriage could be this one. On the contrary, in the latter case, the clever Kate might be ironically acting the part of the obedient wife and just pretend she has been tamed, either with the intention to mock Petruccio by making him believe he is a powerful husband, or because she probably understands this can be the only way to manage her relation. This might be the more coherent possibility, as it is difficult that a determined and strong-willed character like Katherina's could really be bent so easily. An important situation, which can support this latter interpretation, might be when Kate declares that the sun is the moon: also in that case she obviously knows the truth but we might suppose she lies just to please Petruccio.

Another parallel can be drawn with the declaration of Sly's wife in the induction, who acts the part of the proper obedient wife, although we know that "she" is pretending to be like that; this can also be a sort of hint of Kate pretending to be an obedient wife.

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<sup>52</sup> DOLAN, Frances E., "Household chastisements: Gender, Authority, and 'Domestic Violence'", in *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999.

<sup>53</sup> Pieces of cake soaked in wine, usually shared with the wedding guests.



On the other hand, a reverse case is that of her sister Bianca: she behaves like an impeccable and obedient daughter from the beginning, making every male character of the play believe she would be the perfect wife, but turning out to be a real shrew at the end. There are two hints in the play, which allude to Bianca as the probable “shrew substitute”:

Baptista: Proceed in practice with my younger daughter; she's apt to learn and thankful for good turns.<sup>54</sup>

Tranio: Shall sweet Bianca practice how to bride it?<sup>55</sup>

As Margie Burns noticed: “Incidentally, the suggestions about ‘practice’ for Bianca, while juxtaposing her to Katherine, hint subliminally at her constantly ongoing if quiet rehearsal as understudy in the role of the shrew.”<sup>56</sup>

If on the one hand Kate seems submissive in the last scene, we must observe anyway that on the other hand she still rules at the end: she seems in fact to have shifted her power to another target, changing from physical violence to domination through speech. Frances E. Dolan states that Petruccio “clearly has the upper hand, because he controls Katherine’s access to material resources, [...] and, as the husband, he is assumed to be the one who should be on top”, but she also admits that “he rewards Katherine’s submission to him by authorizing her to domineer over others.”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> TS, 2.1.163-164

<sup>55</sup> TS, 3.2.252

<sup>56</sup> BURNS, Margie, “The ending of *The Shrew*”, in Dana E. Aspinall, *The Taming of the Shrew: Critical Essays*, New York, Routledge, 2002.

<sup>57</sup> DOLAN, Frances E., “Household chastisements: Gender, Authority, and ‘Domestic Violence’”, in *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999.



## CHAPTER TWO

### TEXTUAL COMPARISON WITH THE ANONYMOUS "THE TAMING OF A SHREW"

*The Taming of the Shrew* was often connected to an anonymous play called *The Taming of a Shrew*, supposed to have been published for the first time 26 years before Shakespeare's version, in 1594.

The close relations between the two plays lead most of the scholars to believe that the anonymous comedy could be considered as a source of the Shakespearean *Shrew*.

To analyse and compare the two plays, the creation of a sequence by sequence synopsis was necessary, in order to highlight the plays' essential parts; the comparison is then presented in the form of a tabulation, which makes more clear and visible the correspondence between the parts, the possible omissions and inventions.

This is a solution taken from Alessandro Serpieri's *Nel laboratorio di Shakespeare: Dalle fonti ai drammi. Vol. I: Il quadro teorico*, in which the author compared the outline of some Shakespeare's plays with the chronology of the historic sources.

The main units of the synopsis are marked by a title: inside there are the sequences, which in turn are divided into different subsequences or actions. When two sequences or actions are on the same line, they are similar in both plays, while when there is a blank space, it means that that sequence or action was added to a play or omitted by the other.

The segmentation of units and sequences was made on the basis of the content, taking into consideration the most significant actions for the development of the plot.

It is also visible that the subdivision of acts and scenes made in the in folio corresponds for most of the times to the subdivision of the main units done in this analysis.

## **THE TAMING OF THE SHREW**

### **AT THE ALEHOUSE (Induction 1)**

1. *The Hostess of an alehouse throws the drunken tinker Christopher Sly out of her tavern*
  - a) Sly then falls asleep.
  - b) Soon arrive the Lord and his Huntsmen, after a day of hunting, and notice Sly sleeping on the ground.
  - c) The Lord wants to play a trick to teach Sly a lesson, by making him believe he is a nobleman.
  - d) He orders his Huntsmen to carry Sly to his estate, dress him like a lord, give him delicious food and act the part of his servants.
  
2. *Meanwhile, a group of actors show up*
  - a) The Lord asks them to perform a play for a Lord, which is Sly in reality.
  
  - b) The Lord also orders his page Bartholomew to act the part of Sly's wife and explains how the role of a proper obedient wife should be.

## **THE TAMING OF A SHREW**

### **AT THE ALEHOUSE**

1. *The Tapster of an alehouse throws the drunken tinker Sly out of his tavern*
  - a) Sly then falls asleep.
  - b) Soon arrive the Lord and his Huntsmen, after a day of hunting, and notice Sly sleeping on the ground.
  - c) The Lord wants to play a trick to teach Sly a lesson, by making him believe he is a nobleman.
  - d) He orders his Huntsmen to carry Sly to his estate, dress him like a lord, give him delicious food and act the part of his servants.
  
2. *Meanwhile, a group of actors show up*
  - a) The Lord asks them to perform a play for a Lord, which is Sly in reality.
  - b) The players says that they will perform a comedy called *The taming of a Shrew*.
  - c) The Lord also orders his boy to act the part of Sly's wife.

### AT THE LORD'S HOUSE

#### (Induction 2)

3. *Sly wakes up in the Lord's bedroom*
  - a) He is surrounded by servants who offer him food and drinks and he is dressed up with fine raiment.
  - b) Sly does not believe what is happening and he explains he is *Christopher Sly*, a poor man.
  - c) The Lord insists that he is a nobleman but Sly denies again and identifies himself as a tinker, providing as witness the barmaid Marian Hacket, who can confirm his identity.
  - d) The Lord and his servants say that his behaviour is upsetting his wife and servants and tell him to think about his noble birth and that he can do anything he wants: listening to music, having a walk, riding, hawking. They also add that he has the fairest wife of the world.
  - e) Sly finally believes to be a nobleman.
4. *Bartholomew enters the room dressed like a lady*
  - a) Bartholomew utters all the things that an obedient and loving wife is expected to say.

### AT THE LORD'S HOUSE

3. *Sly wakes up in the Lord's bedroom*
  - a) He is surrounded by servants who offer him food and drinks and he is dressed up with fine raiment.
  - b) The Lord introduces himself to Sly as Simon.
  - c) Sly is a little confused, but believes immediately to be a gentleman.
4. *The Boy enters the room dressed like a lady*
  - a) The Boy acts the part of a lovely wife.

<p>b) Sly tells everybody to leave them alone in the room and orders his wife to undress her and come to the bed.</p> <p>c) She explains that the doctor has ordered her to be absent from his bed for a while, because of a relapse danger.</p> <p>5. <i>A servant enters the room announcing that some actors want to perform a play for Sly</i></p> <p>a) The servant adds that, according to the doctor, a play is suitable for a person recovering from a disease.</p> <p>b) Sly tells his wife to sit by his side so they can watch the play together.</p> <p><b>A. BEGINNING OF THE PLAY: LUCENTIO AND TRANIO'S ARRIVAL IN PADUA AND CASUAL MEETING WITH BAPTISTA, HIS DAUGHTERS AND SUITORS (Act 1, Scene 1)</b></p> <p>1. <i>The play performed for Sly opens on a street in Padua, where Lucentio and his servant Tranio have just arrived</i></p> <p>a) Lucentio reveals that his father has sent him to Padua to study and perfect his education.</p>	<p>b) Sly tells his wife to sit on his knee and announces they will go to bed together soon.</p> <p>5. <i>The Lord explains that some players are coming to perform a play for him</i></p> <p>a) Sly gives consent to the players to begin the play</p> <p>b) Sly tells Sim to sit by his side so they can watch the play together.</p> <p><b>A. BEGINNING OF THE PLAY: AURELIUS' AND VALERIA'S ARRIVAL IN ATHENS AND CASUAL MEETING WITH ALFONSO AND HIS DAUGHTERS</b></p> <p>1. <i>The play performed for Sly opens on a street in Athens, where Aurelius and his servant Valeria have just arrived</i></p> <p>a) Polidor welcomes Aurelius to Athens.</p> <p>b) Aurelius reveals that he has come to Padua to meet his friend Polidor</p>
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2. *Lucentio and Tranio notice Baptista and his daughters Bianca and Katherina, while they are talking with Bianca's suitors, so they stop to overhear the group*

a) Baptista states he will not give any permission to marry Bianca, until her sister Katherina is married. He also adds that Gremio and Hortensio are welcome to ask for Katherina's hand.

b) Katherina becomes angry with her father.

c) Hortensio tells Katherina she will never marry unless she becomes of gentler temperament, but she hints she is not interested in marriage.

d) Tranio thinks Katherina is crazy and obstinate, while Lucentio has fallen in love with Bianca because she is

c) Polidor says he can stay at his place.

2. *Aurelius and Polidor notice Alfonso and his daughters Kate, Phylena and Emelia*

a) Ferando tells his daughters to haste to the church.

b) Aurelius is curious about the three girls and asks Polidor for more information.

c) Polidor confesses that he is in love with the youngest one, Emelia, but that his father has sworn that he will not give any permission to marry her and the second daughter, until her eldest sister Kate is married first. He also adds the Kate is a real shrew.

d) Aurelius says he likes the second daughter, Phylena, and Polidor is happy they are not competitors for the same sister.

nice and quiet.

- e) Bianca agrees with his father and promises she will spend all her time studying and playing instruments until it is time for her to be engaged.

3. *Bianca's suitors strategy*

- a) Gremio and Hortensio complain that Baptista is keeping Bianca like a prisoner, but Baptista does not change his mind.
- b) Before leaving, he asks the suitors if they can recommend any good teacher for his daughters.
- c) The suitors agree together that they need to find someone to marry Katherina so they are free to court Bianca.

4. *Lucentio and Tranio discuss of the situation*

- a) Lucentio is in love with Bianca and asks Tranio for some advice.
- b) They decide that Lucentio will disguise himself as a private tutor named Cambio, so he can teach and court Bianca, and that

3. *Aurelius and Polidor strategy*

- a) Polidor and Aurelius agree that they need to find someone to marry Kate, so they are free to court their beloved.
- b) Polidor thinks to know the right man who can become Kate's husband and sends his boy to call Ferando.
- c) Aurelio asks Polidor to introduce him to Alfonso as a merchant's son of Sesto, who has come to Athens for trade.
- d) Aurelius decides that he will court Phylena disguised as a merchant and that his servant Valeria will act in his disguise as the Duke of



<p>Tranio will disguise himself as Lucentio, as he is expected to be seen around Padua.</p> <p>5. <i>Biondello, Petruccio's other servant, arrives</i>  a) Lucentio and Tranio tell Biondello that they are in disguise because Lucentio killed a man and needs to flee the city in case there are witnesses who can identify him.</p> <p>6. <i>Last mention of the frame</i>  a) One of the Lord's servants who has been watching the play with Sly, asks him why he is falling asleep but Sly denies and says he likes the play. [This is the last time we hear from Sly in <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>, but we can assume that he remains onstage.]</p> <p><b>B. PETRUCCIO'S ARRIVAL AND BIANCA'S SUITORS MEETING BEFORE GOING TO BAPTISTA (Act 1, Scene 2)</b></p> <p>7. <i>Petruccio and his servant Grumio have just arrived in Padua from Verona and stand at Hortensio's door</i>  a) Hortensio opens the door and he is surprised to see his old friend Petruccio.  b) Petruccio explains that his father recently died and left him a conspicuous inheritance, so that he has come to Padua to find a rich wife.</p>	<p>Sestos' son.</p> <p><b>B. FERANDO'S ARRIVAL AND SUITORS MEETING BEFORE TALKING WITH ALFONSO</b></p> <p>4. <i>Ferando and his servant Sander have just arrived at Polidor's house</i>  a) Ferando explains he is going to speak with Alfonso, as he wants to marry the shrewish Kate. He also adds that Alfonso has promised him six thousand crowns if he is able</p>
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<p>c) Hortensio jokes that he knows a very rich and shrewish woman suitable for him, whose name is Katherina.</p> <p>d) Petruccio agrees because he is not interested whether she is ugly, old or shrewish, the only important thing for him is that she must be very wealthy.</p> <p>e) Hortensio warns Petruccio again that he was joking and that himself would never marry Katherina, but Petruccio insists to meet her, so he decides to help his friend.</p> <p>f) Petruccio discovers that his dead father knew Katherina's father, so he decides he really wants to go to meet her.</p> <p>g) Hortensio goes with him to Baptista's house and explains that he will disguise himself as a private tutor. He wants Petruccio to introduce him as a gift to Katherina's father so he can court his beloved Bianca secretly.</p> <p>8. <i>Gremio and Lucentio (disguised as Cambio) pass through</i></p> <p>a) Gremio is proud to have Cambio as a gift for</p>	<p>to win her.</p> <p>b) Polidor is surprised, as Ferando seems to have read their thoughts.</p>
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Baptista.

- b) Gremio does not know that Cambio is Lucentio, who is also in love with Bianca, and explains that Cambio should teach Bianca from books of love.
- c) Hortensio announces he has good news, since his friend Petruccio is in town and has decided to court and marry Katherina.
- d) Gremio is surprised and guesses that Petruccio does not know who she really is but Petruccio does not fear her.
- e) Gremio and Hortensio agree they will assist Petruccio and cover all expenses he might have if he is able to win her.

9. *Biondello and Tranio (disguised as Lucentio) happen along*

- a) They ask for directions to Baptista's house, so Hortensio and Gremio are worried because they do not want to face another competitor.
- b) Hortensio argue that Tranio should contribute with him and Gremio to reward Petruccio, if he wants to court Bianca as well. Tranio agrees.
- c) They decide to go eating and drinking together in Bianca's honour.

- c) Ferando announces he is willing to speak with Alfonso

<p><b>C. AT BAPTISTA'S HOUSE: KATHERINA'S QUICK WEDDING ARRANGEMENT, PETRUCCIO'S MEETING WITH KATHERINA AND BIANCA'S TUTORING (Act 2, scene 1)</b></p> <p>10. <i>Katherina has fastened Bianca, who begs her sister to unbind her</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Bianca promises that she will do whatever Katherina commands because she knows her duties to her elder sister.</li> <li>b) Katherina asks Bianca to reveal which suitor she likes most but Bianca does not answer and tells Kate that she can have all of her suitors.</li> <li>c) Katherina slaps Bianca.</li> </ul> <p>11. <i>Baptista comes in and scolds Katherina for her bad behaviour</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Katherina denounces that her father loves her sister more than her, so she goes away weeping and planning revenge.</li> </ul> <p>12. <i>Gremio with Lucentio (as Cambio), Petruccio with Hortensio (as Licio) and Tranio (as Lucentio) with his boy Biondello enter Baptista's house</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Petruccio introduces himself to Baptista and explains that he wants to marry Katherina.</li> </ul>	<p>immediately.</p> <p><b>C. AT BAPTISTA'S HOUSE: KATE'S QUICK WEDDING ARRANGEMENT, FERANDO AND KATE'S MEETING, KATE'S TUTORING AND AURELIUS AND POLIDOR MEETING WITH THEIR BELOVED</b></p>
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He presents the music teacher Licio (Hortensio) as a gift to Baptista.

- b) Baptista agrees but warns Petruccio that Katherina is a real shrew, however, he is allowed to court her if he wants.
- c) Gremio has a present for Baptista too, that is to say a schoolmaster named Cambio (Lucentio).
- d) Tranio (as Lucentio) has a gift for Baptista as well: a lute and a packet of Greek and Latin books for Baptista's daughters.
- e) Baptista thanks them for the presents and calls in a servant to lead the tutors to his daughters.

*13. Petruccio meets with Baptista*

- a) They agree the marriage terms.
- b) Petruccio wants to seal the contract but Baptista wants him to obtain Katherina's love approval first.

*14. Hortensio enters the room with his head injured*

- a) He explains how Katherina broke a lute over his head while he was trying to teach her how to play the instrument.
- b) Petruccio is even more excited and longs to talk to Katherina.

*5. Ferando meets with Alfonso*

- a) Alfonso states that Ferando will have what he has promised, if he is able to obtain Kate's love.
- b) Ferando wants to talk with Kate

<p>c) Left alone, Petruccio explains his plan to tame Katherina: he will say the contrary of what she really is or what she does.</p> <p>15. <i>Katherina enters the room to meet Petruccio</i></p> <p>a) Petruccio greets her as 'Kate', but she highlights that her name is <i>Katherine</i>.</p> <p>b) Petruccio taunts Katherina, calling her 'plain Kate', 'bonny Kate' or 'Kate the Curst', but also 'the prettiest Kate in Christendom', 'Kate of Kate Hall' and 'my super-dainty Kate'.</p> <p>c) Katherina and Petruccio tease each others for a while with puns, word plays and bawdy allusions.</p> <p>d) They continue the verbal fight.</p> <p>e) After a while Petruccio is tired and decides to reveal Katherina that Baptista has approved their marriage and arranged the dowry. He also adds that he will marry her in any case, whether she likes it or not.</p> <p>f) Finally, he reveals that he is going to tame her and transform her in the perfect wife.</p> <p>16. <i>Baptista enters to know if they are getting on well, with Gremio and Tranio (as Lucentio)</i></p> <p>a) Katherina is angry with her</p>	<p>6. <i>Kate enters the room to meet Ferando</i></p> <p>a) Ferando addresses her as 'lovely Kate', 'sweet Kate' and 'bonny Kate'.</p> <p>b) Kate and Ferando tease each others for a while with puns, word plays and bawdy allusions.</p> <p>7. <i>Alfonso enters to know if they are getting on well</i></p>
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<p>father as he consented to marry such a fool.</p> <p>b) Petruccio lies and tells everyone that Kate is mild and gentle and that she has agreed to marry him on Sunday but Katherina replies that she wishes to see him hanged on Sunday.</p> <p>c) Petruccio explains that they have negotiated that she has always to be shrewish in public, but in reality she loves him as well.</p> <p>d) Katherina does not say anything in response.</p> <p>e) Petruccio asks Baptista to organise the wedding feast and they shake hands, as a pre-contract sign.</p> <p>f) Petruccio is leaving for Venice, but confirms that he will be back in Padua on Sunday to marry Katherina.</p>	<p>a) Ferando lies and tells that Kate is willing to marry him, but she replies she does not want to be his wife.</p> <p>b) Although Kate is angry with her father, she delivers an aside in which she announces that she will consent to marry him, because she has been a maid for too long.</p> <p>c) Alfonso announces that they will marry the next Sunday.</p> <p>d) Ferando asks Alfonso to organise everything.</p> <p>e) He also adds that he is going to prepare his country house for Kate's arrival.</p> <p>8. Ferando and Sander have a talk</p> <p>a) Sander mocks Ferando for his introduction to Kate and states that he won her only by chance.</p> <p>b) Ferando orders Sander to go to Polidor and announce him that he and Kate will marry next Sunday.</p>
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17. *Baptista talks with Gremio and Tranio (as Lucentio) about Bianca's wedding*

- a) Baptista is now interested to marry Bianca and compares himself to a businessman who is venturing on a risky business.
- b) Gremio and Tranio (as Lucentio) quarrel about which one should win Bianca's love.
- c) Baptista resolves the conflict by asking which one can assure the greatest dowry to his daughter and Tranio (as Lucentio) wins because he is wealthier than Gremio.

9. *Polidor's boy arrives*

- a) He asks Sander to deliver a message to Ferando.
- b) Sander asks where Polidor is, as he has good news for him.

10. *Polidor, Aurelius and Valeria arrive*

- a) Sander announces them that his master Ferando is marrying tomorrow.
- b) Aurelius orders Valeria to go to Alfonso's house to teach Kate to play the lute.
- c) Polidor explains her that Alfonso asked for a good musician, so she can be the right teacher.
- d) Polidor claims that while Kate is busy with the music lesson, they will have time to court her sisters.



- d) Baptista announces that the Sunday after Katherina's wedding, Tranio (as Lucentio) will marry Bianca, but only if his father confirms his money and properties.

**(Act 3, scene 1)**

*18. Hortensio (as Licio) and Lucentio (as Cambio) are tutoring Bianca*

- a) They quarrel about who has to teach her first.
- b) Bianca decides that Cambio will deliver his Latin language lecture first, while Licio tunes his instrument.
- c) During the lesson, Lucentio (as Cambio) reads a Latin text and instead of translating it in English, he reveals his true identity to Bianca.
- d) Bianca does not trust him because she does not know him and starts his music lesson with Hortensio (as

*11. Polidor and Aurelius go at Alfonso's house*

- a) Alfonso thanks Polidor for the musician he has sent.
- b) Polidor introduces Aurelius as a wealthy merchant from Sestos.
- c) Alfonso announces them that Ferando is going to marry Kate.

*12. Sly interrupts the scene for the first time, by asking when Sander will come again, then orders more drinks*

*13. Valeria, as a music teacher, is tutoring Kate*

Licio).

- e) Hortensio (as Licio) makes her read a musical scale, which is in reality a love letter written for her to explain his feelings.
- f) Bianca leaves the books to help preparing the wedding feast.

- a) They have a quarrel and Kate threatens to beat *him* with the lute.
- b) Finally she just throws the lute down and goes away.
- c) Valeria is happy that the lesson is over.

*14. Aurelius (as a merchant) and Polidor arrive at Alfonso's house*

- a) They are able to speak with their beloved Phylena and Emelia.

#### **D. PETRUCCIO AND KATHERINA'S WEDDING DAY (Act 3, scene 2)**

*19. Baptista and Katherina are disappointed because Petruccio is late*

- a) They worry he does not arrive, Kate is ashamed and runs away weeping.
- b) Biondello announces that Petruccio is coming, describing Petruccio as dressed in a crazy way and riding an old sick horse.

*20. Petruccio enters improperly*

#### **D. FERANDO AND KATE'S WEDDING DAY**

*15. Alfonso is worried because Ferando is late*

- a) Kate is not ready yet.
- b) Polidor warns Alfonso that Ferando will come as dressed in a crazy way.

*16. Petruccio enters improperly*

<p><i>dressed</i></p> <p>a) Baptista is startled and asks him to change his clothes, but Petruccio is resolved and says that Katherina is marrying him and not his clothes.</p> <p>b) Petruccio says he is going to find Katherina, but Tranio and Baptista follow him trying to convince him to change his clothes.</p> <p><i>21. The wedding occurs offstage</i></p> <p><i>22. In the meanwhile, Tranio and Lucentio talk about their plan</i></p> <p>a) Baptista has already agreed on the wedding between Lucentio and Bianca, but they cannot ask Lucentio's real father to seal the contract with Baptista because he would discover the trick.</p> <p>b) They agree they need to find an old man to act the part of Lucentio's father.</p> <p>c) For Lucentio, the best thing would be to elope and marry secretly, but this is quite impossible because Hortensio is always watching</p>	<p><i>dressed</i></p> <p>a) Ferando explains that once married, Kate might destroy his clothes.</p> <p>b) Both Polidor and Alfonso try to persuade him to change his clothes but they are not able.</p> <p><i>17. Kate enters</i></p> <p>a) She declares she does not want to marry Ferando dressed with such clothes.</p> <p>b) Ferando is resolved and states that this is his wedding suit.</p> <p><i>18. The wedding occurs offstage</i></p> <p><i>19. In the meanwhile, Sander and Polidor's boy have a talk</i></p>
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Bianca.

23. *Gremio enters and says he has just come from the wedding*

- a) Gremio explains that Petruccio behaved like a fool during the ceremony: he swore loud in front of the priest and cuffed him, he even threw the wine in his face and finally he kissed soundly the shocked Katherina.

24. *The newlyweds and the wedding guests enters*

- a) Petruccio announces that he and Katherina have to go home immediately, but he bids the guests to continue the wedding feast without them.
- b) Baptista, Tranio, Gremio and Katherina implore Petruccio to stay but he refuses.
- c) Katherina does not want to go with him, but Petruccio states that Katherina is now his wife and property, so she must go with him.
- d) Petruccio warns the guests not to stop his way and not to touch Katherina and he runs away pretending that they are being attacked by

- a) The boy states that Kate is a real devil, but Sander replies that his master is more shrewish than her.
- b) Sander adds that he likes Emelia and they start quarrelling.

20. *The newlyweds and the wedding guests enters*

- a) Ferando announces that he and Kate have to go home immediately.
- b) Alfonso, Kate and Sander implore Petruccio to stay but he refuses.
- c) Kate does not want to go with him, but Petruccio states that she must.

thieves and he is defending Katherina.

- e) The wedding guests think that Katherina has married someone as mad as she is and they continue eating and celebrating.
- f) Baptista makes Bianca and Tranio (as Lucentio) sit at the table at the bride and groom's place.

**E. AT PETRUCCIO'S COUNTRY HOUSE:  
BEGINNING OF THE TAMING PLAN  
(Act 4, scene 1)**

*25. Grumio enters Petruccio's house*

- a) Petruccio's servants are preparing the house for the arrival of their master and his new wife.
- b) Grumio explains that he was riding from Padua with Petruccio and Katherina but was sent ahead before them to make a fire before they arrive.
- c) Curtis asks for news about the newly married couple, but Grumio starts a quarrel with him.

- d) The wedding guests think that Kate has married someone as mad as she is and they continue eating and celebrating.

- e) Polidor anticipates that he will visit the newlyweds soon at their house, while Aurelius anticipates that his father will come within a week to speak with Alfonso.

**E. AT FERANDO'S COUNTRY HOUSE:  
BEGINNING OF THE TAMING PLAN**

*21. Sander enters Ferando's house*

- a) Ferando's servants are preparing the house for the arrival of their master and his new wife.
- b) Will, one of Ferando's servants, asks for news about the newly married couple and Sander explains how strangely was Ferando dressed at the church and how fast they escaped from the wedding banquet.

- d) Later, Grumio reports Curtis what happened on the way from Padua: Katherina's horse fell and threw her in the mire, Petruccio struck Grumio for what occurred, while Katherina prayed to stop him. Curtis comments that Petruccio is more shrewish than Katherina.
- e) All the others servants are ready for their master's arrival.

26. *Petruccio enters with Katherina*

- a) He laments for everything, but at the same time he tells Kate to relax and be happy.
- b) He swears at his servants for their behaviour, he claims that they burned the food and throws back the dishes.
- c) Kate tries to calm him, saying that the food is delicious, but Petruccio declares that they shall go to bed without eating and brings her to her bridal room.
- d) Peter thinks Petruccio overmasters her in his bad temper.
- e) Petruccio is now in her room teaching her self-control.

27. *Petruccio delivers a soliloquy*

- a) He explains his plan to tame Katherina, comparing himself to a falconer and Katherina to a hawk that must be domesticated.
- b) His taming plan consists in

22. *Ferando enters with Kate*

- a) He laments for everything.

- b) He swears at his servants for their behaviour, he claims that they burned the food and beats them.

23. *Ferando delivers a soliloquy*

- a) He explains his plan to tame Kate, comparing himself to a falconer and Kate to a hawk that must be tamed.

- b) His taming plan consists in

starving Katherina and depriving her of sleep until she is completely tamed.

**F. BACK AT BAPTISTA'S HOUSE: TRANIO AND HORTENSIO RESIGNATION (Act 4, scene 2)**

*28. Tranio (as Lucentio) and Hortensio (as Licio) peek at Bianca and Lucentio (as Cambio) while they are flirting*

- a) Tranio (as Lucentio) says that Bianca is leading him on with false expectations and that she fancies no other than Lucentio.
- b) Hortensio agrees and does not like the idea that Bianca prefers a servant instead of a gentleman, so he decides to reveal his true identity.
- c) Tranio (as Lucentio) tells Hortensio that he wants to forswear Bianca's love as well and they vow they will never marry her.
- d) Hortensio adds that he is going to marry a rich widow.
- e) Tranio meets with Lucentio and Bianca and tell them that Hortensio has forsworn her, so Bianca and Lucentio are able to love each other freely.

starving Katherina and depriving her of sleep until she is completely tamed.

**F. AURELIUS AND VALERIA DISCUSS THE SITUATION**

*24. Aurelius tells Valeria to arrange the meeting between the merchant, who has to play his father's part, and Alfonso*

- a) Valeria confirms she will fetch the merchant soon.

- f) Tranio says that Hortensio has gone to Petruccio's 'taming school' to learn how to tame his future wife.

### **G. THE MERCHANT'S ARRIVAL**

29. *Biondello has found the man who can act the part of Lucentio's father*

- a) The Merchant arrives from Mantua.
- b) Tranio (as Lucentio) deceives him by claiming that the Duke of Padua is putting to death all citizens of Mantua coming to his city.
- c) The merchant is worried because he has some bills for money to exchange in Padua, so Tranio (as Lucentio) suggests he can disguise himself as his father Vincentio. In exchange the merchant agrees to meet with Baptista and negotiate Lucentio's wedding.

### **H. BACK AT PETRUCCIO'S COUNTRY HOUSE: THE TAMING PLAN PROVES TO BE EFFICIENT (Act 4, scene 3)**

30. *Katherina prays Grumio to give her something to eat because she is starving*

- a) Grumio taunts Katherina pretending to give her some

- b) Aurelius states that Polidor will marry soon and that he is going to tame his wife.
- c) Aurelius says that Polidor has gone to Ferando's 'taming school' to learn how to tame his future wife.

### **G. BACK AT FERANDO'S COUNTRY HOUSE: THE TAMING PLAN PROVES TO BE EFFICIENT**

25. *Kate prays Sander to give her something to eat because she is starving*

- a) Sander taunts Kate pretending to give her some



food but ending up offering her only mustard, so she beats him.

- b) Petruccio and Hortensio enter with a dish of meat for Katherina, but then Petruccio orders to take it away because she did not thank him for it.
- c) Hortensio stands up for Katherina, saying that he will bear her company, but Petruccio tells him to eat all the meat so Katherina cannot eat anything.
  
- d) Petruccio tells Katherina to make haste because they have to dress up with fine apparels and travel to his father's house for Bianca's wedding.

food but at the end giving her nothing, so she beats him.

- b) Ferando and Polidor enter with a dish of meat, but then Ferando orders to take it away because she did not thank him for it.
  
- c) Polidor prays Ferando to let the plate remain, so he can eat some with her.
  
- d) Kate threatens Ferando that she will go back to her father's house, if he keeps not feeding her; Ferando answers that before she has to become meek and gentle.
- e) Ferando says they are all going soon to her father's house.

#### **H. PHYLENA'S WEDDING ARRANGEMENT**

26. Aurelius (as the merchant), Valeria (as the Prince of Sestos) and Phylotus (as Aurelius' father) go to Alfonso's house to plan the wedding

- a) Phylotus declares his dowry: three hundred pounds a year, a thousand massy bars of pure gold and twice as

31. *The Haberdasher and the Tailor enter*

- a) Petruccio becomes angry with them because in his opinion they did not do a good job.
- b) Katherina likes the clothes but Petruccio insists they are not made as he has ordered. However, he sends Hortensio to pay the tailor.
- c) The Tailor highlights that he made the gown as instructed in the note.
- d) Grumio misinterprets his master's command.
- e) Petruccio delivers a speech about the irrelevance of wearing fine clothes and explains Katherina that the only important thing is what they have inside.

many bars of silver plate.

- b) Alfonso gives his consent and states that he will enlarge his daughter dowry.
- c) Valeria is introduced to Alfonso as the Duke of Sesto's son and as a good friend with Aurelius.
- d) They decide to go inside Alfonso's house to seal the contract.

### **I. BACK AT FERANDO'S COUNTRY HOUSE**

27. *The Haberdasher enter with a cap*

- a) Ferando becomes angry because in his opinion the velvet cap is out of fashion.
- b) Ferando asks Kate if she ordered it and adds it does not look good on her.
- c) When the tailor enters with a gown, Ferando becomes angry because it is not as he ordered.
- d) The Tailor highlights that he made the gown as instructed in the note.
- e) Sander misinterprets his master's command.
- f) Ferando declares that they will go to her sister's in their humble clothes.

- f) Petruccio then announces that it is 7 in the morning, so they will arrive in Padua by noon, but Katherina highlights that in reality it is almost 2 pm, so they will not arrive there until 6 or 7 in the evening. Petruccio claims that it is whatever time he says and that they are not going to her father until she keeps opposing him.
- g) Hortensio admires Petruccio and thinks he is really a shrew tamer.

- g) Ferando then announces that they should haste because they will arrive at his father's at 9 o' clock. Kate answers that it is 2 pm, but Ferando insists that it is 9 in the morning and that they are not going anywhere until she keeps opposing him.

#### **I. BIANCA'S WEDDING ARRANGEMENT (Act 4, scene 4)**

*32. In Padua, Tranio (as Lucentio) and the Merchant (as Vincentio) arrive at Baptista's house*

- a) The Merchant is introduced to Baptista as Vincentio and the two men give their approval for the engagement. They agree to go to Lucentio's house to seal the contract.
- b) Baptista asks Cambio (Lucentio) to bring Bianca there and refers to her that she will be married soon to Lucentio (Tranio), while Biondello has to go finding the notary.

*33. Lucentio meets secretly with Biondello before going to Bianca*

- a) Biondello advises him to hasten his elopement with Bianca, while the others are busy signing a false contract, and to go immediately with some witnesses to Saint Luke's church, where a priest is ready to celebrate the wedding.

**L. THE FOUR LOVERS'S MEETING BEFORE THEIR WEDDING**

*28. Polidor, Emelia, Aurelius and Phylena meet*

- a) The lovers speak, praising each others and testing their mutual love. In particular, Aurelius asks Phylena what she would do, if the Prince of Sestos asked her hand; Phylena answers that she would never leave him.
- b) The four haste to the church where everybody is waiting for their wedding.

*29. Sly interrupts the scene for the second time, asking if they are going to marry and the Lord says they are*

*30. Polidor and Emelia's wedding and Aurelius and Phylena's wedding occur offstage*

**L. PETRUCCIO, KATHERINA, HORTENSIO AND GRUMIO ON THEIR WAY TO PADUA FOR BIANCA'S WEDDING AND MEETING WITH LUCENTIO'S REAL FATHER (Act 4, scene 5)**

**M. BACK TO FERANDO AND KATE AND MEETING WITH AURELIUS' REAL FATHER**

34. *Petruccio and Katherina continue their talk*

- a) Petruccio says that the moon is shining bright, but Katherina replies that it is the sun that is shining bright.
- b) Petruccio insists it is the moon and adds that they are not going anywhere if she keeps opposing whatever he says.
- c) Hortensio advises Katherina to please Petruccio, otherwise they will not go anywhere.
- d) Katherina agrees and states that whatever Petruccio pronounces, it shall be the same for her.
  
- e) Hortensio congratulates with Petruccio, as he has won her.

35. *They encounter an old man along the way: Lucentio's real father, Vincentio*

- a) Petruccio keeps joking with Katherina: he pretends now that Vincentio is a young girl and Katherina plays the

31. *Ferando and Kate continue their talk*

- a) Ferando says that the moon is shining bright, but Katherina replies that it is the sun that is shining bright.
- b) Petruccio insists it is the moon, so Kate agrees.
  
- c) Kate repeats whatever Petruccio pronounces.
  
- d) Ferando is glad that Kate has overcome her obstinacy and does not oppose him anymore. He also admits that he knows that Kate knows it is the sun in reality.

32. *They encounter an old man along the way: The Duke of Sestos, Aurelius real father*

- a) The Duke introduces himself, says he comes to meet his son and asks for directions to Athens.
- b) Ferando keeps joking with Kate: he pretends now that the Duke is a young girl and Kate plays the game and

game and agrees he is a girl. When Petruccio says he is an old, wrinkled man, she apologises and explains she has made a mistake.

- b) Vincentio introduces himself to the group and explains he is looking for his son Lucentio. Petruccio informs him that his son is going to marry Katherina's sister, but as the old man looks suspicious, they decide to take him to Lucentio's house to discover the truth.
- c) Hortensio is satisfied because he has learnt how to handle a shrew and now he is ready to marry the Widow.

**M. BIANCA AND LUCENTIO'S WEDDING, DISCOVERY OF THE DISGUISES AND WEDDING BANQUET (Act 5, scene 1)**

*36. Lucentio and Bianca go to Saint Luke's church to get married*

- a) Biondello leaves them, as they might need him at home, but he supports Lucentio saying that everything will work out.

*37. Bianca and Lucentio's wedding occurs offstage*

agrees he is a girl.

- c) The Duke thinks they are fool and continue his way alone.
- d) Ferando is satisfied with Kate. He also decides to follow the Duke.

**N. WEDDING BANQUET, ARRIVAL OF THE DUKE OF SESTOS AND DISCOVERY OF THE DISGUISES**

38. *In the meantime, Petruccio, Katherina, Vincentio and Grumio arrive at Lucentio's house*

- a) The Merchant, who is still pretending to be Lucentio's father, looks out of the window.
- b) When Vincentio introduces himself and asks for his son, the Merchant becomes angry and says that he is his real father, while Vincentio is a deceiver under his countenance.
- c) Biondello arrives and understands that the game has been discovered, so he pretends to know not his master Vincentio. Vincentio beats him and Biondello calls him a madman.
- d) Tranio comes to the front

33. *The marriages have been celebrated and everybody is heading to Alfonso's house for the wedding banquet*

- a) Alfonso wonders whether Ferando and Kate will come; Polidor guesses that he had too much to do with the shrew.
- b) Phylotus says he will load Alfonso's ships with precious fabrics and stones.
- c) Valeria (as the Prince of Sestos), adds that *he* will send Alfonso exquisite spices, wines and precious fabrics and stones as well.

34. *While Valeria is speaking, the Duke of Sestos enters*

- a) The Duke is angry that

<p>door with the Merchant and Baptista, and Vincentio is shocked to see that he is dressed up with his son's clothes and playing his part.</p> <p>e) Tranio claims that the real Vincentio is a madman and the Merchant insists he is the real Lucentio's father. Everybody trusts them and thinks Vincentio is a cheater.</p> <p>f) Vincentio now thinks that Tranio has murdered his son in order to take his money and identity and asks Tranio where he can find his son.</p> <p>g) Tranio calls the police to bring Vincentio to prison. Gremio is the only one who guesses he is the real Vincentio but the other people do not think so.</p> <p><i>39. Lucentio shows up with his wife Bianca and Biondello</i></p> <p>a) Lucentio kneels before his father and begs for forgiveness.</p> <p>b) Bianca kneels before Baptista, who has not yet understood what is happening.</p> <p>c) Lucentio reveals his real identity and explains he has just married Bianca.</p> <p>d) Both Vincentio and Baptista are angry for this conspiracy, but finally Vincentio forgives his son and assures Baptista that they will make a worthy marriage.</p>	<p>Valeria dishonoured him and asks Aurelius if he has forgotten him.</p> <p>b) Phylotus continues to act the part of Aurelius' father.</p> <p>c) Aurelius kneels before his father and begs for forgiveness.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>(Act 5, scene 2)</b></p> <p>40. <i>After the trouble has been resolved, everybody heads to the wedding banquet</i></p> <p>a) Petruccio asks Kate for a kiss,</p>	<p>d) The Duke wants to send Phylotus and Valeria to prison, so they run away.</p> <p>35. <i>Sly interrupts the scene for the third time, saying that he does not want that they go to prison; he then drinks something and falls asleep</i></p> <p>36. <i>The Duke is furious</i></p> <p>a) His son married without his permission and Alfonso dared to match his daughter with his princely house without his approval.</p> <p>b) Alfonso swears that he and his daughter did not know anything about the situation.</p> <p>c) Aurelius swears everybody is innocent and that it is only his fault; he adds that he is willing to die for his mistake.</p> <p>d) Phylena begs for mercy but states her death will release his woe.</p> <p>e) Polidor and Emelia beg for forgiveness too.</p> <p>37. <i>The Duke forgives his son and accepts Phylena as his wife.</i></p> <p>38. <i>Sly is mentioned for the fourth time: he is sleeping and the Lord orders his servants to carry him back to the alehouse.</i></p>
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she hesitates to kiss him in public but finally agrees and they follow the other guests to the banquet.

- b) Lucentio welcomes his guests to the wedding banquet, inciting everybody to celebrate with them happily and end all the quarrels.
- c) Petruccio claims that Hortensio is afraid of his wife, the Widow, but she answers that it is Petruccio who is afraid of his wife.
- d) Katherina and the Widow have a discussion with word plays and sexual puns. Petruccio likes to see his wife on a verbal fight.
- e) Bianca intervenes and has a little quarrel with Petruccio as well.
- f) The women leave the room, but the men continue some verbal fights.

#### **N. THE WIVES' WAGER AND THE ENDING**

41. *Petruccio wagers with Hortensio and Lucentio a hundred crowns*

- a) The wager consists in sending for his wife: the man, whose wife comes first and proves to be the most obedient, shall win the wager.
- b) Lucentio asks Biondello to

#### **O. THE WIVES' WAGER AND THE ENDING**

39. *Aurelius wagers with Polidor and Ferando a hundred pounds*

- a) The wager consists in sending for his wife: the man, whose wife comes first and proves to be the most obedient, shall win the wager.
- b) Ferando wants to bet five hundred marks.
- c) Aurelius asks Valeria to bid

<p>bid Bianca to come to him, but Biondello come back saying that she was too busy and does not want to come.</p> <p>c) Hortensio asks Biondello to pray his wife to come to him, but Biondello comes back saying that the Widow said she is busy too, but bids him to go to her.</p> <p>d) When Petruccio sends Grumio to command Katherina to come to him, she comes immediately and asks Petruccio what is his will. Petruccio orders Katherina to bring Bianca and the Widow there quickly.</p> <p>e) Lucentio, Hortensio and Baptista are shocked. Baptista decides to give Petruccio twenty more crowns as dowry, because his daughter seems to be a completely different person.</p> <p><i>42. Katherina enters the room with Bianca and the Widow</i></p> <p>a) Petruccio wants to show more proofs of her obedience and orders Katherina to take off her cap. Kate throws the caps on the ground.</p> <p>b) Bianca and the Widow seem to be irritated and</p>	<p>Phylena to come to him, but Valeria come back saying that she was busy and will come in a while.</p> <p>d) Polidor asks his Boy to say his wife that he desires she comes to him, but the Boy comes back saying that Emelia was busy too, but bids him to go to her.</p> <p>e) When Ferando sends Sanders to command Kate to come to him, she comes immediately and asks Ferando what is his will.</p> <p>f) He orders Kate to take off her cap and tread it; Kate does it.</p> <p>g) Polidor, Aurelius and Alfonso are shocked.</p> <p>h) Petruccio orders Kate to bring her sisters there quickly.</p> <p><i>40. Kate enters the room with her sisters</i></p> <p>a) Phylena and Emelia seem to be irritated and prove to be</p>
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<p>prove to be the real shrews.</p> <p>f) Petruccio asks Katherina to teach the unruly wives how they should behave.</p> <p>g) Katherina delivers the longest speech in play, about how women should obey to their husbands.</p> <p>h) After the speech Petruccio asks her to kiss him.</p> <p>i) Petruccio is proud of Katherina and gives everybody the goodnight.</p> <p>j) Everybody is surprised and admits that Petruccio has won and has really tamed Katherina.</p>	<p>the real shrews.</p> <p>b) Ferando asks Kate to teach the unruly wives how they should behave.</p> <p>c) Kate delivers the longest speech in play, about how women should obey to their husbands.</p> <p>d) After the speech she lays her hand under Ferando's feet.</p> <p>e) Alfonso decides to give Ferando a hundred pounds more as dowry, because his daughter seems to be a completely different person.</p> <p>f) Ferando is proud of Kate and gives everybody the goodnight.</p> <p>g) Everybody is surprised and Polidor states that his wife is a shrew.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>FINAL FRAME</b></p> <p>1. Sly wakes up in front of the alehouse again.</p>
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## CHAPTER THREE

### ANALYSIS OF THE COMPARISON WITH “THE TAMING OF A SHREW”

*The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Taming of a Shrew* are textually independent, but undoubtedly connected, starting with the plays' structure: both versions contain the Sly frame, the shrew's main plot and the sisters' subplot. Some of their scenes are really similar, although *The Shrew*'s global lines are almost double than those of *A Shrew*, meaning that *A Shrew*'s scenes are usually more concise. There are similarities at the level of action, as well as at the level of verbal interaction. At the same time the two plays show a lot of differences, for instance about names, settings, characters, content and ideology.

#### 3.1 PLOT AND STRUCTURE

##### 3.1.1 THE FRAME

As mentioned above, both versions present the introductory 'Sly action', in which a drunken tinker is tricked by a lord into the belief that he is a nobleman; the simulation of Sly being a gentleman is in both versions the first example of disguise and role exchange.

Names and characters of the plot are nearly the same, except for some little differences: Sly's name obviously remains, although in *The Shrew* he is named as Christopher Sly and not just as Sly; the Lord names himself Simon or Sim in *A Shrew*, while in *The Shrew* he is a nameless servant, and the alewife of *The Shrew*, is a male tapster in *A Shrew*. Moreover, in *The Shrew*, one of the Lord's pages, Bartholomew, is obliged to dress up like a lady and to play the role of Sly's wife, but the text names him as “Lady”. On the contrary, *A Shrew* talks only about a “boy in woman's attire”. Lastly, the actors are nameless players in *The Shrew*, but two of them come with a name in *A Shrew* (Sander and Tom).

In Shakespeare's version the induction is not only more skilfully and lively described, but it is also longer and more complicated: Sly at first has doubts

about his new aristocratic ancestry and needs to be reassured by the Lord and his servants before believing the trick, unlike the anonymous version, where Sly believes immediately that he is a gentleman and the play starts right after.

TS:

I am Christopher Sly – call not me 'honour' nor 'lordship'.<sup>58</sup>

What, would you make me mad? Am not I Christopher Sly, old Sly's son of Burton heath, by birth a pedlar, by education a cardmaker, by transmutation a bear-herd and now by my present profession a tinker? Ask Marian Hacket, [...] if she know me not. [...] What, I am not bestraught: here's-<sup>59</sup>

Am I a lord, and have such a lady? Or do I dream? Or I have dreamed till now?<sup>60</sup>

AS:

Who I? Am I a lord? Jesus, what fine apparel have I got.<sup>61</sup>

By the mass, I think I am a lord indeed. What's thy name?<sup>62</sup>

In addition, Shakespeare's frame is present only at the beginning, like a presentation, probably only to introduce the play proper, but it does not appear again. At the end of the play, after Katherina's long speech and the couple's kiss, the play ends without any information about Sly and his destiny. On the other hand, in *A Shrew* Sly not only makes his naive comments during the play, proving a lack of knowledge about theatre and its conventions, but he also wants to interfere with the intrigue, trying to change the actions. Sly's interventions do not follow a specific pattern but step in randomly, as F. S. Boas noticed, 'at one or two of the chief turning points in the action of the

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<sup>58</sup> TS, Induction, 2.5

<sup>59</sup> TS, Induction, 2.16-23

<sup>60</sup> TS, Induction, 2.66-67

<sup>61</sup> AS, 2.14

<sup>62</sup> AS, 2.25

plot Sly keeps silence, and on the other hand one of his interventions [...] is obviously in the middle of a scene'.<sup>63</sup>

Sly then falls asleep and finally shows up one more time in the final scene, awakening as a tinker again.

AS:

Sly: Sim, when will the fool come again?<sup>64</sup>

Sly: Sim, must they be married now?

Lord: Ay, my lord.

Sly: Look, Sim, the fool is come again now.<sup>65</sup>

Sly: I say, we'll have no sending to prison.

Lord: My lord, this is but the play. They're but in jest.

Sly: I tell thee, Sim, we'll have no sending to prison, [...]

Lord: No more they shall not, my lord. They be run away.

Sly: Are they run away, Sim? That's well. Then gi's some more drink and let them play again.

Lord: Here, my lord. (Sly drinks and then falls asleep.)<sup>66</sup>

A *Shrew's* Sly awakes at the end of the play with his own clothes on again and blames the tapster for waking him from a wonderful dream. In this version lies also a didactic purpose, as at the end Sly describes to the tapster that he knows the secrets of how to tame his wife: "I know now how to tame a shrew. [...] But I'll to my wife presently and tame her too, an if she anger me."<sup>67</sup> The tapster seems really interested in hearing the story too, so the play probably ends with the comic image of the two characters going home, telling each other about taming strategies. This might be the reason why at the beginning the actors also introduce the play they are going to perform as "a good lesson [...] for us that are married man."<sup>68</sup> In Shakespeare's version there is neither real interest to show Sly's final reaction to the performed play, nor the

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<sup>63</sup> BOAS, Frederick Samuel, *The Taming of a Shrew: Being the Original of Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew*, London: Chatto and Windus, New York: Duffield and Company, 1908.

<sup>64</sup> AS, 4.1

<sup>65</sup> AS, 12.1-3

<sup>66</sup> AS, 12.45-53

<sup>67</sup> AS, 15.15-18

<sup>68</sup> AS, 1.65

aim to teach something: Sly is just useful to introduce and launch the play proper. Some scholars believe that the final frame of Shakespeare's *Shrew* has been lost or deleted, while others suppose that the intention of the author was to have an induction only at the beginning. Shakespeare's induction seems in fact more separate from the play proper than in *A Shrew*, where there is a continuum between the induction and the play. This is probably the reason why *The Shrew* defines the frame with the word *induction*, underlining its metatheatrical purpose, while in *A Shrew* the Sly action is neither distinct from the rest of the play nor properly named.

A curious note is that in *A Shrew* the Lord instructs the boy who should act the part of Sly's wife, by saying to "dally with him and hug him in thine arms, and if he desire to go to bed with thee, then feign some 'scuse and say thou wilt anon"<sup>69</sup>, but later this event does not occur in the anonymous play. However, it does happen in the Shakespearean play: when Sly asks Bartholomew to undress and come to bed, she replies that the doctor has recommended her to be absent from his bed for a few days until his recovering is complete. It is probable that Shakespeare took that hint and was therefore influenced by *A Shrew*. Moreover, as *A Shrew* contains also the final frame, it was always regarded as a more complete work and also as the original work. However, critics such as Peter Alexander are of the exactly opposite opinion: it is believed in fact that originally also Shakespeare's version contained Sly's final frame and was performed in this way, but that the conclusion was later deleted because it demanded too many actors onstage. Therefore, *A Shrew* would be based on the earlier Shakespearean acted play, performed before the cut. Peter Alexander noticed in fact that "the clue that leads to this finding is the brief exchange between Sly and his lady wife at the end of the first scene: the individual responsible for the deletion of the later Sly business [...] overlooked this fragment that, taken with the relevant matter in *A shrew*, enables us to understand Shakespeare's original design."<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> AS, 1.76-78

<sup>70</sup> ALEXANDER, Peter, "The Original Ending of *The Taming of the Shrew*", in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1969.



Nevertheless, although it is not clear whether the final frame of *The Shrew* existed or not, numerous staging performances during the ages did borrow the final scene of *A Shrew* to add in as epilogue to the Shakespeare's play, as if they felt that something was missing.

### 3.1.2 THE PLAY-WITHIN-THE-PLAY

In *The Shrew*, the main plot is the one that mostly resembles *A Shrew*, in terms of events and dialogues; on the other hand the subplot undergoes the biggest transformation from the anonymous play.

At first sight, the most evident difference between the two plays is that the characters have different names: only Kate (never Katherina) appears in both plays, but in *A Shrew* she has two younger sisters, Phylena (in some texts sometimes spelled Phylema) and Emelia, and her father is not Baptista Minola but Alfonso, an Athenian merchant. Petruccio becomes Ferando and his servant Sander, although similar to Grumio's figure, is a more comic and strange character and takes a particular attitude in the play, like that of a fool. Phylena is courted by Aurelius, the son of the Duke of Sestos, Jerobel: these two characters resemble the figures of Lucentio and Vincentio in Shakespeare's play, also for the intrigues in which they are involved. Aurelius has a servant, Valeria, who disguises herself as a music teacher but also as her master during the play, as Lucentio's servant Tranio did in *The Shrew*, disguising himself as his master. As well as in *The Shrew*, there is a merchant disguising himself as one of the suitors' father, but while in Shakespeare's there is a nameless merchant from Mantua disguising himself as Vincentio, in *A Shrew* there is the character of Phylotus who acts as Aurelius' father. In *A Shrew* there is no reference to a character resembling the figure of the old Gremio. The suitor of the youngest sister is Polidor, an Athenian student, who has a boy called Catapie. The characters of a haberdasher and a tailor are also present, as well as Ferando's numerous servants, but the only ones mentioned are Will and Tom, while in *The Shrew* all Petruccio's servants are named in the list of roles: Curtis, Nathaniel, Philip, Joseph, Nicholas and Peter.

In *A Shrew*, the play performed for Sly begins with Polidor welcoming his good friend Aurelius to Athens. The setting for the play is thus Greece and not Italy. In harmony with the setting, there are a few references to Greek philosophers and mythology:

AS:

Polidor: Welcome to Athens, my beloved friend, to Plato's schools and Aristotle's walks; welcome from Sestos, famous for the love of good Leander and his tragedy for whom the Hellespont weeps brinish tears.<sup>71</sup>

Aurelius: O might I see the center of my soul whose sacred beauty hath enchanted me: more fair than was the Grecian Helena for whose sweet sake so many princes died that came with thousand ship to Tenedos.<sup>72</sup>

The action of the first sequence of *A Shrew* resembles the one of *The Shrew*, as Aurelius/Lucentio has just arrived in the city with his servant when he accidentally notices Alfonso/Baptista's daughters and falls in love with one of them. There are few differences, for example while Aurelius states that he has come to Athens to meet his good friend Polidor<sup>73</sup> and even lodges at his house, Lucentio has come to Padua to study and has his own accommodation.

Like in *The Shrew*, it is clear from the beginning that the first knot is that Alfonso wants to marry the eldest daughter first, but in *The Shrew* there is a severe statement by Baptista, while in *A Shrew* it is Polidor who warns Aurelius about the father's oath. In both plays there are also no doubts that Kate/Katherina has a bad temperament, as every character of the plays has a negative opinion of her:

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<sup>71</sup> AS, 3.1-5

<sup>72</sup> AS, 3.81-83

<sup>73</sup> It is not clear if Aurelius has come to Athens only for that reason, as later Aurelius asks Valeria to shift their identities and she replies: "My lord, how if the Duke your father should by some means come to Athens for to see how do you profit in these public schools and find me clothèd thus in your attire?" (AS, 3.93-96)

AS:

Polidor: [...] and he that hath her shall be fettered so as good be wedded to the devil himself. For such a scold as she did never live;<sup>74</sup>

Polidor: We must devise a means and find someone that will attempt to wed this devilish scold [...]<sup>75</sup>

Ferando: The devil himself dares scarce venture to woo her: [...]<sup>76</sup>

TS:

Gremio: [...] She's too rough for me.<sup>77</sup>

Tranio: That wench is stark mad or wonderful forward.<sup>78</sup>

Hortensio: Petruccio, shall I then come roundly to thee and wish thee to a shrewd, ill-favoured wife?<sup>79</sup>

Baptista: For shame, thou hilding of a devilish spirit, why dost thou wrong her that did ne'er wrong thee?<sup>80</sup>

In both plays the sisters' suitors collaborate to find a husband for the shrewish girl, so they can win her sisters' love: the result falls on the stubborn Petruccio/Ferando. At the same time in both plays, Aurelius states that he wants to be introduced to Phylena as a merchant's son and court her with a different identity; he also adds that his servant Valeria should act his part. In *The Shrew* the disguises were slightly different: also Tranio exchanges his role with his master Lucentio and the latter disguises himself as the private literature tutor Cambio, but this trick was used to allow Lucentio to be in touch and court Bianca. In the anonymous version Aurelius' disguise seems at first to have no particular reasons.

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<sup>74</sup> AS, 3.50-52

<sup>75</sup> AS, 3.67-68

<sup>76</sup> AS, 3.115

<sup>77</sup> TS, 1.1.55

<sup>78</sup> TS, 1.1.69

<sup>79</sup> TS, 1.2.58-59

<sup>80</sup> TS, 2.1.26-27

At this point in *The Shrew* there is the last mention of Sly, as we are informed that he is not paying so much attention to the play and he is almost falling asleep. In *A Shrew* at this moment there are no interventions of Sly yet.

In *The Shrew* later Petruccio goes to meet his friend Hortensio and by chance the latter jokingly recommends him the shrewish Katherina; on the other hand in *A Shrew* Polidor sends for his friend Ferando on purpose to suggest him Kate as suitable wife, but when Ferando arrives he is already aware of the situation, as he declares he is going to meet Alfonso to ask for Kate's hand. He also reveals he has already negotiated with Kate's father six thousand crowns if he is able to marry her (the negotiation of the dowry with Kate's father, unlike in *The shrew*, occurs offstage). On the other hand, Baptista had promised to Petruccio twenty thousand crowns to "liberate himself" from Katherina, but this happens onstage while he is at Baptista's house.

Before Petruccio goes to Baptista's house, there are some scenes missing in the anonymous play, as Hortensio asks Petruccio to go with him to Baptista's and introduce him as a music teacher, they also meet with Gremio and Lucentio (as Cambio) on their way and later with Biondello and Tranio (as Lucentio), so there is a sort of suitors' meeting. Moreover, in *The Shrew* there is a scene before the suitors arrive at Baptista's house, in which the sisters fight and finally Kate even strikes Bianca, and Baptista intervenes to divide them. In *A Shrew* is never portrayed a quarrel of this kind between the three sisters.

Kate's wedding arrangement appears in a very concise way in *A Shrew*: after quickly speaking with Kate and teasing each others, Ferando announces their marriage. Although she does not agree publicly, she secretly admits to the audience that she will marry him, because she has "lived too long a maid"<sup>81</sup>: this is a sort of anticipation, missing in Shakespeare's play, which occurs other times in the anonymous play. On the other hand, Kate's wedding arrangement in *The Shrew* is more complicated: after the quarrel between Bianca and Katherina, all the suitors arrive at Baptista's house, following a presentation of suitors and tutors. After that, there is a precise negotiation of

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<sup>81</sup> AS, 3.170

the dowry and a long talk between Katherina and Petruccio, before announcing their wedding. The long chat is a very witty dialogue made of clever and funny puns and ending with a slap in Petruccio's face. In *A Shrew* Kate threatens Ferando to slap him ("Hand off [...] or I will set my ten commandments in your face"<sup>82</sup>) but she does not do it at the end: this is another hint that Shakespeare could have taken some cues from the anonymous play.

When Baptista/Alfonso and Petruccio/Ferando confirm in front of Kate that the marriage contract is sealed, a different reaction of the shrew can be noticed in the two plays: as explained before, while in *A Shrew* Kate consents to marry Ferando in an aside, in *The Shrew* she does not reply anything. It is not clear why she remains silent, but some explanations can be supposed: either Katherina could be too angry or disoriented to say anything, or she could be resigned to the fact that the contract has already been agreed between Petruccio and her father. Paralleling the scene with *A Shrew*, it might also be that Katherina was secretly pleased to be engaged, as happens to her counterpart in the anonymous play.

After the meeting with Kate and his wedding arrangement, Ferando has a curious talk with his man Sander: in a very insolent way, the servant enters laughing and mocking his master about his attitude with Kate, adding that he would have wooed her much better; Ferando however is not in the mood for joking and sends him to inform Polidor of his imminent wedding. In *The Shrew* there are no similar scenes of such familiarity between the two.

In the meanwhile, Polidor remarks that Alfonso has asked him if he knows a good a musician to teach Kate to play the lute, so Valeria is sent to Alfonso's house disguised as a music teacher<sup>83</sup>: this device should enable the younger sisters to slip away from the house, so Valeria is just sent to distract Kate. Baptista makes a similar request to Gremio and Hortensio also in *The Shrew*, where a music teacher appears with the figure of Hortensio, who makes

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<sup>82</sup> AS, 3.152-153

<sup>83</sup> In this way, Valeria acts not only as her master in the play, but also as a music teacher.

himself available to teach to play the lute to Baptista's daughters, even if he is just willing to court Bianca in this disguise.

The difference is that Kate's meeting with Ferando precedes her music lesson, while in *The Shrew* Kate's music lesson precedes the meeting with Petruccio.

Polidor and Aurelius go to Alfonso's house and Aurelius is introduced to Alfonso as a rich merchant and not as the Prince of Sestos: it is at this point, at the beginning of the fourth scene, that takes place the first interruption of Sly, who wonders when the fool (Sanders) will come again and then orders one more drink. At the same time, in *The Shrew*, the arrangement of Bianca's wedding has already been set, as Baptista, after a talk with Gremio and Tranio (as Lucentio), has decided that the latter shall be the suitable husband for her daughter and announces that the Sunday after Katherina's wedding Bianca's wedding will take place.

In both plays the music teacher is not able to have a normal lesson with the shrewish Kate: in *A Shrew* the music class ends with Kate threatening to crack the lute over Valeria's head but finally just throwing it down, while in *The Shrew*, Katherina does break the lute over Licio's head, but she does that offstage and the audience comes to know of the event thanks to Hortensio's report. For the third time, *A Shrew* seems to foreshadow an event that occurs instead in *The Shrew*.

In *A Shrew*, Kate's music class is the device that enables Polidor and Aurelius to go to Alfonso's house and meet their beloved: Polidor starts to praise Emelia and Aurelius does the same with Phylena. In doing this, they utter a sequence of citations about Greek mythology's figures, from Prometheus, to Jove, Phoebus, Priam and Juno. Also in *The Shrew* there is a meeting between Bianca and her suitors, but this happens during Bianca's lessons, as Lucentio (as Cambio) and Hortensio (as Licio) try to court Bianca while they are tutoring her: Lucentio reveals his real identity while he is translating a Latin text, while Hortensio reveals his love by making her read a love letter in the form of a musical scale.

In his wedding day Ferando is late like his Shakespearean counterpart and Polidor, like Tranio, attempts to reassure the apprehensive father. The

difference is that while Polidor is an old friend of Ferando, and thus his comments are suitable for his part, Tranio vouches for Petruccio's honesty, although he has just known him, as already seen in the first chapter. Polidor is in reality Hortensio's counterpart in *A shrew*, but makes exactly the same comments as Tranio to Petruccio: this means that originally Tranio's words should be in Hortensio's mouth. In this way Hortensio's inconsistency in *The Shrew* would be explained.

Finally Ferando shows up basely dressed up like Petruccio does, but this time he explains to Kate's father that it is due to his daughter's ill temperament, as he announces that once married, if they argue she will destroy any nice clothes he should wear. On the other hand, the motive of Petruccio's filthy clothes is that Katherina has to marry him for love and not for his clothes.

The meeting between Kate and Ferando/Petruccio, the wedding and the immediate escape from the wedding party, happen in a similar way in both plays. The wedding occurs offstage in both plays, but in *The Shrew* we are able to discover the details thanks to Gremio's narration, while in *A Shrew* there is not anybody to tell about the ceremony.<sup>84</sup>

As in *The Shrew*, Ferando wants to leave immediately the wedding feast and in no way Kate is able to dissuade him. At that moment take place two other anticipations that are not found in Shakespeare, as Polidor announces he will go to visit the newlyweds in a few days and Aurelius promises Alfonso that he will meet his father soon:

AS:

Polidor: Within this two days I will ride to him and see how lovingly they do agree.<sup>85</sup>

Aurelius: and for my father's coming to this place, I do expect within this week at most.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> At the beginning of the sixth scene Sander only explains briefly to Tom that Ferando showed up at the wedding improperly dressed and that he went home right after the ceremony, but there is not a detailed description like that of Gremio in *The Shrew*.

<sup>85</sup> AS, 5.108-109

<sup>86</sup> AS, 5.125-126

This kind of anticipation seems to lower the play's suspense and to make the anonymous play less captivating, compared to Shakespeare's play.

Another difference between the two plays is that Petruccio uses an amusing device to abandon the wedding-banquet scene: first he states that Kate is now his property, comparing her even to his horse and his ox, then he pretends that some thieves are suddenly attacking them and since he is Kate's protector, he must bring her to his home and he even tells Grumio to take his gun. On the contrary, the author of the anonymous play was not as inventive as Shakespeare, as all Ferando is able to say is that they have to go but they will come back for her sisters' marriage.

Similarly to *The Shrew*, the newlyweds go home, where they should find everything ready for dinner, but Ferando is mad about everything, he criticizes the preparation of the food, he beats his servants and finally they do not even eat. At that point he reveals his taming plan, using words from falconry (as in *The Shrew*) as well as citations from the Greek mythology<sup>87</sup> and explaining that his method consists in depriving Kate of food and sleep. The main difference between the two plays is that in this scene Kate remains silent while Ferando is insulting his servants and claiming that the meat is not properly cooked, while in *The Shrew* Katherina shows a more compassionate side, trying to calm him down:

TS:

Katherina: Patience, I pray you, 'twas a fault unwilling.<sup>88</sup>

Katherina: I pray you, husband, be not so disquiet. The meat was well, if you were so contented.<sup>89</sup>

After this scene, in *The Shrew*, Hortensio's resignation takes place, as he is tired to witness Bianca and Lucentio's continuous flirting; he also adds that he is going to marry a rich widow. When Tranio meets with Lucentio and Bianca,

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<sup>87</sup> He mentions Hercules, which is the Roman name for the Greek divinity Heracles, son of Zeus.

<sup>88</sup> TS, 4.1.142

<sup>89</sup> TS, 4.1.1157-1158



he explains them that Hortensio is going to the 'taming school', in other words, he is going to Petruccio's house to learn how to tame his future wife, in a dialogue that is extremely similar to that one of *A Shrew*, when Aurelius says to Valeria that Polidor is going to marry soon and he is going to the "taming school" as well:

AS:

Aurelius: [...] Polidor shortly shall be wed, and he means to tame his wife ere long.

Valeria: He says so.

Aurelius: Faith, he's gone unto the taming school.

Valeria: The taming school? Why, is there such a place?

Aurelius: Ay, and Ferando is the master of the school.<sup>90</sup>

TS:

Tranio: I'faith, he'll have a lusty widow now that shall be wooed and wedded in a day.

Bianca: God give him joy.

Tranio: Ay, and he'll tame her.

Bianca: He says so, Tranio?

Tranio: Faith, he is gone unto the taming school.

Bianca: The taming school? What, is there such a place?

Tranio: Ay, mistress, and Petruccio is the master [...]<sup>91</sup>

The difference is that while Hortensio has never stated that he will go to Petruccio's and thus Tranio is not allowed to know it; Polidor does state that he will go to Ferando's in front of Aurelius and the other wedding guests (Polidor: "Within this two days I will ride to him and see how lovingly they do agree"<sup>92</sup>). This could also explain the inconsistency described in the first chapter, as Shakespeare could have taken the clue from the anonymous play, forgetting to have Tranio informed by Hortensio.

At almost the same time in both plays, Biondello and Valeria find a merchant, who has to act the part of their master's father.

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<sup>90</sup> AS, 7.22-26

<sup>91</sup> TS, 4.2.50-57

<sup>92</sup> AS, 5.108-109

The story continues quite similarly in both plays, as there are some scenes that resemble each others: we are back at Petruccio/Ferando's country house, Sander/Grumio mocks Kate when she asks for food and she beats him; later Ferando and Polidor/Petruccio and Hortensio eat in front of her but deny her food because she is not thankful.

At this point in *The Shrew* takes place the Haberdasher and Tailor's scene, which is also present in *A Shrew*, even if in the middle there is the scene of Phylena's wedding arrangement: Aurelius, like Lucentio in *The Shrew*, has found a merchant to act as his father so that he can organise his wedding with Phylena; Phylotus and Alfonso thus meet and the marriage contract is sealed. Valeria is also present, but disguised as the Duke of Sestos' son.

In both plays, the Haberdasher and Tailor's scene takes place at Ferando/Petruccio's country house: here dialogues are particularly similar, although in *A Shrew* the scene is as always very compacted. There are differences also at the level of style, as Shakespeare is as usual more creative and dynamic and his language is more colourful and funny:

AS:

Haberdasher: A velvet cap, sir, an it please you.

Ferando: Who spoke for it? Didst thou Kate?<sup>93</sup>

TS:

Haberdasher: Here is the cap you worship did bespeak.

Petruccio: Why, this was moulded on a porringer – a velvet dish. Fie fie, 'tis lewd and filthy. Why, 'tis a cockle, or a walnut-shell, a knack, a toy, a trick, a baby's cap. Away with it; come, let me have a bigger.<sup>94</sup>

In addition, both Grumio and Sander misunderstand their masters' sentence about Kate's gown, proving to be naïve and absent-minded: their master's command is a simple request to take the gown, as he will make whatever use of it he wants, while the servant understands that he has to lift up Kate's gown. The sexual meaning is emphasized with the same words in both sides:

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<sup>93</sup> AS, 10.4-5

<sup>94</sup> TS, 4.3.65-70

“use” (to prepare Kate sexually) and “deeper” (deeper into Kate). The dialogue in the two plays is so similar that it is difficult to find the differences:

AS:

Ferando: [To the tailor] Go, I say, and take it up for your master's use.

Sander: 'Souns, villain, not for thy life, touch it not. 'Souns, "take up my mistress' gown to his master's use"?

Ferando: Well, sir, what's the conceit of it?

Sander: I have a deeper conceit in it than you think for. "Take up my mistress' gown to his master's use!"<sup>95</sup>

TS:

Petruccio: Go, take it up unto thy master's use.

Grumio: Villain, not for thy life! Take up my mistress' gown for thy master's use?

Petruccio: Why sir, what's your conceit in that?

Grumio: O sir, the conceit is deeper than you think for. "Take up my mistress's gown to his master's use"!? O fie, fie, fie!<sup>96</sup>

After the tailor has gone, the shrew-tamer informs Kate that they will go to her sister's wedding even in their humble clothes, but Petruccio, unlike Ferando, also instructs Kate in a long philosophical speech about the importance of the inner side of their selves rather than the external part, a topic offhandedly treated in *A Shrew*. There is a parallel with the *Book of Common Prayer*, which also contrasts outward apparel and gives instructions to wives in relation to clothing.

Then Ferando/Petruccio discuss with Kate about what time it is: he demonstrates his harsh character but she does not want to cede, thus he commands her not to oppose him. Also in this case, the scene is paralleled in both plays:

AS:

Kate: Nine o' clock? Why, 'tis already past two in the afternoon by all the clocks in the town.

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<sup>95</sup> AS, 10.46-51

<sup>96</sup> TS, 4.3.156-162

Ferando: I say 'tis but nine o' clock in the morning.

Kate: I say 'tis two o' clock in the afternoon.

Ferando: It shall be nine, then, ere we go to your father's. Come back again, we will not go today. Nothing but crossing of me still. [...]<sup>97</sup>

TS:

Petruccio: [...] Let's see, I think 'tis now some seven o' clock, and well we may come there by dinner-time.

Katherina: I dare assure you, sir, 'tis almost two, [...]

Petruccio: It shall be seven ere I go to horse. Look what I speak, or do, or think to do, you are still crossing it. [...]<sup>98</sup>

In *The Shrew*, the merchant (as Vincentio) seals the contract with Baptista for Bianca's wedding and Biondello suggests Lucentio to hurry to the church with Bianca. Parallel to this scene, in *A Shrew* Polidor and Aurelius meet with their lovers before their marriage and the scene looks like a homage to Greek mythology: they mention various ancient figures such as Jove, Ganymede, Icarus, Neptune, Hercules, Orpheus, Pluto, Leander, Achilles, the Amazons, Penthesilea, Hector, Pyrrhus, Aeolus, Helen and Juno. With a great sentimentality, which is missing in Shakespeare's play<sup>99</sup>, Aurelius also decides to test Phylena's love, in an attempt to understand if she is really in love with him or she is just interested in his wealth:

AS:

Aurelius: What if the duke of Sestos' only son, which came with me unto your father's house should seek to get Phylena's love from me and make thee duchess of that stately town? Wouldst thou not then forsake me for his love?

Phylena: Not for great Neptune, no, nor Jove himself, will Phylena leave Aurelius' love.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> AS, 10.64-68

<sup>98</sup> TS, 4.3.186-192

<sup>99</sup> In reality also Petruccio seems to carry the same values as Aurelius, when he delivers a speech in which he states that clothes are not important, because what counts is inside (TS, 4.3.168-183). Nevertheless, this seems a part of his taming plan and a sort of mocking for Katherina rather than a proof of his real feeling.

<sup>100</sup> AS, 11.16-22

At this point the couples are ready to marry and they haste toward the church. Then, at the beginning of *A Shrew's* twelfth scene, Sly interrupts the play for the second time, foolishly asking the Lord if they are really going to marry. Polidor and Aurelius' wedding occurs offstage, as it is with that of Lucentio and Bianca.

After this, we are back with Ferando/Petruccio and Kate, who are going to Alfonso/Baptista's house: Ferando/Petruccio makes Kate believe his declarations about sun and moon, right before the Duke of Sestos/Vincentio shows up; this is an important scene, as Kate starts openly to bend to her husband and repeats whatever he says. The dialogue is surprisingly similar in both plays, although in *A Shrew* the scenes are as always more compacted:

AS:

Ferando: Come, Kate, the moon shines clear tonight methinks.

Kate: The moon? Why, husband, you are deceived. It is the sun.

Ferando: Yet again: come back again. It shall be the moon ere we come at your father's.

Kate: Why, I'll say as you say—it is the moon.

Ferando: Jesus save the glorious moon.

Kate: Jesus save the glorious moon.<sup>101</sup>

TS:

Petruccio: [...] Good Lord, how bright and goodly shines the moon!

Katherina: The moon? The sun; it is not moonlight now.

Petruccio: I say it is the moon that shines so bright.

Katherina: I know it is the sun that shines so bright.

Petruccio: [...] It shall be the moon or star or what I list or e'er I journey to your father's house. [...]

[...]

Katherina: [...] be it moon or sun or what you please, and if you please to call it a rush-candle, henceforth I vow it shall be so for me.

Petruccio: I say it is the moon.

Katherina: I know it is the moon.

Petruccio: Nay then, you lie; it is the blessed sun.

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<sup>101</sup> AS, 12.2-15

Katherina: Then God be blest, it is the blessed sun, but sun it is not, when you say it is not, and the moon changes even as your mind. What you will have it named, even that it is, and so it shall be so for Katherine.<sup>102</sup>

In both plays, when the Duke/Vincentio interrupts the couple, Ferando/Petruccio and Kate both pretend that he is a woman, acting as fools. This scene makes us understand that the taming is completed and Ferando/Petruccio is ready to prove everybody how he managed to tame his shrewish wife. There are few differences in this scene: while in *A Shrew*, Kate understands by herself that she has to please Ferando if she wants to see her father, in *The Shrew*, it is Hortensio that suggests her to act in this way, as he is tired to wait for the couple to be in harmony. In *A shrew* Ferando states also an important sentence, as he is happy that Kate pleased him at the end, although he knows that she knows the reality of the things:

AS:

Ferando: I am glad, Kate, your stomach is come down. I know it well thou knowest it is the sun, but I did try to see if thou wouldst speak and cross me now as thou hast done before.<sup>103</sup>

This sentence is significant when putting into question if Kate's final transformation is real or not.

In *A Shrew*, the Duke thinks that they are a mad couple and continues on his way alone, while in *The Shrew*, the couple admits the trick to Vincentio and go with him to Lucentio's house to discover what is occurring. It must be underlined that in the anonymous play, even if Ferando tells Kate that they "will after him and now persuade to his shape again"<sup>104</sup>, this event in reality will never happen. Thus, this is the fourth time that a predicted event of the anonymous play does not take place, yet it does occur in Shakespeare's version. Moreover, in *The Shrew*, Petruccio and Hortensio reveal to Vincentio that his son has married Kate's sister: as we have seen in the first chapter, they

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<sup>102</sup> TS, 4.12-23

<sup>103</sup> AS, 12.15-18

<sup>104</sup> AS, 13. 56-57

could not know that Lucentio was the winning suitor. However, if we have in mind *A Shrew*, we can observe that Aurelius (Lucentio's counterpart) has no rivals, thus it is obvious that he is the one marrying Phylena: for this reason Shakespeare's version might have taken from the anonymous play this scene, forgetting that Bianca had more suitors.

After the double wedding in *A Shrew* and Bianca's wedding in *The Shrew* have been performed, in both plays we have the discovery of the disguises and thus the denouement.

In *The Shrew*, once arrived at Lucentio's house, Vincentio discovers the trick but he is believed to be an impostor, risking to be brought to prison.

On the other hand, in *A Shrew*, when the real Duke shows up during Polidor and Aurelius' wedding feast and understands that a merchant is playing his part while his servant Valeria is playing his son's part, he immediately turns mad and threatens to send them to prison. At this point, Sly interrupts the play for the third time, this time also mistaking the play with reality, claiming that the characters should not go to prison. He then asks for a drink again and falls asleep, not waking up again until the end of the play. The Duke's rage is due not only to Valeria and Aurelius' deception, but also to the fact that Alfonso did dare to think of a match between his daughter and his princely house's heir. In fact here, unlike *The Shrew*, the first problem for Phylena and Aurelius' marriage was exactly the different social rank: this might explain Aurelius' decision of a disguise. Fortunately when Aurelius, Phylena, Polidor and Emelia humbly repent, the Duke is willing to forgive everybody and finally accepts Phylena as his daughter.

Also in *The Shrew* Vincentio finally forgives his son, after he has arrived with Bianca to explain the situation and ask for forgiveness.

At the beginning of *A Shrew*'s fourteenth scene the frame is mentioned for the last time before the ending of the play-within the play, as the lord asks his servants to carry back the sleeping Sly to the alehouse with his real clothes.

The final scene of *A Shrew* involves three wives in a test, like that of *The Shrew*: Kate proves to be the most obedient, while her younger sisters turn out to be

the real shrewish wives. The difference is that in the Shakespeare's version one of the wives was a widow, Hortensio's new wife.

The play ends with a speech of Kate about a wife's duties, similar to the one of *The Shrew* but slightly shorter, even though this time, although sharing some ideas like woman's obedience, love and gentle temperament, the speech expresses a slightly different way of thinking. In fact, *A Shrew* takes as example some biblical arguments, like the creation of the world in the Genesis, the fact that the woman was created from Adam's rib, and thus confirming woman's inferiority to man, the story of Abraham and Sarah. On the contrary, *The Shrew* grounds not only in the Bible, but also on some books of that age: the *Book of Common Prayer*, the *Homily of the State of Matrimony* and the *Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion*. Consequently, about the relation of women and men within marriage, *The Shrew* is closer to the Jacobean thought, while the strongest position of *A Shrew* refers to the Elizabethan's thought. Women in the Jacobean era were not thought to be as strong and powerful as men, but they were expected to be feminine and delicate and to take care of their family at home, while men were supposed to work and go into battle. On the other side, women in the Elizabethan era were raised with the belief they were inferior to men and they had to be totally dominated by the male members of their family: "disobedience was seen as a crime against their religion. The Church firmly believed this and quoted the Bible in order to ensure the continued adherence to this principle."<sup>105</sup>

### 3.2 MAIN CHARACTERS

- SLY: In both plays Sly appears to be a drunken and silly slacker with a miserable life. However, he appears a very self-confident person, being at ease both as a tinker and as a lord. In *A Shrew* he seems more foolish and simpleton, as, unlike in *The Shrew*, he immediately falls in the Lord's trap. Moreover, in the anonymous play we are able to know him better because he intervenes throughout the play with his illogical comments,

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<sup>105</sup> [www.elizabethan-era.org.uk](http://www.elizabethan-era.org.uk)



proving also an inadequate cultural education. In *The Shrew*, although showing his foolishness as well, he is able to quote something from Thomas Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, even if in an imperfect way. He also decides to speak in verse when he starts to believe he is a nobleman, although this is quite unreal for a lowborn person.

- PETRUCCIO/FERANDO: Petruccio/Ferando and Kate have the strongest characters in the play and they fight to have the command. Petruccio and Ferando share the same harsh and intransigent character and they have the same will to dominate and manipulate Kate's brain. They are also really interested in money: this side of the character is widely described in *The Shrew*, where Petruccio clearly admits he does not care whether Kate is ugly, as he is interested only in gaining her dowry. Also in *A Shrew* Ferando reveals that he wants to win Kate as he has negotiated a great dowry with her father. However, Petruccio seems more interested in Katherina beyond the money reason than his counterpart of *A Shrew*, as sometimes he admits to be attracted by her and also asks her to kiss him a few times during the play.

Petruccio seems to be more violent than his counterpart in the anonymous play: as already seen in the first chapter, he wrings Grumio's ear, he slaps the priest and throws sops in the sexton's face, he beats Grumio on their way home because Kate's horse has fallen, and he hits his servants at home. In *A Shrew* the first act of violence only occurs at Ferando's country house when he beats the servants.

- KATE: We have seen how in both plays every character has a negative opinion of Kate, as she is described as an unruly, stubborn and shrewish girl. It must be underlined, however, that the majority of the times Kate is described from the point of view of men, who look at her in a stereotyped way. In contrast with this vision, in *The Shrew* there are a few examples which reveal her good and emotional side: for instance when Petruccio is late for their wedding and she goes away weeping because she feels humiliated, or when she defends Petruccio's servants

from his accusations. In *A Shrew* there are no clear examples of the same sensitivity. From another point of view, *The Shrew's* Kate seems more violent than her counterpart in *A Shrew*: she binds and strikes her sister, she slaps her husband, beats her music teacher and hits Grumio, while in the anonymous version there is only one reference of Kate's beating Sander. Frances E. Dolan conjectures that *A Shrew's* Kate beats Grumio only as she saw her husband repeatedly doing so, as "she observes and emulates violence towards servants as an acceptable form of unruliness, which purports to maintain rather than disrupt household order"<sup>106</sup>. We know instead that *The Shrew's* Kate was used to beat people before knowing Petruccio.

- BAPTISTA/ALFONSO: While *The Shrew's* Baptista proves to treat his daughters' marriages like a mere business, *A Shrew's* Alfonso seems to be a little less interested in money. Baptista arranges Kate's wedding for money and does the same with Bianca's wedding: he seals the contract with Tranio without asking anything to Bianca and choosing him only on the basis of his greater dowry. On the other hand, also Alfonso marries Kate for money but seems to accept Phylena and Emelia's decisions about their beloved (Polidor is just a student), without asking the two suitors about their dowry.
- BIANCA/PHYLENA/EMELIA: In *The Shrew*, we are able to catch something of Bianca's character, for instance she appears to be really quiet and mild-mannered at the beginning but at the end she reveals to be quite sharp-tongued, coming out with some very shrewish comments, especially in her final talk with Gremio, Vincentio and Petruccio. On the other hand, in *A Shrew* it is difficult to understand the character of Kate's sisters: they rarely speak and their uniqueness compared to the other characters is not perceivable. Only at the end we perceive that Emelia has not a really good character, but this is due

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<sup>106</sup> DOLAN, Frances E., "Household chastisements: Gender, Authority, and 'Domestic Violence'", in *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999.

only to Polidor's comment<sup>107</sup>. There are some differences about the relation between the sisters as well: while in *The Shrew* there are some episodes in which Bianca and Katherine heavily and openly argue and fight, in *A Shrew* we do not know what is the opinion of Phylena and Emelia about Kate and in addition, they never seem to quarrel.

- LUCENTIO/HORTENSIO/AURELIUS/POLIDOR: The main difference is that while Shakespeare's characters are more animated, Aurelius and Polidor's figures (as Kate's sisters) are more dull and they are not skilfully characterized in the play: they seem to embody the typical average lovers, who meet and utter love words. In Shakespeare's play the subplot is more involving because Bianca has three suitors (four, if we count Tranio), therefore it is much more amusing to follow the twists of the play about the suitor's rivalry. On the other hand, *A Shrew* is not so enthralling from this point of view: for example Polidor has no real barrier to overcome for his wedding, except that of having Kate married first. In addition, Aurelius seems to have no reason to disguise himself, as unlike Bianca's suitors he is the only suitor and thus he has no rivalry. Nevertheless, we come to know only at the end that he might have disguised himself for a difference in rank between him and Phylena.
- GRUMIO/SANDER: The loyal servant of the shrew-tamer is in both plays partner in his cruel plan with sarcastic enthusiasm; both characters are also sharp-tongued and humorous. However, while Grumio denotes a more dizzy side, Sander demonstrates to be a little more cunning. For example, Grumio misunderstands what his master is saying when he and Petruccio are at Hortensio's door: Petruccio asks him to knock for him at the door, but Grumio understand he has to hit his master, proving to be a very silly character. On the other hand, Sander appears to be more self confident: he not only faces his master with humorous insolence after speaking with Kate, but he also dares to say that he likes

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<sup>107</sup> Polidor: "I say thou art a shrew." (AS, 14.166)

Emelia and would gladly court her. However, both Sander and Grumio demonstrate to be not so perceptive in misunderstanding their masters about the gown in the tailor scene.

Grumio shows a more violent side, as he even strikes a fellow servant (Curtis), while Sander does not.

### 3.3 REFERENCES

As already seen in *The Shrew*, also *A Shrew* includes references from popular plays, especially from Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* and *Tamburlaine*, which we can easily find throughout the play. In *A Shrew*, the borrowings are present not only in the induction, but also in the main plot and especially in the subplot, although sometimes they are inaccurate or inappropriate for the context. For instance, in the second scene, one of the Lord's servants mentions Pegasus, stating the he runs over the Persian plains: the author might have thought that Pegasus was a Persian horse, as he was mentioned in *Tamburlaine*<sup>108</sup>, but in reality Pegasus is a winged horse from the Greek mythology.

Boas counts at least 16 borrowings from Marlowe in *A Shrew*: unlike the Shakespeare's version, the Marlovian borrowings of the anonymous play are so particularly numerous and reported in such an indiscriminate way that critics have often talked of plagiarism.

The subplot of both plays is linked also to Gascoigne's *Supposes*, which is the English version of the Italian comedy called *I Suppositi* by Ludovico Ariosto. In *A Shrew* some scenes are surprisingly similar to it: Aurelius' arrival and his love at first sight for Phylena, his decision to court her in disguise and order his servant to play his part, Phylotus impersonating his father, the arrival of the real father, Aurelius confession and a final reconciliation.

### 3.4 INCONSTISTENCIES

There are some inconsistencies that must be underlined in *A Shrew* as well, which are not present in *The Shrew*: these inconsistencies might prove the

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<sup>108</sup> The play of Christopher Marlowe is set in Persia.

bad quarto version or the fact that *A Shrew* might originate from another source or from an adaptation of an acted play, giving the possibility of mistakes and omissions of some parts.

The first anomaly regards the repetition of the same names, as if some characters played also other parts in the play: Sander is in fact the name of one of the two players in Sly's frame, but also the name of Ferando's closer servant in the main plot. The other player's name is Tom, but Tom is also called one of the Lord's servants together with Will. Finally, two of Ferando's servants in the main plot are called Tom and Will as well. Boas notices<sup>109</sup> also that the Lord presents himself as Simon to Sly, and at the beginning of the play proper, Alfonso enters with his daughters and a certain Simon. (However, this reference is visible only if we examine the original quarto version of 1594 and not the modern editions.)

Another anomaly is that Aurelius states at the beginning that he has come to Athens to meet his friend Polidor, but soon after Valeria reveals that he has come to study at the university.

An inconsistency regards as well the disguises, as Aurelius first orders Valeria to act his part, but later suddenly states: "Valeria, as erst we did devise, take thou thy lute and go to Alfonso's house [...]"<sup>110</sup>: to interpret this, we might suppose that they had agreed before upon the music teacher devise, but there is no mention about this in the play.

Another incongruity is about the day of Kate's wedding: Alfonso says first that Kate shall wed *tomorrow* (AS, 3.165), but soon after he states that the *next Sunday* will be her wedding day (AS, 3.175). Later Ferando confirms that the wedding will occur the *next Sunday* (AS, 3.203). Anyway, a few lines after, Sander is communicating to Polidor about his master's wedding, declaring that he must come to his wedding *tomorrow* (AS, 3.256). In addition, while talking with Aurelius and Polidor, Alfonso soon after confirms that *tomorrow* is the wedding day (AS, 3.307). It is true that the word "tomorrow" can be used

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<sup>109</sup> BOAS, Frederick Samuel, *The Taming of a Shrew: Being the Original of Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew*, London: Chatto and Windus, New York: Duffield and Company, 1908.

<sup>110</sup> AS, 3.67-68

sometimes with the meaning of “in the near future”, but this use of the word only dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as the Oxford English Dictionary confirm, thus it is not possible to believe that the author intended that meaning.

Lastly, we might add among the inconsistencies also Sly's comment at the beginning of the fourth scene:

AS:

Sly: Sim, when will the fool come again?

Lord: He'll come again, my lord, anon.

[...]

Sly: O brave, here's two fine gentlewomen.<sup>111</sup>

Sly asks of the fool, i.e. Sander, fifty lines after he exited from the scene, making the comment unsuitable for that moment of the play. Moreover, he then states that two gentlewomen enter, but in reality only a gentlewoman enter (Kate), accompanied by a male music teacher (Valeria), even if in disguise. As Raymond Hooks noticed<sup>112</sup>, Sly's interference would have been more suitable at the beginning of the eleventh scene, as just before there is the scene of the tailor, where Sander is present, behaving exactly like a fool. The comment's position would also be suitable there, as right after the four lovers meet (and thus the two gentlewomen, Emelia and Phylena, enter). Hook's hypothesis is made more reliable by the fact that at the beginning of the following scene, soon after the four lovers' meeting, Sly states that ‘the fool is come again now’<sup>113</sup>, as an answer to his previous question.

### 3.5 ORIGIN

Through the remaining documents of the ancient theatre, critics are not able to know exactly which play was first performed. It is believed that the first mention of *A Shrew* appeared in the Stationers' Register on May 1594, for a play called “A pleasant Conceyted historie called the Tamynge of a shrowe”;

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<sup>111</sup> AS, 4.1-8

<sup>112</sup> SCHROEDER, John W., “*The Taming of a Shrew and The Taming of the Shrew: a case reopened*”, in *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, Vol. 57, No. 3, University of Illinois Press, 1958.

<sup>113</sup> AS, 12. 3

two other editions appeared in 1596 and 1607. Shakespeare's version seems to appear later, as it makes its first appearance in print in the First Folio of the 1623 and for this reason *A Shrew* was believed to be the inspiration for Shakespeare's work. However, not only the shrew theme was really common in that age, so that Shakespeare might have been inspired by another similar work, but also the titles of the two plays differ only in one word, being in this manner easily exchanged.

During the times, three major schools of thought have emerged about the origin of the two plays, which can be summarised as follows:

1. *A Shrew* is the original play and *The Shrew* derives from it.
2. *The Shrew* is the original play and *A shrew* a 'bad' version of it.
3. Behind both *A shrew* and *The shrew* lies a common original, a lost Shrew play from which both independently derive.<sup>114</sup>

The first theory has been the most reliable among scholars during the times. The major historians who favoured this theory were F. S. Boas, R. Warwick Bond and E. K. Chambers. Also J. W. Schroeder explained<sup>115</sup> how Shakespeare might have been influenced by *A Shrew*, as we have seen how some events of the anonymous play which are only foreshadowed in the text but do not occur, are instead present in *The Shrew*, as if Shakespeare after reading those situations, decided to create and develop his new scenes.

F. S. Boas conjectures also that, as *A Shrew* "quotes largely from Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* and *Tamburlaine*, acted in all probability in 1588 and 1589, while he does not draw upon his later plays, makes it probable that *The Taming of a Shrew* was produced about 1590 or not long afterwards"<sup>116</sup>, and thus it was written before Shakespeare's version. We have also seen how the majority of the inconsistencies of Shakespeare's version can be explained if compared

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<sup>114</sup> SCHROEDER, John W., "*The Taming of a Shrew and The Taming of the Shrew: a case reopened*", in *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, Vol. 57, No. 3, University of Illinois Press, 1958.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> BOAS, Frederick Samuel, *The Taming of a Shrew: Being the Original of Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew*, London: Chatto and Windus, New York: Duffield and Company, 1908.

to the same events of *A Shrew*, thus with the idea that Shakespeare was following the structure of the anonymous play, but with carelessness.

To sustain the second theory, we find critics such as Wilhelm Creizenach, J. S. Smart, Peter Alexander, J. Dover Wilson, B. A. P. Van Dam, Samuel Hickson and H. D. Gray. In particular, it is Samuel Hickson who made a list of passages of *A Shrew* that in his opinion have been improperly taken from *The Shrew*, as they are fully understandable only if we know the Shakespearean version. Hickson thinks in fact that the author, having *The Shrew* in mind, might have taken some parts of the play, maybe remembering only some words and not the structure or vice versa, and thus changing them with his inventiveness, sometimes with strange results. This could prove the anonymous text to be a report of *The Shrew*, as “the fumbling reproduction of witticism without the point is a characteristic of text pirated or memorial reconstruction”<sup>117</sup>.

Peter Alexander chooses a significant example to explain this theory: he says that<sup>118</sup> Shakespeare uses the right terms when Petruccio explains his taming plan by comparing himself to a falconer who mans a hawk, while the writer of the anonymous plays tried to imitate him but failed the terms. He probably remembered the verb “to mew up” written somewhere else in the play<sup>119</sup> and used it in an incorrect way, as Ferando says: “I’ll mew her as men do mew their hawks, and make her gently come unto the lure”<sup>120</sup>, that does not make much sense in hawking terms. On the other hand, Petruccio explains that the taming consist not in the mewing, i.e. in the caging, but in keeping her awake and denying her food.

The third theory was taken into consideration especially among modern critics, to end up the quarrels between the other two theories. The main scholars who lined up were Bernhard ten Brink, G. I. Duthie, Hardin Craig and

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<sup>117</sup> DUTHIE, George Ian, “*The Taming of a Shrew and The Taming of the Shrew*”, in *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 19, no. 76, Oxford University Press, 1943.

<sup>118</sup>ALEXANDER, Peter, “The Original Ending of *The Taming of the Shrew*”, in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1969.

<sup>119</sup> Gremio: “Why will you mew her up [...]?” (TS, 1.1.87)

Tranio: “And therefore has he closely mewed her up because she will not be annoyed with suitors.” (TS, 1.1.182-183)

<sup>120</sup> AS, 6.44-45



Raymond Houk. The latter supposes that there must have been a first draft or set of notes of the play written by Shakespeare, from which the actual *The Shrew* has originated, and that the first draft was also stolen by an anonymous writer, who then created *A Shrew*.

To conclude his article on the comparison between the two plays, G. I. Duthie affirms that “*A Shrew* is a [...] memorially constructed text, and is dependent upon an early *Shrew* play now lost. *The Shrew* is a re-working of this lost play.”<sup>121</sup> Thus, he does think that they both draw on a common lost source, but that *A Shrew* is effectively antecedent *The Shrew*. He conjectures also that the first common draft should have two sisters in the subplot, thus *A Shrew* would follow the source better as regards the subplot, while Shakespeare might have reworked this by putting more suitors on a single sister, to make the story more enthralling. This could also explain Hortensio's inconsistencies.

### 3.6 AUTORSHIP OF THE PLAY

It has been long discussed about the presumed author of *The Taming of a Shrew* and the choice has fallen especially on four playwrights, who were contemporary: Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Kyd, Robert Green, and even Shakespeare himself.

The hypothesis that Christopher Marlowe had written the play was the chief thought of the critics of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as the Marlovian borrowings are present throughout the play. Nevertheless, this idea was gradually rejected, due to the evident imprecisions of some Marlovian passages.

The author of the *Spanish Tragedy*, Thomas Kyd, has been also one of the most cited authors, as among his most exploited features there are the play-within-the-play device and the humorous tone. This idea was declined as well, because critics felt it was not possible that an author of his level could mention so many times his chief rival<sup>122</sup> in his play.

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<sup>121</sup> DUTHIE, George Ian, “*The Taming of a Shrew and The Taming of the Shrew*”, in *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 19, no. 76, Oxford University Press, 1943.

<sup>122</sup> i.e., Marlowe.

A third playwright, who has long been listed among the possible writers, was Robert Greene: he used to imitate frequently Marlowe's style in his plays, for example in *Alphonsus*, and *The historie of Orlando Furioso*, which is based on the Italian Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. However, he was always able to mention Marlowe's lines in a correct way, making the hypothesis of the authorship almost unlikely. F. S. Boas noticed also that Greene is the "weakest in plot construction, which is the chief excellence in *The Taming of a Shrew*"<sup>123</sup>, and that "the types of womanhood found in his plays are entirely unlike any of Alfonso's daughters".<sup>124</sup>

The fourth hypothesis that has been conjectured by critics is that Shakespeare himself could be the writer of *A Shrew*, as an earlier draft of *The Shrew*. Also in this case, the assumptions have been demolished: for instance *A Shrew*'s too simple language and standard characters are quite different from Shakespeare's style, made of more sharp-witted dialogues, skilfully described scenes and well-characterized characters. It is also true that Shakespeare did borrow something from Marlowe, as he was strongly influenced by him, but it is difficult to believe that he could have copied so many parts from his lines. *The Taming of a Shrew*'s origin is thus still debatable and it is probably destined to remain a mystery in the history of English drama.

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<sup>123</sup> BOAS, Frederick Samuel, *The Taming of a Shrew: Being the Original of Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew*, London: Chatto and Windus, New York: Duffield and Company, 1908.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### COMPARISON WITH JOHN FLETCHER'S SEQUEL 'THE WOMAN'S PRIZE, OR THE TAMER TAMED'

In the XVII century appeared a play that was destined to become even more popular than *The Shrew*: this comedy was *The Tamer Tamed, or The Woman's Prize*, officially published 22 years after Fletcher's death in the 1647 folio of *Comedies and Tragedies* attributed to John Fletcher and Sir Francis Beaumont. Nevertheless, a manuscript of the play was already circulating before, as the text was subject to censorship by Henry Herbert of the Master of Revels with a government document, dated 1633.

It is difficult to date the exact time of composition, but the majority of the scholars think that Fletcher could have written it between the years 1603-1610. The most curious thing is that this play was immediately considered a response to Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*: it is really uncommon to find successful sequels to Shakespearean plays in that period.

#### 4.1 PLOT AND STRUCTURE

Unlike *The Shrew*, *The Tamer Tamed* has not Sly's introductory frame, but the main plot follows the scheme of *The Shrew*, as it has as well a double-action plot regarding the love affairs of two sisters: on the one hand it focuses on the taming of Petruchio by her second-wife Maria, on the other hand it treats the love intrigues of Maria's sister Livia, courted by two men.

The play was divided into five acts by the acting companies, like many other plays of that period and presents an amusing and captivating plot with many comic scenes and intrigues.

Before the beginning of the first act, there is a prologue explaining the target of the play:

Ladies, to you, in whose defense and right Fletcher's brave muse prepared herself to fight a battle without blood, 'twas well

fought, too, (the victory's yours though got with much ado) we do present this comedy [...]<sup>125</sup>

Therefore, from the beginning Fletcher's strong commitment to women's rights seems clear, as the play aims at women and sustains their battle of the sexes.

The fact that the play was intended for a feminine audience is a striking innovation to underline, as normally plays were mainly written for a male public.

However, a few lines after, it is stated that this "merry play"<sup>126</sup> was just meant to amuse and entertain women, and that it is just a comic play:

The end we aim is to make you sport; yet neither gall the City, nor the Court. Hear and observe his comic strain [...]<sup>127</sup>

We do not know if Fletcher's intentions and commitment were real and he adopted the "light tone" stratagem to avoid censorship, or if he was truly writing a kind of farce just to divert and amaze his public.

In the first act, on their wedding night, Maria refuses to consummate her marriage with Petruchio, until he accepts her demands and she locks herself in a room on the upper floor of the house with other married women and provisions of food and clothes.

In the second act the men finally yield to the women conditions, but in the third act, Petruchio remains alone, as Maria has convinced his friends to leave him. Therefore, he pretends to be ill to attract his wife's attention, but his trick has another consequence, as Maria warns everyone that he has the plague and locks him inside his house.

In the fourth act, Petruchio is tired of his wife's behaviour, as she starts even to dress in an improper way and flirt with his friends, so he announces he will leave for France.

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<sup>125</sup> TT, Prologue, 1-5

<sup>126</sup> TT, Prologue, 8

<sup>127</sup> TT, Prologue, 15-17

In the last act, the “tamer” is finally tamed, as Petruchio even fakes death in order to obtain Maria’s compassion. At the end, the two reconcile, as Maria understands she has total control over her husband and decides to quit her game and start a new life with him.

As regards the subplot, also Livia participates in the women’s uprising, even if her main purpose is in reality to prevent her marriage with the old and ugly Moroso, which her father has arranged for her because of Moroso’s wealth.

At last, there is a happy ending for both sisters, as Livia succeeds in marrying her real love Rowland, and Maria is able to tame her tyrannical husband.

Only three characters of Shakespeare’s *Shrew* appear also in *The Tamer Tamed*: Petruchio, Bianca and Tranio. However, only Petruchio seems to resemble to his previous Shakespearean counterpart, while Bianca and Tranio look like completely new characters.

#### 4.2 MAIN CHARACTERS

- PETRUCHIO: In Fletcher’s plays Petruchio is described like a tyrant, but the play explains that the cause for his transformation was his wedding with Katherine. Being a widower, he remarries with Maria, but this time, unlike in *The Shrew*, he is the one who suffers the mistreatments of his new wife, until he capitulates at the end.
- BYANCA: In Fletcher’s play Bianca is the cousin of Maria and Livia and although we know that she is married<sup>128</sup>, her husband never appear in the play. Therefore, unlike her counterpart in *The Shrew*, she is not limited by any male figure in this play (neither her husband nor her father), which makes her a very strong character, as she plays a central role in the unfolding of both plot actions. We might also suppose that she also could be a widow. Moreover, if we suppose that Fletcher took inspiration from Shakespeare’s character we should imagine that Bianca was Petruchio’s sister-in-law and thus she might want to avenge her sister Katherine for the abuses she had to undergo with

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<sup>128</sup> Petronius: “For surely, if your husband look not to ye, I know what will.” (TT, 4.1.126-127)

Petruccio: this could explain Bianca's strong interest in rising up against Petruchio and men in general. In addition, she has a strange relationship with Tranio.

- TRANIO: Tranio is not a servant in Fletcher's play, but a gentleman, friend of Petruchio: he seems to have taken a similar status to the one he was pretending in Shakespeare's play. On the one hand he is described as a gentleman at the same level of Petruchio, on the other hand he seems to fear Bianca and to consider her as a mistress whom he has to respect. He also has a role in helping Livia to get married with Rowland: similarly, his counterpart of *The Shrew* cooperates to organize the wedding of Bianca and Lucentio.
- MARIA: She is sharp and intelligent while she leads a metaphorical battle of sexes, encouraged by a team of supportive women, which will end with the final submission of her husband Petruchio.
- LIVIA: Maria's sister, in love with Rowland although her father has promised her to an old suitor. She joins her sister's revolt, although her battle has nothing to do with the behaviour of a husband, but consists in fighting against her father's will and succeeding in marrying the man she really loves.
- PETRONIUS: The father of Maria and Livia represents the typical severe and tyrannical father whom anybody can disobey: he resembles Baptista in some ways, as he imposes his will on his daughters without taking their real dreams into consideration. He reacts with rage at his daughters' uprising but approves its positive consequences at the end.

#### 4.3 SETTING

The play is set in England and not in Italy like *The Shrew*. Nevertheless, the characters have Italian names so it might be that originally the play was meant to be set in Italy and that the setting was changed later.

#### 4.4 TITLE

The title of the play consists of two parts. "The Tamer Tamed" obviously refers to *The Taming of the Shrew*, in this way Fletcher's play presents itself as an answer to Shakespeare's work and the reader can immediately guess from the title that the roles are here inverted: the cruel ruler of *The Shrew* is now the one being subjugated.

"The Woman's Prize" is a curious expression, as in those times the two terms were in strong opposition: during the Renaissance women were not allowed to win prizes of any kind as they were not permitted to participate in competitions. Only men could win prizes, for example "prizes were won in military, athletic, chivalric and educational contests, from all of which women were systematically excluded."<sup>129</sup>

#### 4.5 THE SOCIAL CONTEST AND THE FEMINIST REACTION

John Fletcher wrote in a period in which the male supremacy and the female submission were the dominant and unquestionable principles in which the English society was based. While Shakespeare's *Shrew* took from a long tradition of plays depicting the taming of unruly and rebellious wives, *The Tamer Tamed* presents itself like an exuberant and provocative play in defence of women. As already seen before, women in those times were excluded from many fields, among them the theatre: until the half of the XVII century in theatre performances all roles were acted by male actors and women parts were in this way performed by male in disguise. In his play, Fletcher describes a sort of female rebellion against male indisputable dominance, an unusual theme for a play, if compared to many other misogynistic plays of that period. This symbolic "revolt" recalls the actual insurrections of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, like the Midlands riots. The play shows us also a great solidarity between women, that joined together and guided by a fearless Bianca, have the courage to oppose to a society willing to oppress them. Paralleling *The Shrew*, Fletcher's women ask their husbands some conditions like clothes and money, which were instead

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<sup>129</sup> FLETCHER, John, *The Tamer Tamed, or The Woman's Prize*, edited by Celia R. Daileader and Gary Taylor, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2006.

denied to Shakespeare's Katherine. In fact Petruccio, by refusing to give her food, fine clothes and sleep, was controlling her totally; therefore, Maria and her teammates are metaphorically asking for those goods that can give them the freedom they need:

Petruchio: (reads)[...] Liberty and clothes when, and in what way she will; continual moneys, company, and all the house at her dispose; [...] New coaches and some buildings she appoints here, hangings and hunting horses; and for plate and jewels [...] two thousand pound in present; [...]<sup>130</sup>

Maria's principal ruse is a "sex-strike", a symbolic metaphor of requesting independence and respect, as she claims that a husband should obtain his woman's approval first, instead of using her at his mere pleasure whenever he wants. This episode might be influenced by Aristophanes' play *Lysistrata*, an old comedy of the 411 B.C. in which some women join together and promise to refuse to have sex with their husbands until they abandon the war.

Fletcher's play might reflect a slight change of the cultural view, in the direction of a more equal society, compared to the strong positions of woman inferiority of the Elizabethan time. "As Ira Clark argues, 'Recognition of women's rights in marriage seems to have been increasing during the early Stuart period'. And in the mid-century, for the very first time, Parliament even considered legislation to prevent husbands from treating their wives cruelly."<sup>131</sup> The ideal sustained by the play is the belief in the equality of men and women and that their roles in marriage are interchangeable, which corresponds to the modern "companionate marriage".

#### 4.6 CENSORSHIP

*The Tamer Tamed* was subject to a severe censorship since the first years of its manuscript's circulation: in 1633 Sir Henry Herbert, Master of Revels, even

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<sup>130</sup> TT, 2.6.182-189

<sup>131</sup> SMITH, Molly Easo, "John Fletcher's response to the gender debate: *The Woman's Prize* and *The Taming of the Shrew*", in *Papers on Language and Literature*, Vol. 31, Issue 1, 1995.



issued a government document which cancelled a scheduled performance, urging then the acting company “the King's players” to review the text of the play. This was due to Fletcher's sometimes too vulgar language, which according to them was full of injuries against Church and State. “The offensiveness of Fletcher's play can be divided into three categories: vulgarity, blasphemy and subversion”<sup>132</sup>. “Vulgarity” comprehends bawdy language in general, especially the terms with double meanings often referring to sexuality; “blasphemy” refers to impertinence towards something sacred, for example terms or sentences which were considered an insult to the Church and God<sup>133</sup>, while “subversion” indicates those anti-patriarchal phrases which were thought to threaten a system based on an inviolable male superiority. Some scholars think that the real reason of the censorship the play has to undergone is the subversive anti-patriarchal theme.

Nevertheless, *The Tamer Tamed* is truthfully much more vulgar than *The Shrew*, whose dialogues, compared to Fletcher's play, would seem now even delicate. For example, in the second act, Petronius even interjects Livia calling her a “whore”<sup>134</sup>, a very abrupt and gross way to address a daughter. Supposedly the text of the play contained in the 1647 folio edition of *Comedies and Tragedies* refers to the already “purified” text, being in this way the approved version. The text which I took into consideration seems to belong instead to the first version of Fletcher's original manuscript, that is to say before it was subject to the censorship.

#### 4.7 JOHN FLETCHER AND SHAKESPEARE

The fact that *The Tamer Tamed* was immediately labelled as a sequel of Shakespeare's *Shrew* has ignited an intense debate during the years.

Fletcher's friendship with William Shakespeare was already known, as at the beginning of the XVII it produced some fruitful collaborations, for example in

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<sup>132</sup> FLETCHER, John, *The Tamer Tamed, or The Woman's Prize*, edited by Celia R. Daileader and Gary Taylor, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2006.

<sup>133</sup> Even the use of the word “God” itself was prohibited in theatrical performances.

<sup>134</sup> Petronius: “I hear you, whore.” (TT, 2.6.174)

the writing of *Henry VIII*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen* or the lost play *The History of Cardenio*.

Some scholars think that Fletcher's play has nothing to do with Shakespeare, as they adduce that the setting and characters of the two plays are so different that they cannot be connected. However, the majority of the critics consider Fletcher's play a response to the one of Shakespeare, or at least that Fletcher took inspiration from it.

We must underline in fact that even if *The Tamer Tamed* is set in England, this can be in relation of the "Sly action", which was set in the English countryside. Moreover, the actors who perform Shakespeare's inset play are all Englishmen, and we have seen in the first chapter that the characters of the play, although supposed to be Italian, seem to be the mirror of the 16<sup>th</sup> century English merchant class, for their strong interest in money and business. The fact that *The Tamer Tamed* presents no "Sly action" does not mean that the play is unrelated to *The Shrew*: instead, it might be the proof that Fletcher considered Shakespeare's frame as finished and thus with no need of further retake. It can also be possible that Fletcher might intend to write a sequel that could be performed again in front of Sly and his 'entourage', thus without needing the frame repetition at the beginning. In this case he could have taken the opportunity of the unfinished frame, to create new adventures for some of Shakespeare's characters.

By analysing the two plays, a lot of similarities can be observed, putting the two versions really close and lessening the conjectures of some critics that the two plays have nothing in common. As regards the plots, there are similarities at the level of actions: Petruchio gets married with Maria, who is the older of two sisters, like Katherina is, while the younger sister Livia (like Shakespeare's Bianca) has an old and wealthy suitor called Moroso, who resembles the figure of Gremio in *The Shrew*. Similarly to Shakespeare's version, Moroso has the initial approval of Maria's father, like Gremio has, but at the end Livia is able to marry her true sweetheart Rowland, like Bianca succeeds to marry her true love Lucentio. Bianca's temperament has also something similar to her counterpart in *The Shrew*: she becomes the representative of the women's

battle against men, showing a resolution and a courage that we can also see in Shakespeare's Bianca, when she is determined not to obey her husband who has sent for her, making him to lose the wager.

As we have already learnt from the prologue, the humorous and farcical tone of Fletcher's play is evident: the comic situations and dialogues drew the attention of the critics, as these thought that the witty Fletcher in this way was able to make a veiled criticism of the society, without exposing himself too much and by making people think beyond their laughter. In this way it is similar to Shakespeare's, whose play had already been labelled "a kind of farce". Peter Berek, speaking of *The Shrew* explains the meaning of using a farcical tone in a play: "the conventions of farce seem to be a way of treating matters that might well be seen as highly important, such as sex, money, and power, but doing so in a way that pretends they are unimportant. [...] Such plays are striking for the way they veil their own complexity".<sup>135</sup>

There is a parallel from Shakespeare's *Shrew* that considers the comedy as a "medicine": in Fletcher's prologue, the author advises to see the comedy many times for the cure of melancholy, and the same is recommended to the deceived Sly by his fake servant in order to heal his sadness.

TS:

Servant: Your honour's players, hearing your amendment, are come to play a pleasant comedy; for so your doctors hold it very meet, seeing too much sadness hath congealed your blood – and melancholy is the nurse of frenzy – therefore they thought it good you hear a play and frame your mind to mirth and merriment, which bars a thousand harms and lengthens life.<sup>136</sup>

TT:

Hear and observe his comic strain and when y'are sick of melancholy, see't again. 'Tis no dear physic, since 'twill quit the

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<sup>135</sup> SMITH, Molly Easo, "John Fletcher's response to the gender debate: *The Woman's Prize* and *The Taming of the Shrew*", in *Papers on Language and Literature*, Vol. 31, Issue 1, 1995.

<sup>136</sup> TS, Induction, 2.125-132

cost, or his intentions, with our pains, are lost.<sup>137</sup>

There are a lot of references to Petruchio's previous wife Katherine: the fact that a shrewish former wife is clearly mentioned means that is highly probable that Fletcher was referring to Shakespeare's *Shrew*. Moreover, Petruchio's friends accuse Katherine for his bad temperament, as they are sure that she changed his disposition with her bad character:

Moroso: What though his other wife, out of her most abundant stubbornness, out of her daily hue and cries upon him, (for sure she was a rebel) turned his temper and forced him blow as high as she?<sup>138</sup>

Tranio: Since his first marriage, he is no more the still Petruchio [...]<sup>139</sup>

The *Tamer Tamed* begins soon after the wedding between Petruchio and the docile Maria, but Fletcher hints immediately that his previous wife Katherine has never been tamed, demolishing the ending of Shakespeare's play. A speech between Tranio, Sophocles and Moroso makes it clear that Petruchio seems still to fear Katherine and to be influenced by her, an opposite point of view compared to the last scene of *The Shrew*, where a submissive Katherine give a lectures to everybody about women's inferiority.

Tranio: For yet the bare remembrance of his first wife (I tell you on my knowledge, and a truth, too) will make him start in's sleep, and very often cry out for cudgels, cowl-staffs, anything, hiding his breeches, out of fear her ghost should walk, and wear 'em yet.<sup>140</sup>

It is interesting to notice that Maria is first believed to be a mild and quiet person to have pity on, while Petruchio is viewed as the tyrant which will tame her, as he had previously done. Petruchio's friends have sympathy for Maria,

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<sup>137</sup> TT, Prologue, 17-20

<sup>138</sup> TT, 1.1.24-28

<sup>139</sup> TT, 1.1.48-49

<sup>140</sup> TT, 1.1.43-48

in the same way the male characters of *The Shrew* have pity for Petruccio before marrying with the shrewish Katherina.

Sophocles: Alas, poor wench, through what a mine of patience must thou work [...] <sup>141</sup>

Tranio: Methinks her father has dealt harshly with her [...] to match her to this dragon. I protest I pity the poor gentlewoman. <sup>142</sup>

With this presentation probably any spectator would guess that the quiet-depicted Maria would transform herself into such a strong and independent character, able to submit her man and to go against the grain. Petruchio's friends also bet over the newlyweds, recalling the bet over wives of *The Shrew*:

Sophocles: He will bury her. Ten pound to twenty shillings, within three weeks.

Tranio: I'll be your half. <sup>143</sup>

However, after the beginning of her symbolic revolt, Maria's and her sister's descriptions are not positive anymore, as they are even compared to devil, in the same way Katherina was often referred to in *The Shrew*:

Petronius: The devil's in 'em, even the very devil, the downright devil.

Petruchio: I'll devil 'em. <sup>144</sup>

The bestial metaphors are present as well in *The Tamer Tamed*. In particular, we have seen that in *The Shrew* Petruccio compares Katherina's taming to the domestication of a wild falcon. On the other hand, Maria compares herself to a haggard, a wild female hawk, which flies freely and cannot be

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<sup>141</sup> TT, 1.1.4-5

<sup>142</sup> TT, 1.1.8-11

<sup>143</sup> TT, 1.1.61-63

<sup>144</sup> TT, 1.3.231-232

tamed. In another speech Maria, referring to Katherine, also compares her to a "beast", saying that she became like that because she submitted to her husband.

The main difference between the two plays is that while Shakespeare conforms to a traditional literary canon, as the "shrew tamer" was a really common topic in that period, Fletcher dares to go beyond, giving the audience an original and unusual intrigue. In Fletcher's play his "heroines" of the battle of sexes surprisingly shout "why, then, let's all wear breeches"<sup>145</sup> in the most possible natural way: "breeches" were the symbol of the patriarchal authority, therefore a woman wearing breeches was a real subversion of the natural order.

The epilogue makes Fletcher's intention even more clear: it is a speech hinting at gender equality, where men "should not reign as tyrants o'ver their wives"<sup>146</sup> but should give them the same rights and higher attentions. Effectively, this is a completely opposite view to Shakespeare's final, where a submissive Katherine teaches the other women why they should bend to their husbands. The fact that Fletcher wants "to teach both sexes due equality"<sup>147</sup> is important, as he did not mean that the woman should rule over her husband, but that in the couple both partners have the same mutual commitment to live in a correct way: at the end in fact, Maria swears not to behave like this anymore and Petruchio vows he will never be a tyrant toward her, so they promise each other mutual love.

Some critics have noticed that calling Fletcher's play a "sequel" would mean diminishing it: *The Tamer Tamed* in fact can stand alone by itself as an original and captivating play and readers do not need to read before Shakespeare's play to understand Fletcher's work. Therefore, *The Tamer Tamed* could be also called "a 'counter-part', as Gerard Langbaine called it in 1691"<sup>148</sup>, as it

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<sup>145</sup> TT, 1.2.187

<sup>146</sup> TT, Epilogue

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> FLETCHER, John, *The Tamer Tamed, or The Woman's Prize*, edited by Celia R. Daileader and Gary Taylor, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2006.

represents another point of view about the issue of gender equality of that period.

Many other authors have taken hints from *The Shrew* to build different works, such as comedies, farces and ballads, but anyone of these have managed to have the same success of Fletcher. In the last years two movies have also adapted the famous Shakespeare's play, modernizing the old comedy with nowadays circumstances and transforming them into romantic movies: Zeffirelli's 1967 film *The Taming of the Shrew* and 1999 film *10 things I hate about you*.





## CONCLUSION

As regards the relationship between *The Shrew* and *A Shrew*, the most appropriate solution seems to think that there was a common source to inspire both plays, as we have seen that from both parts lies some inconsistencies or scenes that are supposed to have been taken from one another and vice versa. It would have been much easier to establish which one was the inspiration for the other, if we could have found more documents and evidences about the date of writing, or we could have gathered more information if we had at least the name of the anonymous play's real author. Perhaps one day new documents will appear to explain the real history of these plays, but until then many considerations can be plausible, if sufficiently supported.

The unexpected end of Sly's frame in the first scene of the first act remains an evident imperfection of Shakespeare's play, whatever explanation we might find for it; concluding that in this case the anonymous play is the one better ended between the two. However, it is undeniable that Shakespeare's play is more skilfully invented, more enthralling, more colourful, and that his characters are as always more clever and lively, compared to the dull characters of the anonymous play.

As regards the relationship between Shakespeare's play and *The Tamer Tamed*, the connections are unquestionable and it is highly probable that Fletcher knew and took inspiration from *The Shrew*. The most enthralling thing was to see how Fletcher's genius was able to take some starting points and ideas from a play and to build a completely different but equally brilliant comedy, dealing with the same topics about the relation between the sexes but inverting the common belief, with the result of an unimaginable attention from the public. Many other playwrights tried to write sequels taking inspiration from the great Shakespeare but Fletcher's *Tamer Tamed* might be labelled as one of the most successful and discerning one.

More than 400 years have passed from the composition of these plays, yet the themes brought into question are still of greater importance nowadays, especially the theme of the women's condition.

I will conclude my work with a phrase taken from *The Tamer Tamed*, which summarises the general meaning of Fletcher's ideology:

Maria: The Tamer's tamed – but so, as nor the men can find one just cause to complain of, when they fitly do consider, in their lives they should not reign as tyrants o'er their wives, nor can the women from this precedent insult or triumph, it being aptly meant to teach both sexes due equality and, as they stand bound, to love mutually. In this effect, arising from a cause well laid and grounded, may deserve applause, we something more than hope our honest ends will keep the men, and women too, our friends.

I think that nowadays, in the XXI century, in a world where women in many countries still struggle for gender equality, these plays are still strongly up-to-date.

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