

# The Curious Connection between Nashe, Dekker, and Freemasonry

In the autumn of 1597, poet/playwright Thomas Nashe was in trouble again, this time for his co-authorship of *The Isle of Dogs*. Nashe escaped to Great Yarmouth where he spent six weeks, according to *Lenten Stuffe*, and Francis Meres reported that Nashe was still banished from London in *Palladis Tamia*, registered 7 September 1598.

Just as Thomas Nashe took to the wings, a new author sallied forth who wrote as if he were channelling Nashe. He first appears as “Thomas Dickers” in Henslowe’s Diary, January 1598, when Henslowe bought Dickers’ unnamed play. In February, Henslowe paid to have him discharged from debtor’s prison. Like Nashe, Dekker apparently made the idealistic, foolhardy decision to earn his living via the pen, as opposed to others who combined writing with work as lawyers, tutors, tradesmen, intelligencers or actors.

In Henslowe’s Diary, Dekker hit the ground running, authoring or co-authoring over forty plays between 1598 and 1602, including fifteen with Nashe’s friend Henry Chettle. Henslowe called him “Dickers” or “Deckers” in 71 diary entries, compared to a version without the “s” in only four, but the playwright consistently signed for money from Henslowe as “Thomas Dekker,” and this is how he is known. Three girls were christened at St. Giles’s Cripplegate in 1594, 1598, and 1602 with their father listed as Thomas Dycker, Dykers, and Dicker<sup>1</sup>. It is generally accepted that these were Dekker’s children since the name was uncommon, but no evidence exists to support this; Dekker did not write about them.

Indeed, few additional details about Thomas Dekker’s life have been discovered since Ernest Rhys noted, regarding Alexander Grosart’s attempts to find out about Dekker, that his “indefatigable energy of research was probably never exercised to so little purpose in the case of any author.”<sup>2</sup> On the subjects of Dekker’s birth and age, all that scholars have to go on is what he wrote. London was his mother, he claimed, and if a passage in 1632’s *English Villainies* where he speaks of “my three score years” is to be taken literally, he was born in 1572 (Nashe was born in 1567). No information has come down regarding Dekker’s schooling, but he was obviously well educated, with an extensive knowledge of Latin and the classics.

All was quiet on the Thomas Nashe front until he published *Lenten Stuffe* between 25 March and late May, 1599. He would have been in London when he wrote, in his address to the Readers, “I am called away to correct the faults

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<sup>1</sup> F.P. Wilson, “Three Notes on Thomas Dekker,” *The Modern Language Review* 15 (1920) - pp82-5.

<sup>2</sup> Ernest Rhys (Ed.), *Thomas Dekker* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1894) - p.xi

of the press that escaped in my absence from the printing-house.” From the first page of his text:

*... in my exile and irkesome discontented abandonment, the silliest millers thombe or contemptible stickle-banck of my enemies is as busie nibbling about my fame as if I were a deade man throwne amongst them to feede upon. So I am, I confesse, in the worldes outwarde apparance, though perhappes I may proove a cunninger diver then they are aware, which if it so happen, as I am partely assured, and that I plunge above water once againe, let them looke to it, for I will put them in bryne, or a piteous pickle, every one. But let that passe...*

**Lenten Stufe<sup>3</sup>**

To highlight key points, he said he had been in exile and was like a dead man in outward appearance, but called himself a cunning diver who was partly assured of rising above the water once again.

On June 1, 1599, Archbishop Whitgift banned Thomas Nashe from publishing in the future, and ordered that existing stock of his works be burned. Nevertheless, Nashe, or at least his writing, “surfaced” once more when his play from the early 1590s, *Summers Last Will and Testament*, was printed in 1600; it was an interesting title given that either he had died by then or would soon afterwards. Charles Fitzgeffrey wrote in *Affaniae* (1601) that he was dead, but no details such as date, cause of death or burial site, are known. Going quietly into the night was an incongruous ending for the scrappy author who waged pamphlet wars against Martin Marprelate and Gabriel Harvey. Nashe was the sort of man who would have battled Death itself if the two could have gone at it with quill pens and ink pots.

Thomas Dekker took up Nashe’s banner, however, specializing in Nashe’s mediums, plays and pamphlets, tackling some of the same subjects in the same style. Paul Kocher noted that although others wrote about the seven deadly sins, “none did so more brilliantly or more copiously than Nashe”; Dekker devoted a work to the topic, *The Seven Deadly Sinnes of London*<sup>4</sup>. When it came to satire, “Nashe had a gift for seeing and depicting the ridiculous in human behavior,” wrote Virginia F. Stern<sup>5</sup>. So did Dekker, who parodied a broad spectrum of London society, from youths aspiring to be gentlemen in *The Guls Horne-booke*, to papists in *The Double PP*, to con artists in *The Belman of London*.

Dekker wrote *Newes from Hell*, the devil’s answer to Nashe’s *Pierce Penillesse*, in perfect Nashe-speak, eulogizing Nashe, I think, exactly as the poet would have wished:

<sup>3</sup> Ronald B. McKerrow (Ed.), *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, (London: A.H. Bullen, 1904-10; reprint, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958) - Vol V, p.153. All Nashe works are quoted from this text by volume and page number.

<sup>4</sup> Paul H. Kocher, “Nashe’s Authorship of the Prose Scenes in *Faustus*,” *Modern Language Quarterly* 3 (1942) - p.26.

<sup>5</sup> Virginia F. Stern, *Gabriel Harvey: His Life, Marginalia and Library* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979) - p109.

*And thou [Nashe], into whose soule (if ever there were a Pithagorean Metempsuchosis) the raptures of that fierie and inconfenable Italian spirit were bounteously and boundlesly infused, thou sometimes Secretary to Pierce Pennylesse, and Master of his requests, in/genious, ingenuous, fluent, facetious, T. Nash: from whose abundant pen, hony flow'd to thy friends, and mortall Aconite to thy enemies: thou that madest the Doctor [Harvey] a flat Dunce, and beat'st him at two tall sundry Weapons, Poetrie, and Oratory: Sharpest Satyre, Luculent Poet, Elegant Orator, get leave for thy Ghost to come from her abiding, and to dwell with me a while, till she hath carows'd to me in her owne wonted ful measures of wit, that my plump braynes may swell, and burst into bitter Invectives against the Lieftenant of Limbo, if hee casheere Pierce Pennylesse with dead pay.*

**News from Hell<sup>6</sup>**

In the revised edition of this book, *A Knight's Conjuring*, Dekker placed Nashe in an Elysian Grove of Bay Trees along with other deceased poets he wished to honor. Indeed, in *Old Fortunatus*, an anonymous play written at least in part by Dekker, we hear: "my tongue speakes no language but an Almond for Parrot, and crack me this Nut" (l.i.53-4), the titles of two pieces by Nashe<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, in Dekker's *The Belman of London*, a speech praising beggars evokes another on the same subject in *Summers Last Will and Testament*, and ends with "Peace cries the Penillesse Orator" (1608 ed. C3r-v).

Dekker took a Nashe-like stand of defiance, and punningly compared being a writer to being pressed to death:

*For he that dares hazard a pressing to death (thats to say, To be a man in Print) must make account that he shall stand (like the olde Weathercock over Powles steeple) to be beaten with all stormes. Neither the stinking Tabaccobreath of a Sattingull, the Aconited sting of a narrow-eyde Critick, the faces of a phantastick Stage-monkey, nor the Indede-la of a Puritanicall Citizen, must once shake him. No, but desperately resolve (like a French Post) to ride through thick & thin: indure to see his lines torne pittifully on the rack: suffer his Muse to take the Bastoone, yea the very stab, & himselfe like a new stake to be a marke for every Hagler . . .*

**The Wonderfule Year, 1603 ed. A3r**

Further stretching coincidence, Dekker parodied the interests of Nashe's enemies, Gabriel, Richard and John Harvey, sons of a ropemaker. The title of the pamphlet quoted above is a play on Harvey's *Gorgon, or The Wonderful Year*, while Dekker's *O per se O* is a take-off on a Harvey nickname for Nashe, "A per se A" (Strange Newses I.315; the two are inter-related in a Nasheian portion of Doctor Faustus, when Robin the clown reads, "A per se a.

<sup>6</sup> Alexander B. Grosart (Ed.), *The Non-Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, (London: printed for private circulation only, 1884-6) - Vol II, p.103. This passage was excluded when the pamphlet was reissued a year later as *A Knight's Conjuring*, 1607.

<sup>7</sup> Izaak Walton said Nashe wrote *Crack Me this Nut*, a lost play listed in Henslowe's Diary on 5th September 1595. He also stated that Nashe wrote *A Fig for my God-Son*, a lost work which cannot be categorized. Izaak Walton, *The Life of Mr. Rich. Hooker* (London: J.G., 1665) - p.88.

t - h - e, the! o per se o. deny Orgon . . . Gorgon?" (1616 Q II.iii.8-9). Dekker's *Lanthorne and Candle-Light* contains a story about a Rope-maker called Richard who was a "parlous sour fellow, ill-loved of his neighbors." Gabriel and John wrote almanacs, and Dekker's *The Ravens Almanacke* is a send-up of the genre. In Dekker's *Satiromastix* a character says "respice funem," (think on the rope's end), the same pun on "respice finem" (think on your end) that Nashe jabbed Harvey with in *Strange Newes* (I.81), which is also included in a scene with the Gabriel Harvey-like Dr. Pinch in *The Comedy of Errors* (IV.iv.41-2)<sup>8</sup>.

What is the main difference between authors Dekker and Nashe? E.D. Penry maintained that it was one of personality. "Dekker is far less egotistic, far less arrogant... While Nashe craves personal recognition, Dekker would be satisfied with peace and quiet."<sup>9</sup> Yet Dekker became involved in a literary battle, too, when he and John Marston took on Ben Jonson in 'The War of the Theatres'. Even so, Dekker 's self-description as one who "was condemned with his Catte to be duckt three times in the cucking-stoole of *Pyriphlegeton* ... because he scolded against his betters, and those whom hee lived upon"<sup>10</sup> sounds odd, since Jonson would not have been considered his superior. It was Nashe who had been accused of "censuring his betters" in Richard Harvey's *Lamb of God*.

Is it possible that Thomas Nashe changed his appearance and returned to London as "Thomas Dekker," then "killed" himself off after he was banned from publishing? When he spoke of being in the country in *Pierce Penilesse*, he called himself "the plague's prisoner"; it was London - with its printers, booksellers, plays, and targets for satire - that was for Nashe, to quote Dekker, "Mother of my life, Nurse of my being"<sup>11</sup>. To ban a man like Nashe from publishing would have been akin to a death sentence: writing was his *raison d'être*. The appendix to this paper sets forth ample linguistic evidence to support the theory that Nashe became Dekker, broken down into five categories: memorial associations; shared, rare usage of words; "matches" between words and phrases; similarities in style and content; and other similarities.

### **Keys to Success: Freemasonry and Collaboration**

How could Nashe have successfully pulled off becoming "Dekker" with nobody divulging the truth, either before or after his death? It is crucial to take into account, I believe, the presence of a nascent Freemason organisation when investigating illogical circumstances during the era of the English Renaissance. This is no idle suggestion. My research indicates that a secret society of men working for the greater good spearheaded England's progress

<sup>8</sup> Discussed in McKerrow IV.162. For the relationship between Dr. Pinch and Harvey, see J.J.M. Tobin, "Dr. Pinch and Gabriel Harvey," *Notes and Queries* 248 (2003) - pp23-5.

<sup>9</sup> E.D. Penry (Ed.), *Thomas Dekker. Selected Writings*, (London: Edward Arnold, Ltd., 1967) - p.18.

<sup>10</sup> Larry M. Robbins (Ed.), *Thomas Dekker's A Knight's Conjuring - A Critical Edition*, (The Hague: Mouton, 1974) - p.144.

<sup>11</sup> Dekker, *A Rod for Run-awayes*, 1625 ed. B1r

in literature, theatre and science, just as *The Pléiade* invigorated literature in France.

Freemasonry went public in 1717. The first two known Freemasons, Sir Robert Moray and Elias Ashmole, joined in 1641 and 1646 respectively (both were founding members of the science-oriented Royal Society) but it was not a new organisation at the time. The official history published in 1723, Anderson's *Constitutions*, unhelpfully claimed that Adam was the first Freemason, his sons formed the first lodge, and Joseph, Moses and Solomon were Grand Masters<sup>12</sup>.

Some think the organisation began with operative English stone masons and transitioned to a speculative Craft<sup>13</sup>. They point out that by 1630, there existed within the London Company of Masons a subcategory of men that were "taken into the Acception" and called "accepted." Others find its origins in Scottish lodges of operative masons around 1600<sup>14</sup>. It is, however, difficult to take seriously the notion that tradesmen devised a system as sublime as Freemasonry and successfully rooted it among intellectuals and the nobility. Its philosophical bent evidences the finger-prints of highly educated people who possessed both conviction and free time. I view it as an outgrowth of the circle of men centred around Sir Philip Sidney.

Intriguing language appears in *A Funeral Elegy*, a 1612 tribute to the late Master William Peeter by "W.S." that was formerly thought to be by Shakespeare, but is now attributed to John Ford<sup>15</sup>. It bemoans:

*The willful blindness that hoodwinks the eyes  
Of men enwrapped in an earthy veil  
Makes them most ignorantly exercise  
And yield to humor when it doth assail.*

***A Funeral Elegy, lines 257-60***<sup>16</sup>

Candidates for the first degree of Freemasonry are "hoodwinked" or blindfolded, representing the darkness/ignorance which does not comprehend the light, as well as the mystical darkness which preceded the rites of ancient initiations<sup>17</sup>. Symbols related to temple building, both within oneself and without, are key to the organisation.

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<sup>12</sup> James Anderson, *The New Book of Constitutions of the Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons* (London, 1738).

<sup>13</sup> Roeynton B. Khambatta, "Ars Quatuor Coronatorum of the Twentieth Century," *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* 114 (2001) - pp.1-9.

<sup>14</sup> David Stevenson, *The Origins of Freemasonry. Scotland's Century, 1590-1710* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

<sup>15</sup> See G.D. Monsarrat, "A Funeral Elegy: Ford, W.S., and Shakespeare," *Review of English Studies* 53 (2002) - pp.186-203.

<sup>16</sup> All lines from *A Funeral Elegy* are quoted from Donald S. Foster, *Elegy by W.S.* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1989).

<sup>17</sup> Albert Mackey, *An Encyclopædia of Freemasonry and its Kindred Sciences* (Philadelphia: Moss and Co, 1879) - p.350.

The Elegy maintains that learning and wit enriched “the curious temple of his [Peeter’s] mind,” and praised him because he:

*Shuns the glad sleights of ensnaring vice  
To spend his spring of days in sacred schools.  
Here gave he diet to the sick desires  
That day by day assault the weaker man,  
And with fit moderation still retires  
From what doth batter virtue now and then.*

**A Funeral Elegy, lines 73-78**

A sacred school wherein one gives diet to sick desires that assault the weaker man is an apt description of a Masonic lodge. The author certainly was not talking about the Protestant or Catholic churches, and Freemasonry seems to be the only “sacred school” with a highly ethical content that might have been in operation at the time. The language suggests that two university-trained men, one of whom was a poet/playwright, were involved with the organisation as of 1612.

That Nashe himself was a member is hinted at when he maintains that “science hath no enemy but the ignorant” and rails against those who “endeavour to turne our day into night, and our light into darknesse” in his *Anatomy of Absurdity* (1589), and by the fact that “Post Tenebras Dies” (after darkness, day) appears on the cover of his *The Terrors of the Night* (1594)<sup>18</sup>. According to Albert Mackey’s *Encyclopædia of Freemasonry*, “*Lux e tenebris*” (light out of darkness, i.e., from ignorance to knowledge) is “a motto very commonly used in the caption of Masonic documents as expressive of the object of Masonry, and of what the true Mason supposes himself to have obtained”<sup>19</sup>.

For his part, Dekker wrote:

*The fountains of Science flow (by his [Apollo’s] influence) and swell to the brim: Bay trees to make garlands for Learning, are new set, and already are green, the Muses have fresh colors in their cheeks; their Temple is promised to be made more fair: there is good hope that Ignorance shall no longer wear Satin.*<sup>20</sup> (Emphasis in original)

I think that Nashe belonged to a community of Masonic authors who vowed to keep his secret.<sup>21</sup> He would have been viewed as a fellow advocate in advancing the enrichment of the English language, literacy and moral

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<sup>18</sup> McKerrow wrote that he was unaware of any source for the motto (McKerrow, IV.198).

<sup>19</sup> Mackey, op. cit. - p.479.

<sup>20</sup> Robbins (Ed.), op. cit. *Thomas Dekker’s A Knight’s Conjuring*, p.77.

<sup>21</sup> I do not mean to imply that all English Renaissance authors were Freemasons, or that everyone who co-authored a work with Dekker was a Freemason, but given Thomas Middleton’s mention of Nashe and appearance of “covering” for Dekker, I suspect Middleton was one.

behaviour, specialising in writing plays and pamphlets that shed light upon social ills in a humorous fashion.

### Fletcher, Shakespeare, Jonson and Davies

Work by certain Elizabethan writers includes hints that they may have been in-the-know about Nashe. Thomas, the protagonist of John Fletcher's *Monsieur Thomas* (c.1610-16), is a wench, a mischief maker, a quarreller, and a man with a mad, fiery nature, like Thomas Nashe. Although there had been no talk of birds, dogs or dowries beforehand, Thomas bizarrely tells a character that if she does not hold her peace "I'll kill thy Parrot, hang up thy small hound, and drink away thy dowry to a penny"<sup>22</sup> (IV.i.277-8). Might these be references to Nashe's *An Almond for a Parrot*, *The Isle of Dogs*, and *Pierce Penilesse*? There is nothing elegiac about this play; rather it appears to be spoofing someone who is still alive. Possible ties to Dekker include Thomas' statement that he no longer attends horse races, and that he is set to marry a woman named Mary at the end of the play. Dekker published *A Strange Horse-race* in 1613 (a pamphlet which contains "the last will and testament" of the devil), and records show that "Mary wife of Thomas Deckers" was buried at Clerkenwell in 1616.<sup>23</sup>

If my interpretation of Sonnet 112 is correct, the Bard knew Nashe's secret. Nashe praised *I Henry VI*, and many believe he co-authored it.<sup>24</sup> For his part, Shakespeare obviously admired Nashe's work. J.J.M. Tobin maintained that Shakespeare "knew his Nashe almost as well as his Bible," and wrote a series of articles documenting Nashe's influence in the Bard's plays and poetry.<sup>25</sup> A warm relationship between the two may be hypothesized. According to Sonnet 112:

*Your love and pittie doth th'impression fill,  
Which vulgar scandall stampt upon my brow,  
For what care I who calles me well or ill,  
So you ore-greene my bad, my good allow?  
You are my All the world, and I must strive,  
To know my shames and praises from your tounge;  
None else to me, nor I to none alive,  
That my steel'd sence or changes right or wrong,  
In so profound Abisme I throw all care  
Of others voyces, that my Adders sence,  
To cryttick and to flatterer stopped are:  
Marke how with my neglect I doe dispense,*

<sup>22</sup> "Hound" is Seward's emendation for "hand" in the original text; it has been accepted by subsequent editors.

<sup>23</sup> Mark Eccles, "Thomas Dekker: Burial-place," *Notes and Queries* 177 (1939) - p.157. A few caveats: Mary was, of course, a common name. In *The Ravens Almanacke*, 1609, Dekker wrote: "It was this poore Sowters destiny not to be hang'd, but (worse then that) to be marryed" (C2v). This would have been an impolitic thing to say had he been married at the time.

<sup>24</sup> See Vickers, "Incomplete Shakespeare: Or, Denying Co-authorship in *I Henry IV*"; and Gary Taylor, "Shakespeare and Others: The Authorship of *Henry the Sixth, Part One*," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, ed. Leeds Barroll (Teaneck, NJ: Fairleigh Dickenson University Press, 1995) - Vol. VII, pp.145-205.

<sup>25</sup> J.J.M. Tobin, "Shakespeare, Nashe and Sir Thomas More," *Notes and Queries* 250 (2006) - pp.59-62.

*You are so strongly in my purpose bred,  
That all the world besides me thinks y'are dead.*<sup>26</sup>

(Emphasis added)

Modern editors have changed the last line to: "That all the world besides methinks are dead" but in the original version, the poet tells the subject that all the world thinks he is dead, except for the poet. The subject of this passage might be the dead-but-still-alive Thomas Nashe.

In Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*, 1601, a character threatens to commit Demetrius and Crispanus, aka Thomas Dekker and John Marston, to the Hospital of Fools. This is a reference to Garzoni's *The Hospitall of Incurable Fooles*, translated from the Italian and published anonymously in 1600 by Edward Blount, publisher of Marlowe and Shakespeare<sup>27</sup>. A seventeenth-century hand wrote on one copy, "Tho. Nashe had some hand in this translation and it was the last he did as I heare," and its prefatory address is, according to Charles Nicholl, written in Nashe's style.<sup>28</sup> Ben Jonson could be interpreted as associating Thomas Dekker with Thomas Nashe.

### **Collaboration and Anonymous Authorship**

Elizabethans knew full well that authorship could be detected via writing style. Nashe himself claimed that a letter from M. Bird praising Gabriel Harvey in Harvey's *Four Letters and Certain Sonnets* was, "by all reference or collation of stiles," penned by Harvey himself (*Strange Newes*, l.273). Nashe's writing style was distinctive, so why didn't his enemies detect his pen behind Dekker's?

While there were undoubtedly many reasons why authors collaborated together and published anonymously, the net effect of both practices was to cloud authorship. Of the sixty existing pieces currently associated with Dekker, his participation in forty-two percent of them was anonymous. The figure is higher at the beginning of his career in print: of the twelve pieces published between 1600-4 to which he has been found to have contributed, two-thirds do not bear his name. Some of his anonymous pamphlets during this period were collaborations with Thomas Middleton, while the majority of plays with which Dekker was involved in Henslowe's Diary had co-authors. Collaborations and anonymous publications made it appear that numerous authors could write in Nashe's style. Given that some of the best minds in scholarship have laboured for years devising tests to identify authorship of various English Renaissance works, it is certainly plausible that Nashe's adversaries were fooled by such techniques.

If I am right about the beginnings of Freemasonry and its early goals, what mattered most was that educational and reform-oriented material was

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<sup>26</sup> *Shake-Speares Sonnets* (London: G. Eld, 1609), G4r.

<sup>27</sup> Ben Jonson, *The Poetaster*, (ed. Tom Cain, Manchester University Press, 1995) - p.259.

<sup>28</sup> "Thomas Nashe," *Dictionary of National Biography* (2004).



produced, rather than the glorification or enrichment of the authors themselves. Freemasonry has long encouraged members to engage in anonymous acts of charity, and brothers have long supported other brothers in need.<sup>29</sup>

### Counter-Arguments: Handwriting and Ben Jonson

The four existing examples of Nashe's handwriting provided in W.W. Greg's *English Literary Autographs*, to this amateur's eye, each look quite different from one another, while Dekker wrote in three distinct hands.<sup>30</sup> None of the Nashe hands appear similar to the Dekker ones. Does this mean Nashe could not have become Dekker? Well, we do know that Nashe had the ability to write in different hands. An author who had decided to assume a different persona during this era would have disguised his handwriting; it was how people identified each other. Handwriting samples may not be of much aid when purposeful deception is suspected.

If Dekker has been correctly identified as Hand E in the manuscript play *Sir Thomas More*, for my theory that Nashe changed his handwriting to be valid, the Hand E addition to the play would have to have been made after 1598. Scholarship has focused on the dating of the Hand D addition since many believe it to have been by Shakespeare, and opinions as to its date of composition range from 1593-4 to 1603-4. Recent research by MacD. P. Jackson, however, supports Hand D's composition around 1603-4.<sup>31</sup>

A complimentary epitaph, c.1599-1601, by Ben Jonson is one of a series of five elegies (the only signed one is by Humphrey King) to Thomas Nashe discovered among the papers of Berkeley Castle, written in the hand of an employee of Nashe's patron, George Carey.<sup>32</sup> I believe that Jonson and Carey, the second Lord Hunsdon, were Freemasons. A clue regarding Carey, the "heir of Hunsdon" appears in George Chapman's dedication to Mathew Roydon prefacing *The Shadow of the Night*, which also mentions "Darby" or the Earl of Derby, better known as Lord Strange, and Henry Percy, the Earl of Northumberland. Both Hunsdon and Strange sponsored acting companies. Although he does not state so outright, Nashe almost certainly dedicated

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<sup>29</sup> A complimentary epitaph written by Ben Jonson for the deceased Thomas Nashe resides in the papers of Berkeley Castle, home to Nashe's patrons, the Carey family (Katherine Duncan-Jones, "'They Say A Made a Good End': Ben Jonson's Epitaph on Thomas Nashe," *Ben Jonson Journal* 3 (1996): 1-19.) It stated that Nashe's death had caused a dearth of wit throughout the land, and assured friends that Nashe had died a faithful, penitent Christian. Based upon my research, I believe that Jonson and play patron George Carey, Lord Hunsdon, were Freemasons, and almost certainly would have known that Nashe was still alive; the epitaph could have been written to comfort members of the Carey family who were not "in the know."

But Jonson and Dekker were insulting each other in plays between 1599-1601, and in 1619, Jonson told William Drummond that Dekker was a rogue. Would Jonson have written a favourable epitaph for Nashe if he had "become" Dekker? Jonson admits he was not Nashe's greatest fan: "none left behind/ to equall hym in his ingenious kind/ I urge not this as being his parasite/ who lov'd him least will doe him greater right..." Perhaps the undated epitaph was written before or after the Theatre Wars: Jonson and Dekker collaborated with each other on two plays in 1599, and on a pageant for King James in 1603. In any case, if a brother asked him to write it, a dutiful secret society member would have complied.

<sup>30</sup> W.W. Greg, *English Literary Autographs 1550-1650* (Oxford University Press, 1925) - IX, X, XX.

<sup>31</sup> MacD. P. Jackson, "A New Chronological Indicator for Shakespeare's Plays and for Hand D of *Sir Thomas More*," *Notes and Queries*, 54 (2007) - pp.304-7.

<sup>32</sup> Katherine Duncan-Jones, "'They Say A Made a Good End': Ben Jonson's Epitaph on Thomas Nashe," *Ben Jonson Journal* 3 (1996) pp.1-19.

Pierce Penilesse to Strange, and mentioned Percy in the piece. Chapman wrote Roydon:

*How joyfully oftentimes you reported unto me, that most ingenious Darbie, deep searching Northumberland, and skill-embracing heir of Hunsdon had most profitably entertained learning in themselves, to the vital warmth of freezing science, & to the admirable luster of their true Nobility, whose high deserving virtues may cause me hereafter strike that fire out of darkness, which the brightest Day shall envy for beauty.*<sup>33</sup>

This passage, too, sounds themes of learning, darkness and day. Ben Jonson wrote in a dedication to Earl of Pembroke William Herbert: "In so thick, and dark an ignorance, as now almost covers the age, I crave leave to stand near your light: and, by that, to be read."<sup>34</sup> The Earl of Pembroke was Freemasonry's Grand Master from 1618 to 1630, according to Anderson's *Constitutions*.

In his epitaph, Jonson called Nashe his "best loved friend," wrote that Nashe's death had caused a dearth of wit throughout the land, and assured friends that Nashe had died a faithful, penitent Christian. Assuming Jonson and Carey were in the know, the elegies would have been written to comfort members of Carey's family who were not, because they had not taken a Masonic vow of secrecy, such as Carey's wife and his daughter, Elizabeth, who married Sir Thomas Berkeley.

But Jonson and Dekker insulted each other in plays during the War of the Theatres (unless it was all just a publicity stunt) and in 1619, Jonson told William Drummond that Dekker was a rogue. Would Jonson have written favourable words about Nashe if he had "become" Dekker? Jonson had his ups and downs with men: he and Dekker collaborated with each other on two plays in 1599, and did so again on a pageant for King James in 1603, while Marston complimented Jonson in 1604. Jonson often collaborated with Inigo Jones, who designed sets, then fell out with him. In any case, if asked by a brother to pen an elegy, a dutiful secret society member would have complied. Inigo Jones, by the way, purportedly became Freemasonry's Grand Master c. 1603, and thereafter alternated between that position and Deputy Grand Master. A builder/architect who rubbed elbows with stonemasons, Jones would have been well positioned to seed Freemasonry amongst working (operative) masons.

A laudatory poem by E.G. prefacing Dekker's *Lanthorne and Candle-light* reads as if it could have been written for Nashe:

*In an ill Time thou writ'st, when Tongues had rather  
Spit venome on thy lines, then from thy labours  
(As Druggists doe from poison) medicine gather...*

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<sup>33</sup> Phyllis Brooks Bartlett (Ed.), *The Poems of George Chapman*, (New York: Russell and Russell, 1962) - p.19.

<sup>34</sup> *The Works of Benjamin Jonson*, (London, 1616) - Vol. I, p.681.

*When thou (in thy dead Sleepe) liest in thy Grave,  
These Charmes to after-Ages up shall raise thee;  
What heere thou leav'st, alive thy Name shall save,  
And what thou now dispraisest, shall then praise thee.  
Tho, Not to know ill, be wise Ignorance,  
Yet thou (by Reading Evill) doest Goodnesse teach.*

(1608 ed. A4v)

I propose that the lines were, indeed, written for Nashe (whether or not their author knew it), who became Thomas Dekker in order to be able to continue to prick the conscience of London, living on for more than thirty years after he was reported to have died.

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## Appendix A: Linguistic Evidence for Nashe and Dekker Being the Same Author

The subject of linguistic connections between Nashe and Dekker affords an embarrassment of riches. The goal of this appendix is to provide a sufficient number of examples to demonstrate the extraordinary similarities between their bodies of work, similarities that I consider to soar beyond the realm of coincidence, focusing on ties that are common between the two, and uncommon to others. I build upon the foundations of Ronald B. McKerrow's gloss of Nashe's writing, and Cyrus Hoy's gloss of Dekker's canon.<sup>35</sup> Much of my evidence comes from running some of the myriad associations they noted between Nashe and Dekker through the Chadwyck-Healey Early English Books Online searchable database (*EEBO*) to determine to what extent they were unique to the two authors. I also made use of similarities which carried through to Dekker's writing that Paul Kocher put forth in arguing for Nashe's authorship of much of *Doctor Faustus*' prose.

*EEBO* has been my tool of choice throughout this study. As of April 2009, it contained 19,911 records of works written between 1472 and 1700, including most Elizabethan and Jacobean era plays plus non-dramatic works by playwrights. Because of certain gaps, however, I examined fifty additional pieces as named in this footnote.<sup>36</sup> For ease of expression, the term "*EEBO*" includes the works examined by hand. The evidence falls into five categories: memorial associations; shared, rare usage of words; "Matches"; similarities in style and content; and other similarities.

### A1. Memorial Associations

A major difficulty facing authorship researchers is how to distinguish between imitation among authors as opposed to the authentic presence of any given

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<sup>35</sup> Cyrus Hoy, *Introductions, Notes and Commentaries to Texts in "The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker,"* Edited by Fredson Bowers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

<sup>36</sup> The Beaumont and Fletcher 1647 *Folio's Love's Cure; The Loyal Subject; and The Woman's Prize, or The Tamer Tamed*; John Day's *The Isle of Gulls*, 1606; *Humour out of Breath*, 1608; and *Law Tricks*, 1608; John Marston's *The Dutch Courtezan*, 1605; John Weever's *Epigrammes in the Oldest Cut, and Newest Fashion*, 1599; Thomas Nashe's *Lenten Stuffe*, 1599; Christopher Marlowe's *Lucans First Booke*, 1600; Anthony Munday's *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, 1601; Samuel Rowlands' *Tis Merrie When Gossips Meete*, 1602, *A Theater of Delightfull Recreation*, 1605, and *The Knave of Harts*, 1612; John Taylor's *A Funeral Elegie, in Memory of the Rare, Famous and Admired Poet, Mr. Benjamin Jonson Deceased*, 1637, and *Differing Worships, or, the Oddes, Betweene some Knights Service and God's, Or, Tom Nash, his Ghost*, 1640; John Webster and William Rowley's *A Cure for a Cuckold*, 1661. Anonymous: *A Countercuffe Given to Martin Junior*, 1589; *Edward III*, 1596; *Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes*, 1599; *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, 1598; *Histrion-Mastix*, 1610; *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, 1596; *The Knave in Graine* by J.D., 1640; *The Life and Death of Jacke Straw*, 1593; *Look About You*, 1600; *The Maydes Metamorphosis*, 1600; *The Taming of a Shrew*, 1594; *The Tragedy of Cæsar and Pompey*, 1607; *The Cold Tearme*, 1621; *True Tragedie of Richard III*, 1594; *A Warning for Fair Women*, 1599; *The Weakest Goeth to the Wall*, 1600; *Wily Beguiled*, 1606; *The Wisdom of Doctor Dodypoll*, 1600, *The Whipping of the Satyre by I.J.*, 1601; *Father Hubburds tales: or the ant and the nightingale*, dedication signed by T.M., 1604. Manuscript plays: *The Captive Lady; The Captives; Charlemagne or The Distracted Emperour; Edmund Ironside; Fidele and Fortunio* by M.A. or A.M., reg. 1584; *Grim the Collier of Croydon; John a Kent & John a Cumber* by Anthony Munday; *John of Bordeaux; The Second Maiden's Tragedy; Sir Thomas More; Timon; Tom a Lincoln; Woodstock or The First Part of Richard II*.

MacDonald P. Jackson printed a valuable discussion regarding the use of *EEBO*, emphasizing the special care which must be taken to search for unusual spellings since texts are uploaded in their original state, in his *Defining Shakespeare—Pericles as Test Case* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 196-7. I made use of *EEBO*'s "variant spelling" option and ability to search for stem words (awk\* and auk\* will yield various spellings for "awkward"), supplemented by spellings from the *OED* plus others that came to mind. Sources of error this technique cannot account for are occasions when *EEBO*'s software was unable to read a complete word and added placeholders, such that, for example, "awkward" might become "a-kward," or when *EEBO*'s searchable copy was missing pages.

writer. Following are examples where Dekker seems, rather than to copy Nashe, to share the same memories and patterns of word associations (bold emphasis added).

- (a) Both Nashe and Dekker pun on the notes of Guido d'Arezzo's musical scale and the same Latin phrase which they associate with Spain. Nashe writes of a jest that was written against Pope Sextus after his election: "**Sol, Re, Me, Fa**, that is to say, **Solus Rex me facit**; onely the K. of **Spaine** made me Pope" (*Pierce Penilesse* l.186-7). Dekker employs the pun in his *The Noble Spanish Soldier*: "Sol, Re, me, fa, mi, I have it now, *Solus Rex me facit miseram*: Alas poore Lady, tell her no Pothecary in *Spaine* has any of that *Assa fetida* she writes for" (IV.ii.27-30)<sup>37</sup>. These are the only two appearances of "Solus Rex me" in *EEBO*. Dekker and Nashe appear to share the same unique, complex set of word associations.
- (b) Both authors associated the **Swiss** with wearing **large breeches**. Regarding the size of Gabriel Harvey's *Pierce's Supererogation*, Nashe wrote, "O, tis an unconscionable vast gorbellied Volume, bigger bulkt than a Dutch Hoy, & farre more boystrous and cumbersome than a payre of *Swissers* omnipotent galeaze [galley] breeches" (*Have With You to Saffron-Walden*, III.35). In Dekker appears, "But those Goblins whom I now am conjuring up, have bladder-cheekes puft out like a *Swizzers* breeches (yet being prickt, there comes out nothing but wind)" (*The Wonderfull Yeare 1603* ed. A3v)<sup>38</sup>. The two other *EEBO* associations between the Swiss and large breeches were post-Restoration (1660 and later): John Evelyn's *Tyrannus*, 1661; and Francois Robelais' *Pentaguel's Voyage*, 1694.
- (c) Nashe names **De Arte Bibendi** - a book in Latin verse about drinking by Vicentius Obsopeus, 1536, in *Pierce Penilesse* (l.207) and *Summers Last Will and Testament* (III.277). For his part, Dekker jests at someone who wished "to take *Bacchanalian* degrees, and to waite himsele in *Arte bibendi magister* [Master in the art of drinking]" in *The Guls Horne-booke* (Grosart, II.204), seemingly a memory of the title Nashe mentioned.<sup>39</sup> Obsopeus' book may not have been a particularly popular piece; *EEBO* mention of it occurs elsewhere only in works by William Prynne, 1628, and Richard Head, 1675.
- (d) In the *OED/EEBO*, Nashe and Dekker were the first two to employ "**apple wife**," meaning "apple seller." Nashe wrote, "The gods, and goddesses all on a rowe...from *Ops* to *Pomona*, the first applewife" (*Lenten Stuffe* V.198), a joke stemming from the fact that Pomona was the goddess of fruit trees, and her name derived from "pomum," the Latin word for apple. As Nashe associated "apple wife" with an early mythological figure, Dekker associated the term with the first female Biblical figure, and also used it to get a laugh. In

<sup>37</sup> Dekker's plays are quoted from *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953-61), by volume and page number.

<sup>38</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in McKerrow Vol. IV, pp.319-20.

<sup>39</sup> The possible allusion to *De Arte Bibendi* was noted in Thomas Dekker, *The Gull's Hornbook*, ed. R.B. McKerrow (London: De la More Press, 1904) - p.87.

*Il Honest Whore*, one character remarks that in England, all Costermongers (apple or fruit sellers) are Irish, and another replies, "Oh, that's to show their Antiquity, as comming from *Eve*, who was an Apple-wife, and they take after the Mother" (I.i.37-8). Nashe and Dekker were again thinking along the same lines. Other *EEBO* occurrences of "apple wife" are found in works dated 1609, 1612, 1636, 1640 and 1659, where the usages are conventional. It is worth noting that Dekker and Webster's *Sir Thomas Wyat* (II.i.7) contains the first known use of the synonym, "apple women."

- (e) A "**leathern bag**" was associated with money in both the Nasheian prose of *Doctor Faustus* (Scene vii.118)<sup>40</sup> and Nashe's *The Terrors of the Night* (I.384)<sup>41</sup>. In pre-Restoration *EEBO* "leathern bag(s)" hold money (as opposed to wind, meal, liquor, etc.) in five other works: Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* (I.ii.191) and *The Wonderfull Yeare* (1603 ed. F3r); plus Thomas Heywood's play *The Captives*, registered 1624; Peter Heylyn's *Mikrokosmos*, 1625; and *The World Encompassed by Sir Francis Drake*, 1628.
- (f) Both Nashe and Dekker associate the words "**tickle**" and "**tobacco**." In Nashe's *Have With You to Saffron-Walden*: "a tickling pipe of tobacco" (III.276); Dekker's *Lanthorne and Candle-light*: "the Horse-courser tickles his nose (not with a Pipe of Tobacco) but with a good quantitie of the best Neesing powder" (I3r); and Dekker's *Whore of Babylon*: "nay his wife tickels it too, for three Muskateeres came but to drinke Tabacco in her cabbin, and she fired their flaskes and tuch-boxes" (V.iii.45-7)<sup>42</sup>. The combination occurs but once elsewhere in *EEBO*, William Vaughan's *The Arraignment of Slander Purjury Blasphemy*: "whether the spirit of Detraction tickles the possessed party at tableboard, at Tobacco-taking, at gossiping..." (1630 ed. p. 85).
- (g) Both Nashe (*The Unfortunate Traveller* II.209) and Dekker (*The Guls Horne-booke*, Grosart, II.202) employ the same quote from Horace, "**Caelum petimus stultitia**," which means "we seek the heavens in our stupidity."<sup>43</sup> The actual quote, however, is "*Caelum ipsum petimus stultitia*," and correctly cited in the two other *EEBO* works in which it appears, Pierre Charron's *Of Wisdom Three Books*, 1608, and *An Exact Collection of the Works of Doctor Jackson*, 1645. Both Nashe and Dekker made exactly the same mistake remembering Horace.
- (h) A **plaiice** (type of fish) is described as having a "**wry mouth**" (or being wry mouthed) only in Nashe's *Lenten Stuffe* (V.203); Dekker's *Il Honest Whore* (II.i.6); John Taylor's *Odcomb's Complaint*, 1613; and Thomas Duffett's *The Amorous Old-Woman*, 1674.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Frank Romany and Robert Lindsey (Eds.), *Christopher Marlowe. The Complete Plays*, (London: Penguin Books, 2003).

<sup>41</sup> Leathern bag/money association made by Kocher, 27.

<sup>42</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in McKerrow IV.318.

<sup>43</sup> Horace, *Od. i.3.38*. Translation from *The Unfortunate Traveller and Other Works*, ed. J.B. Steane (London: Penguin Books, 1972, reprint 1985) - p.254.

<sup>44</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in McKerrow, IV.407.

- (i) Both Nashe and Dekker thought highly of **John Bentley**, an actor with the Queen's Players from 1583 until he died in August 1585. Nashe said, "If I ever write anything in Latin (as I hope one day I shall), not a man of any desert here amongst us but I will have up. Tarleton, Ned Alleyn, Knell, Bentley, shall be made known to France, Spain and Italy" (*Pierce Penilesse*, l.215). Dekker called him "inimitable Bentley" and placed him with deceased poets in his Elisian Grove of Bay Trees because he had been a lover of playwrights and a register to the muses (*A Knight's Conjuring* p.156). Thomas Heywood names Bentley in a list of actors that were before his time and would seem, indeed, to have been before Dekker's.<sup>45</sup> These are the only references to the actor that I am aware of in published, period literature.

## A2. Shared, Rare Usage of Words

Into this category fall words or phrases that already had a set meaning before Nashe added a new one. In certain works with which Dekker was involved, Nashe's new definition was employed. The key point here is that almost nobody else followed Nashe's lead.

- (a) "**Back friend**" meant a false friend or secret enemy (*OED* def. 1) until Nashe came up with an additional definition, "supporter" (def. 2), in *Lenten Stufte* (III.202). The phrase appears with both meanings in works Dekker authored or co-authored: def. 1 in *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (III.ii.24) and *The Virgin Martyr* (III.i.83); and def. 2 in *The Roaring Girl* (I.ii.51) and *The Witch of Edmunton* (II.i.229)<sup>46</sup>. I found "back friend" only once elsewhere in pre-Restoration *EEBO* as def. 2: Robert Monro's *Monro his expedition with the worthy Scots Regiment*, 1637.
- (b) "**Friskin**" usually meant "a frolic, playful encounter" (*OED* def. 1). The only two *OED/EEBO* appearances of "friskin" meaning "a gay, frisky person" (def. 2) are in Nashe's *Saffron-Walden*: "One Sunday evening, when hys Wench or Friskin was footing it aloft in the Greene" (III.122) and Dekker's *Satiromastix*: "I? saist thou so Friskin? I have her ath hip for some causes, I can sound her, she'll come at my becke." (III.i.116-7)<sup>47</sup>.
- (c) "**Extempore**" adverb, commonly meant "without premeditation or preparation" (*OED* def. A1). In pre-Restoration *EEBO*, it meant "at once, immediately" (*OED* def. A2) as best I can determine only in Nashe's *Strange Newes* (I.314) and *The Unfortunate Traveller* (II.233), Dekker and Middleton's *Meeting of Gallants at an Ordinarie* (1604 ed. C4r, Dekker portion), and *The Blacke Booke* (Middleton's Works, VIII.12) attributed to Thomas Middleton which, I believe, linguistic evidence indicates was co-authored by Nashe.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Thomas Heywood, *An Apology for Actors* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1612), E2v. For information on Bentley, see Edwin Nunzeger, *A Dictionary of Actors* (New York: Greenwood Publishers, 1968) - pp.44-5.

<sup>46</sup> The two meanings of "back friend" are discussed in Hoy's glosses of various Dekker plays.

<sup>47</sup> McKerrow noted the difference in Nashe's use of "friskin" in *Saffron-Walden* and *Lenten Stufte* in McKerrow, IV.376.

<sup>48</sup> *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, ed. A.H. Bullen (New York: AMS Press, 1964). The anonymous *The Blacke Booke* is attributed to Middleton because "T.M." signed its dedication, yet it is Nasheian in terms of linguistic richness and absurd style as well as its subjects: *Pierce Pennilesse* and Thomas Nashe, and I view it as a work of co-authorship penned during the same year

- (d) Only two authors thought to employ “**Scotch saddle**” as a simile in the *EEBO* listings: Nashe, *Have With You to Saffron-Walden*: “my braine as poore and compendius, as the pummell of a scotch saddle” (III.134); and Dekker, *Worke for Armourors*: “a nose indented like a scotch saddle” (Grosart, IV.154). The one other non-literal *OED/EEBO* usage of the phrase is in John Florio’s 1598 Italian-English dictionary, as an adjective: “*Naso schiacciato*, a flat Scotch-saddle nose”.
- (e) “**Peripatetical**” meant “peripatetic,” a follower of Aristotle, until Nashe employed it to mean “used for or involved in walking” (*OED* def. 2a) in his Preface to *Menaphon*: “to make a Peripateticall path into the inner parts of the Citie” (III.316.20). It also appears as def. 2a in Dekker and Webster’s *West-ward Hoe*: “a Constable new chosen kept not such a peripateticall gate” (1607 ed. B3v)<sup>49</sup>. I have found it elsewhere with this definition twice in *EEBO*, in *Tyro’s Roring Megg* by Tom Tyro, 1598; and in Thomas Adams’ *Diseases of the Soul*, 1613.

### A3. Matches

Louis Ule conducted a word frequency analysis during his study of the authorship of *Woodstock*, comparing it to 29 other texts, including Nashe’s *Summers Last Will and Testament*. Ule found that *Summers Last Will* “demonstrates what many may have suspected, that Nashe in his writings exhibits the largest vocabulary of any Elizabethan.”<sup>50</sup> That same distinctive richness of vocabulary appears in the works of Thomas Dekker, although so far as I know, no one has documented it. What I have been able to document are pairings between Dekker and Nashe of rare words, phrases, and word usages. When these appear in both of their canons in the *OED/EEBO* plus no more than one other occurrence in a work by a different author within a forty-year time period, I call them “Matches.” Given the size of *EEBO*,

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that Middleton and Nashe collaborated on *I The Honest Whore*, *The Roaring Girl*, *The Meeting of Gallants at an Ordinarie*, and *The Magnificent Entertainment*. In terms of connections to Dekker, it mentions “two of Derickes Neckelaces,” meaning nooses, referring to hangman Thomas Derrick. He was a favorite subject of Dekker, who named him in *The Belman of London*, *The Guls Horne-booke*, *Satiro-mastix*, *The Seaven Deadly Sinnes*, *The Wonderful Yearre*, and *The Meeting of Gallants at an Ordinarie*, the last piece co-authored with Middleton. Middleton does not mention Derrick in any other work except *Father Hubbards Tales*, another 1604 piece mentioning Nashe whose dedication was signed by T.M. that I believe was also co-authored by Dekker. Some form of *The Blacke Booke’s* “shoulder-clap” occurs fourteen other times in pre-Restoration *EEBO*, including Dekker’s *Satiro-Mastix*, *Westward Ho*, *The Guls Horne-booke* and *The Compters Common-wealth*, but not elsewhere in Middleton except in a Nasheian portion of *Father Hubbards Tales*. “Damnable” appears seven times. This word occurs but one time each in two plays Middleton authored or co-authored, *Your Five Gallants* and *A Faire Quarrel*. In the nine Dekker works in which it is found, it usually occurs more than once, and in four of them appears 4-5 times. *The Blacke Booke’s* “for all the world like” appears in four solo works by Dekker, but is found in Middleton only in works he co-authored with Dekker: *The Meeting of Gallants* and *The Roaring Girl*. *The Blacke Booke’s* “false embrace(s),” appears only thirteen other times in *EEBO*, including Nashe’s *Pierce Penilesse* and Dekker’s *Penny-wise Pound Foolish*, but not Middleton. *The Blacke Booke’s* “risse” (arose), on the other hand, is a Middletonian word, occurring in his *A Mad World My Masters*, *Michaelmas Term*, and *The Wisdome of Solomon Paraphrased*, and not elsewhere in Dekker. Other similarities to Middleton’s works are pointed out in *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture*, ed. Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 350.

Nashe mentions the *Black Book* in three of his works, and Dekker in four of his, while Middleton, not at all in his *EEBO* searchable works. In writing it, Nashe would have been delivering on the promise of Robert Greene (a friend of Nashe but not of Middleton), who said he would write it (in *The Black Book’s Messenger*) but died before he was able to do so. In my view, Dekker would have kept his name off this pamphlet to avoid too close a connection with Nashe, but after both “T.M.” and an anonymous self-proclaimed friend of Nashe (*The Returne of the Knight of the Poste from Hell*, 1606) had written about Pierce Penilesse, Dekker felt it was safe to write about him under “true” name in *Newes from Hell*, 1606.

<sup>49</sup> Nashe/Dekker association made in McKerrow, IV.453.

<sup>50</sup> Ule, “Cluster Analysis and the Authorship of *Woodstock*,” *Revue, International Organization for Ancient Languages Analysis by Computer*, 1 (1976), Reprint - p.20.



Matches are extraordinarily difficult to come by. Any given Match could be the result of imitation or coincidence, but the occurrence of so many between two authors is hard to explain.

- (a) The word “**anthropophagize**(-s,-d,-ing),” formed from “Anthropophagi,” an English term for cannibals, is found in the *OED/EEBO* only in Nashe’s *Christs Teares Over Jerusalem*, as a verb: “Ratified it is (bad-fated saturnine boy) that thou must be anthropophagized by thine own mother” (I.73) and Dekker’s *The Wonderfull Yeare*, as an adjective: “Arm my trembling hand, that it may boldy rip up and anatomize this anthropophagized plague” (Grosart I.103), plus dictionaries dated 1623, 1661 and 1677.<sup>51</sup>
- (b) In Nashe’s *Christs Teares Over Jerusalem* appears “as stale as **sea-biefe**” (II.180) and in Dekker’s *Newes from Hell*, “more stale then Sea-beefe” (Grosart Works, II.112).<sup>52</sup> The expression sounds proverbial, but it is not. The first appearance of “sea-beef” in the *OED/EEBO* is in Nashe, and the word occurs but once elsewhere in *EEBO* besides Dekker, John Josselyn’s *New-Englands Rarities*, 1672, where it has a different meaning. If Dekker were writing with Nashe’s work open in front of him, it would have to have been the 1594 edition of *Christs Teares*, since “sea-biefe” does not occur in the 1593 edition.
- (c) In John Stow’s 1598 *Survey of London*, he wrote about one mother Mampudding, who kept a house for victualing in petty Wales, Tower Street ward. Writing the same year, Nashe mentioned “**mother Mampudding**” in his *Lenten Stufe* (III.200). So did Dekker in *Satiromastix* (III.i.266), and nobody else in *EEBO*.<sup>53</sup>
- (d) “Ut,” or “gam-ut,” now commonly called “do,” is the first note of d’Arezzo’s scale, while “re” is the second; “gamut are(s)” is a reference to these two notes. In *EEBO* the phrase appears in Nashe’s *Have With You to Saffron-Walden*, “the melodious God of **Gamut are**, that is life and sinnewes in everie thing” (III.23); Dekker’s *Old Fortunatus*, “O, there’s more musicke in this, then all the Gammoth ares, and Sol fa Res, in the world” (V.ii.33-4); Dekker’s *The Guls Horne-booke*, “You Courtiers, that do nothing but sing the gamuth-are of complementall courtesie” (Grosart, II.202), books about music published in 1617 and 1688, and a 1637 epitaph praising a musician.<sup>54</sup>
- (e) “**Calamanco**,” a type of fabric, applied to a person (*OED* def. 2b), occurs in the *OED/EEBO* only in Nashe’s *Strange Newes* (I.330, “Calimunco”); Gabriel

<sup>51</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in McKerrow IV.226.

<sup>52</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in McKerrow IV.249.

<sup>53</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in Hoy, I.258. Hoy mentioned that F.P. Wilson (*Works*, V.59) found “that mampodding madge” in R.B.’s *A New Tragical Comedie of Apius and Virginia*, 1575. It is unclear from the context whether this reference is to the same woman.

<sup>54</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in Hoy, I.127.

Harvey's *Pierces Supererogation*, quoting Nashe<sup>55</sup>; and Dekker and Webster's *Sir Thomas Wyat* (IV.ii.51, "Callimanco").

- (f) A term of address, followed by "**Swines snout**," occurs in *EEBO* only in Nashe's *Pierce Penillesse*: "Lady Swinsnout" (I.169.10); Dekker's *Il Honest Whore*: "Master Swines snout" (V.ii.403); and Thomas Becon's *The Reliques of Rome*, 1563, where Pope Sergius is called "Pope Swinesnoute".<sup>56</sup>
- (g) "Court holy water" was a common phrase meaning "flattery" or "empty promises." "**Court holy bread**," meaning the same thing, is found in *EEBO* only in Nashe's *Pierce Penillesse* (I.161); Dekker and Webster's *West-ward Hoe* (II.iii.21), and Thomas Morton's *New English Canaan*, 1637.<sup>57</sup>
- (h) "**Huffy tufty**," adjective, occurs in the *OED/EEBO* only in Nashe's *Have With You to Saffron-Walden* (III.73) and *Lenten Stufe* (III.174); Patient Grissil (IV.iii.36) by Dekker, Chettle and Haughton; the undated, anonymous manuscript play *John of Bordeaux* (Malone Society Reprint li. 511) which is a sequel to Robert Greene's *Frier Bacon and Frier Bongay*; and the Duke of Newcastle's *The Triumphant Widow*, 1677.<sup>58</sup>
- (i) "**Diogenical**" is an adjective based on the Greek philosopher Diogenes. Its *OED/EEBO* appearances are in Nashe's *Christ's Tears* (II.109); Dekker, Chettle and Haughton's *Patient Grissil* (1603 ed. C2v); *Taylor's Feast* by John Taylor, 1638; and two books of *The Works of Francis Rabelais*, 1693 and 1694.
- (j) "Greasy" was a favorite adjective of both Nashe and Dekker. "**Greasy doublet(s)**" occurs in *EEBO* in Nashe's *Pierce Penillesse* (I.208); Dekker's *Belman of London* (I1v); *The Revengers Traegedie*, 1607 (anonymous play attributed to Thomas Middleton); and Giovanni Bona's *A Guide to Eternity*, 1680.
- (k) "**Naulum**" is the passage money paid to Charon the boatman to ferry the newly dead across the river Acheron; it was also known as Charon's "obolus" or "obol." Nashe transported the Latin "naulum" into an English sentence with its association to Charon in *Have With You to Saffron-Walden* (III.34). Dekker carried the word and association forward in *Newes From Hell/A Knight's Conjuring* (p.109). It also appears in an English sentence in John Day's *Law Tricks*, 1608; Thomas Heywood's *Love's Mistress*, 1636; and works published in 1652, 1664, 1668, and written in 1677.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>55</sup> *The Works of Gabriel Harvey*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (London: for private circulation only, 1884-5), II.275; Nashe/Dekker association noted in McKerrow IV.195.

<sup>56</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in McKerrow IV.99.

<sup>57</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in McKerrow IV.91.

<sup>58</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in Hoy I.171.

<sup>59</sup> *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1964) - Vol. V, V.i p.149.

- (l) Both a Nashe-style section of *Doctor Faustus* (Scene ii.2) and Nashe's *Pierce Penilesse* (l.160) employ the Latin phrase "**sic probō**," meaning "thus I prove it," in an English sentence.<sup>60</sup> So does Dekker in *If It Be Not a Good the Devil Is In It* (l.iii.86). It elsewhere occurs in an English sentence in *EEBO* in *Tom a Lincoln* (anonymous, undated play, MSR li. 1343), and pieces dated 1650, 1651 and 1651.

#### A4. Similarities in Style and Content

In a wide variety of Dekker's works, he wrote similarly to a wide variety of Nashe's works. If Dekker were merely imitating Nashe, we would have expected Nashe's influence to be strong in his first few years as a writer, then taper off once he developed his own style. Instead, if Nashe and Dekker were two separate individuals, Dekker wrote as if he had resolved to follow directly in Nashe's footsteps, owned a set of Nashe's works, and frequently thumbed through them so that he could continue copying Nashe's style. The following examples of similarities between the two, presented in chronological order, illustrate this point.

- (a) Dekker:

*Tucca. He shootes at thee too Adam Bell, and his arrowes stickes heere; he calles thee bald-pate.*

*Sir Vaughan. Oundes make him prove these intolerabilities.*

*Tucca. And asks who shall carry the vinegar-bottle? And then herimes too't, and says Prickshaft: nay Miniver hee cromples thyCap too; and -*

***Satiro-Mastix, IV.iii.119-23 (acted 1601)***

Nashe:

*Pish, pish, what talke you of old age or balde pates? Men and women that have gone under the South pole, must lay off their furde night caps in spight of their teeth, and become yeomen of the Vineger bottle: a close periwig hides all the sinnes of an olde whore-master;*

***Pierce Penilesse, I.182***

Both passages are referring to baldness as a symptom of venereal disease, and vinegar, a contemporary treatment for it, using the same phrases: "bald pate(s)" and "vinegar bottle." Both associate it with a servant/someone who carries the bottle, as well as to sex, with "Prickshaft" being a probable pun on "prick" (penis) suitable for the archery analogy. While *Pierce Penilesse* mentions furred night caps, *Satiro-Mastix* mentions "cap" and "Miniver," a type of fur from which caps were made ("Miniver cap" appears in Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*).

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<sup>60</sup> Kocher, op. cit. - p.19.

(b) Dekker:

*Over head and eares yfaith? I have a sacke-full of newes for thee*

**Satiro-Mastix, I.ii.30-1 (acted 1601)**

*News from Graves-end Sent to Nobody*

**Title of pamphlet by Dekker and Middleton, 1604**

Nashe:

*We shall be sure to have a whole Gravesend Barge full of Newes, and heare soundly of all matters on both eares*

**Have With You to Saffron-Walden, III.33**

(c) Dekker and Middleton, Dekker portion:

*For your excellent drunkard, is your notable Gallant, and he that can passe away cleare without paying the Host in the Chimney-Corner, he is the king of Cannes, and the Emperour of Alehouses*

**The Meeting of Gallants at an Ordinarie, 1604 ed. C3v**

Nashe:

*Bee it knowen to as many as will paie mony inough to peruse my storie, that I folowed the court or the camp, or the campe and the court, when Turwin lost her maidenhead, and opened her gates to more than Jane Trosse did. There did I (soft, let me drinke before I go anie further) raigne sole king of the cans and blacke jackes, prince of the pigmeis, countie palatine of cleane straw and provant*

**The Unfortunate Traveller, II.209**

(d) Dekker:

*Scald, hot-liverd gotish Gallant*

**II Honest Whore, II.i.180 (written c.1604)**

Nashe:

*Scald, trivial lying pamphlet*

**Pierce Penillesse, I.154**

(e) Dekker:

*O London, thou art great in glory, and envied for thy greatnes*

**The Seven Deadly Sinnes of London (1606), Grosart, II.10**

Nashe:

*London, thou art the seeded Garden of sinne*

**Christs Teares Over Jerusalem, II.158**

EEBO contains four other instances of "London thou art".

(f) Dekker:

*There was such chopping of hearbes, such tossing of Ladles, such plucking of Geese, such scalding of Pigges, such singing, such scolding, such laughing, such swearing, and such running too and fro, as if Pluto had that day bidden all his friendes to a feast and that these had bene the Cookes that drest the dinner.*

**Belman of London (1608 ed. B4v)**

Nashe:

*As we were thus discoursing, I hard such ringing of belles, such singing, such shouting, as though Rhodes had beene recovered, or the Turke quite driven out of Christendome...*

**An Almond for a Parrat (1590), III.342**

(g) Dekker:

*Come, come, it would be but a bald world, but that it wears a periwig...and, though to purge it wil be a sorer labour than the cleansing of Augeaes stable, or the scouring of Mooreditch: yet, Ille ego, qui quondam; I am the Pasquille madcap, that will do't.*

**The Guls Horne-booke (1609), Grosart II.212**

Nashe:

*I will make you laugh your hearts out. Take me at my word, for I am the man that will do it.*

**Lenten Stufe, V.151**

Note the parallel construction of "I am the ...that will do it." Moreover, the introductory lines to Virgil's *Aeneid* - "Ille ego, qui quondam" (I am he who once) - appear in Nashe's *An Almond for a Parrat* (III.369) and *Strange Newes* (I.293), while "Not Hercules when he cleansed the stables of Aegeas, under-tooke such a stinking unsavorie exploit" is in *Strange Newes* (I.326). Nashe juxtaposed "bald" or "baldpate" with "periwig(s)" in *Pierce Penillesse* and *Summers Last Will*, while the common phrase "come, come" is found seven times in his works. It should be noted, by the way, that both authors were fond of including Latin tags.

(h) Dekker:

*Swords were drawne, but either they had no hearts to strike, or no hands, for  
(like so many S. Georges on horse-backe) they threatned, but gave not a blow*

**Worke for Armourours (1609 ed. B3r-v)**

Nashe:

*These whelpes . . . have long been on horseback to come riding to your  
Divelship: but, I knowe not howe, like Saint George, they are alwaies mounted,  
but never move.*

**Pierce Penillesse, I.174**

(i) Dekker:

*Bleake Agues, Apoplexies, Murrees, Catarrhes, Coughes, Dropsies, Rhewmes,  
diseases that make wars*

**Dekker his Dream (1620 ed. p.26)**

Nashe:

*All rheumes, poses, Sciaticaes, dropsies, and gouts, are diseases of their  
flegmaticke engendring.*

**The Terrors of the Night (1594 ed. C1v)**

(j) In a usage not listed in the *OED*, “plum-tree” has been identified as a term for female genitalia in seven pieces, including *The Atheist’s Tragedie*, *II Henry VI*, *The Widow*, and *Women Beware Women*.<sup>61</sup> None of these four demonstrate the following verbal similarities in the other three:

Dekker and Ford:

*I must and will have a fling at one of her plum-trees*

**The Sun’s Darling (licensed 1624), III.iv.59-60**

Nashe:

*Hey ding a ding, up with your petticoat, have at your plum-tree*

**Have With You to Saffron-Walden, III.113**

*I perceyve there cannot a new Booke come forth but you will have a fling at it.*

**Have With You to Saffron-Walden, III.18**

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<sup>61</sup> Hoy, *op. cit.*, IV.30.

Dekker, Haughton and Chettle:

*By Cod is sweare terrible to knog her pade, and fling her spindle legs at plum trees*

*Patient Grissil (written 1599), II.i.85-6.*

#### A5. Other Similarities

Both Nashe and Dekker believed that the sound of musical instruments drove tigers to madness (*The Anatomie of Absurdities*, I.30, and *Match Me in London*, III.iii.97-8)<sup>62</sup>. Both called a fool's coat with an extra pair of sleeves a "coat with four elbows" (*Have With You to Saffron-Walden*, III.23, and Dekker's *The Guls Horne-booke*, Grosart, II.202)<sup>63</sup>. Both parodied Richard Stanyhurst's attempts at onomatopoeia in devices appended to his *Aeneid* translation: Nashe's Preface to *Menaphon*: "Rounce robble hobble / Of ruffe raffe roaring, with thwicke thwacke thurlerie bouncing" (III, 320); and Dekker and Massinger's *The Virgin Martyr*: "Rounce, robble-hobble, and thwicke thwacke thirlery bouncing" (IV.ii.60-1). While other poets also parodied Stanyhurst's onomatopoeia<sup>64</sup>, Dekker is the only one in *EEBO* who mirrored Nashe's parody of Stanyhurst rather than Stanyhurst himself.

In Nashe's *Christs Tears* (II.149-53) and Dekker and Middleton's *I Honest Whore* (II.i.165-7), it is maintained that prostitutes sell themselves to the devil disguised in a man's shape, and that whores pretend to be respectable people, such as a knight's daughter or a captain's wife, dwelling at a citizen's home to present "suits in Law" during the Term time when courts are open for business.<sup>65</sup> Nashe mentioned the whore of Babylon in two pieces, while Dekker wrote a play by that title.

The prison pamphlet *The Compter's Common-Wealth* by William Fennor, silently co-authored with Dekker who was imprisoned from 1613-1619, twice uses the phrase "never a penny in his/my purse" (pp. 48, 77) found in two of Nashe's works (*Summers Last Will and Testament*, III.247, III.266 and *Letter to William Cotton*, V.196) and in Dekker's *The Ravens Almanacke* (1609 ed. B4r)<sup>66</sup>. As Dekker praises Nashe in *Newes from Hell*, *The Compters Common-wealth* praises Dekker: "The most wittiest, elegantest and eloquentest Peece (Master Dekkers, the true heire of Apollo composed) called *The Bell-man of London*, have already set foorth the vices of the time so lively, that it is unpossible the Anchor of any other mans braine can sound the sea of a more deepe and dreadful mischeefe" (p.16). This pamphlet describes the practices of corrupt and abusive jailors, and makes it clear that

<sup>62</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in Hoy, III.170-1.

<sup>63</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in McKerrow, IV.314.

<sup>64</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in Hoy III.223-4.

<sup>65</sup> Nashe/Dekker association noted in Hoy II.33.

<sup>66</sup> For Dekker's involvement with this pamphlet, see Phillip Shaw, "Thomas Dekker in Jacobean Prison Literature," *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, 62 (1947) - pp.381-7. *The Compter's Common-Wealth* was re-issued under the title *The Miseries of Jaile* in 1619, and as *A True Description of the Lawes, Justice, and Equity of a Compter* in 1629.

Fennor's contributor could not be named since he was still in prison, where jailors could exact revenge against him.

We find "like the new-painted gates of a Lord Mayor's house" in Dekker's *The Guls Horne-booke* (Grosart II.224) and "the posts of his gate are a-paynting" in *I The Honest Whore* (III.i.86). This alludes to the custom of each Lord Mayor, who assumed office for one year, to repaint external portions of his official residence. Nashe mentions it too, in *Pierce Penillesse*: "after the colour of a new Lord Mayor's posts" (I.180)<sup>67</sup>. In *Pierce Penillesse* (I.199), Nashe appeals to "Honiger Hammon," requesting his opinion of the case against him. Records show that Nashe's friend Christopher Marlowe attended school with Grays-Inn attorney Thomas Hammond, both in Canterbury and at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. He is the same Thomas Hammon to whom Thomas Heywood dedicated *The Jew of Malta* in 1633. In Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* there is a character called Master Hammon, cousin to Master Warner. Walter Warner was a scientist associated with the Earl of Northumberland.

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<sup>67</sup> On the custom of officials painting posts, see McKerrow, IV.108.