

chooses these particular words to make this point.⁵ No one has noted that ‘a piece of him’ is a direct quotation from one of Horace’s most famous odes, III.30:

Exegi monumentum aere perennius
regalique situ pyramidum altius,
quod non imber edax non Aquilo impotens
possit diruere aut innumerabilis
annorum series et fuga temporum.
non omnis moriar, multaque *pars mei*
vitabit Libitinam

[I have finished a monument more lasting than bronze, more lofty than the regal structure of the pyramids, one which neither corroding rain nor the ungovernable North Wind can ever destroy, nor the countless series of years, nor the flight of time. I shall not wholly die, and a large *part of me* will elude the Goddess of Death.]⁶

Shakespeare imitates the opening lines of Horace’s poem in the first quatrain of Sonnet 55:

Not marble nor the gilded monuments
Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone besmeared with sluttish time.

Not only is Horatio’s name is derived from Horace, but his first appearance on stage contains an otherwise difficult-to-explain line that turns out to be a quotation from a poem by Horace that Shakespeare knew intimately. Moreover, the logic of Horace’s poem makes it fitting that ‘*pars mei*’ should reappear as ‘a piece of him’: Horace is saying that his body will die but his textual self, his literary works, will live on. If Horatio is quoting from Horace, preserving his text, then he perpetuates precisely the sort of literary immortality that Horace envisaged for himself (and that Shakespeare promises to the addressee of Sonnet 55). ‘A piece of him’ thus means not only ‘a piece of Horatio’ but ‘a piece of Horace’.

⁵ *Hamlet* ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (London, 2006), 149 (this edition, the Arden, also notes the possibility that Horatio is offering his hand); *Hamlet* ed. G. R. Hibbard (Oxford, 1987), 144; *Hamlet*, ed. Philip Edwards (Cambridge, 1985), 76.

⁶ Original and translation are both cited from Horace, *Odes and Epodes*, ed. and trans. Niall Rudd (Cambridge, MA, 2004), *Odes* III.30.1–7.

In this context, it is striking that Hamlet’s dying words to Horatio concern the preservation and transmission of Hamlet’s story:

Hamlet: [...] Horatio, I am dead,
Thou liv’st. Report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.
Horatio: Never believe it.
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane.
Here’s yet some liquor left.
Hamlet: As thou’rt a man,
Give me the cup. Let go. By heaven, I’ll ha’t.
O God, Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind
me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity a while,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
To tell my story.

Ironically, it is not through heroic suicide, but rather by living, and by preserving and defending Hamlet’s ‘name’, that Horatio will prove himself to be an ‘antique Roman’. Through the commission to report Hamlet’s cause, Horatio takes on explicitly in the final scene of *Hamlet* the role that lies latent in his cryptic words in its first scene: he becomes a medium of posthumous literary survival. As the *Sonnets* demonstrate, Shakespeare found the idea of literary immortality fascinating, and found Horace’s treatment of the theme compelling. The character of Horatio in *Hamlet* should be recognized as part of Shakespeare’s engagement with his predecessor Horace.

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DIVIDABLE SHORES IN *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA*

IN Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*, Ulysses’ well-known oration on degree contains the line ‘Peaceful commerce from dividable shores’ (I.iii.105). Shakespeare does not use the word *dividable* in any other work. A search of the Literature Online database reveals no use of it in any text earlier than *Troilus and Cressida*, but *OED* quotes the earliest use, in 1587, by Arthur Golding, at least

some of whose work had been read by Shakespeare¹. However, *OED*'s citation of Golding is for its first definition of the word: 'Capable of being divided; divisible'. That is not the meaning *OED* infers for Shakespeare's use, because it quotes Ulysses' line to support its second definition: 'Having the function of dividing'. With this definition, Ulysses is to be understood as talking of 'peaceful commerce from shores having the function of dividing'.

Alexander Schmidt, in *Shakespeare-Lexicon*, glosses *dividable* as 'divided, separated, different'.² He also notes Shakespeare's sole use of the word *individable*, in *Hamlet*, a play written within a year or two of *Troilus and Cressida*,³ glossing it as 'not to be distinguished and determined by a peculiar appellation'. Comparing Schmidt's definitions of the two words, as he prompts us to do, Ulysses can alternatively be understood as referring to commerce between shores which are separate from each other.

As a consultation of scholarly editions of the play shows, Ulysses' words have never been satisfactorily explained. The New Variorum edition, having reviewed the commentary on this line from Shakespeare's time until 1949, can do no more than repeat the *OED* and Schmidt definitions, with the caution that 'the sense is subject to the interpretation of the context, which is not clear enough to be determinative'.⁴ Several scholarly editions⁵ published after the New Variorum print one

of these definitions, some noting that it is unparalleled. Riverside prints both and places question marks after both. One recent edition gives up the attempt altogether and says that Ulysses' words have 'only a vague meaning'.⁶

I suggest that the words have not been satisfactorily explained because editors have failed to notice that they refer to the instrument called a dividing compass, or simply 'dividers'. This instrument, still in use today, had been an essential tool for sailors for hundreds of years before Shakespeare's time. 'With the aid of dividers and a parallel ruler the shipmaster could... find from the chart the distance and bearing between any two points.'⁷ There is a contemporary engraving, printed as the frontispiece to a book called *Het Licht der Zee-vaert*, published in 1608, by Dutch cartographer Willem Janszoon Blaeu (1571–1638), which might almost be an illustration of Ulysses' words.⁸ The engraving shows a group of men seated beside two large globes, with various books, charts, and instruments. A wall-sized painting mounted behind them shows sailing ships on water, confirming that the context is shipping and navigation. Two men are shown holding dividers: one is using it on a book, the other on one of the globes. They are clearly using the dividers to help them chart the course of a voyage.

With this knowledge, it is easy to see the correct meaning of Ulysses' words. By *dividable shores*, he means shores which have been charted; more exactly, that it is possible, by using a divider on a chart, to calculate the sailing distances between places along those shores. A merchant wishing to undertake 'peaceful commerce' by sea needs to know the distance between ports with accuracy; otherwise, he cannot estimate the duration of the voyage and, therefore, its commercial viability. The use of the word 'dividers' as shorthand to mean 'dividing compass' is not

¹ For example, see H. H. Furness (ed.), *The Tempest* (London, 1892), 234, for a demonstration of Shakespeare's indebtedness to Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

² Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare-Lexicon*, 3rd edn (rev. Gregor Sarrazin) (Berlin, 1902), 321 and 584.

³ *OED* dates *Hamlet* as being from 1602 (see its definition of *beetle* as a verb) and *Troilus and Cressida* from 1606 (see definition of *dividable*), but the latter play was entered in the Stationers' Register much earlier than that, on 7 February 1603.

⁴ H. N. Hillebrand and T. W. Baldwin (eds), *Troilus and Cressida* (London, 1953), 55.

⁵ G. Blakemore Evans, *The Riverside Shakespeare* (Boston, 1974), 455; R. A. Foakes (ed.), *Troilus and Cressida* (Harmondsworth, 1987), 174; Kenneth Muir (ed.), *Troilus and Cressida* (Oxford, 1982), 72; Kenneth Palmer (ed.), *Troilus and Cressida*, Arden 2 (London, 1982), 128; David Bevington (ed.), *Troilus and Cressida*, Arden 3 (Walton-on-Thames, 1998), 163.

⁶ Anthony B. Dawson (ed.), *Troilus and Cressida* (Cambridge, 2003), 100.

⁷ E. G. R. Taylor, 'The Sailor in the Middle Ages', *Journal of Navigation*, i (1948), 192.

⁸ As at 2 January 2012, there is a high-resolution image of this engraving in Wikipedia, which can be reached by the shortcut URL <http://tinyurl.com/6k9faq4>. According to the information provided there, a copy of Blaeu's book is held by the university library in Marburg, Germany.

recorded by the *OED* until 1703. However, the meaning for which I have argued does not depend upon whether Shakespeare knew the instrument as ‘dividers’ or ‘dividing compass’.

Alice Walker, in her edition of this play, came close to finding the above meaning. Citing *A Shakespeare Glossary*,⁹ she gave to *dividable* the meaning ‘that divides’ but added that ‘the context makes it likely that the word refers to degrees of latitude and longitude (i.e. ‘charted’ shores)’.¹⁰ She did not make the connection with dividing compasses which finally makes Ulysses’ meaning clear.¹¹

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⁹ C. T. Onions, *A Shakespeare Glossary* (Oxford, 1911), 62.

¹⁰ Alice Walker (ed.), *Troilus and Cressida* (Cambridge, 1957), 155.

¹¹ I am grateful to the reviewers of this paper for their helpful comments.

KISSING CORIOLANUS

IN Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus* V.iii.44–8 (TLN 3393–7) with Stage Direction before 44 or after 45:

Coriolanus. Like a dull actor now, 40 [to Virgilia
I have forgot my part, and I am out,
Even to a full disgrace. Best of my flesh,
Forgive my tyranny, but do not say
For that, ‘Forgive our Romans’.
[Virgilia kisses him] Norton, Oxford, Parker;
They kiss Bliss]

¹ The edition quoted is David Bevington (ed.), *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, 6th edn (Chicago, 2009). The other editions cited are to be understood as ‘ed(s), *Coriolanus*’ and as individual editions except as otherwise noted. They are: Peter Alexander, *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (Glasgow, 1951); Lee Bliss, *New Cambridge Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 2000); Philip Brockbank, Arden [2] Shakespeare (London, 1976); G. B. Evans, *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd edn (Boston, 1997); Stephen Greenblatt, *The Norton Shakespeare Based on the Oxford Edition*, 2nd edn (New York, 2008); G. R. Hibbard, *New Penguin Shakespeare* (Harmondsworth, 1967); R. B. Parker, *Oxford World’s Classics* (Oxford, 1994); Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, Oxford Shakespeare, 2nd edn (Oxford, 2005); John Dover Wilson, *Cambridge Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 1960).

Oh, a kiss
Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge! 45
[They kiss Bevington]
Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss
I carried from thee, dear, and my true lip
Hath virgined it e’er since.¹
[no SD] Folio 1623; Alexander, Hibbard, Evans,
Brockbank

Who kisses whom and when is not the kind of question that much detains the swashbuckling criticism—theoretical, ideologically committed, judgemental—that this play characteristically attracts. But it matters to persons of the theatre and those interested in what the play says and means at a primary level. Although ‘My wife comes foremost’ (V.iii.22), the social decorum and personal self-assertion of ‘Virgilia kisses *him*’ is dubious, and the stage direction gratuitous in that way alone. As noted above, Alexander, Brockbank, Evans, and Hibbard followed the Folio in having no stage direction, but the stage business of kissing is implied, and an editor may well feel bound to supply the necessary or appropriate stage direction and sense that assist both reading and performance. Better to maintain silence than supply an erroneous direction, of course, but no one supplies the latter deliberately. Bevington certainly has it in the right place, in any case, after line 45. The action implied is Coriolanus’s kissing Virgilia *after* passionately wishing for, affectionately demanding, ‘Oh, a kiss / Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge!’ It might be noted in passing that if such a kiss is not said to be *sweeter* than revenge in this perhaps surprising comparison, it is not *less* sweet, and revenge has become a cause dear indeed.²

The force of the initial interjection ‘O[h]’ is standard *OED*, sense 2, ‘Expressing (according to intonation) appeal, surprise, lament, etc. Now chiefly *poet.* and *rhetorical.* Used mainly

² ‘Revenge is sweet’ was proverbial at least from 1566 and unsurprisingly common in Shakespeare’s day, when revenge plays abounded, so it would be somewhat gratuitous to consider Coriolanus’s use of it here as tendentious. See Maurice P. Tilley (comp.), *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Ann Arbor, 1950); F. P. Wilson (comp.), *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1970); and R. W. Dent (comp.), *Proverbial Language in English Drama Exclusive of Shakespeare, 1495–1616: An Index* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984). Also see *OED* s.v. ‘Revenge’ Phrases P3 (online version, March 2010).