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To Determine the Relative Shares of
Shakespeare and of Thomas Heywood in the
authorship of Troilus and Cressida.

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of
the Graduate School of the University of
Minnesota

by

Zoe Donaldson

in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts.

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THE undersigned, acting as a committee of the Graduate School, have read the accompanying thesis submitted byMiss Zoe Donaldson..... for the degree ofMaster of Arts,..... They approve it as a thesis meeting the requirements of the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree ofMaster of Arts.....

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Chapter -

In the second book of The Iliad is the following passage: "Only Thersites still chattered on, the uncontrolled of speech, whose mind was full of words many and disorderly, wherewith to strive against the chiefs idly and in no good order * * And he was ill-favored beyond all men that came to Ilios. Bandy-legged was he, and lame of one foot, and his two shoulders, rounded, arched down upon his chest, and over them his head was warped and a scanty stubble sprouted on it. Hateful was he to Achilles and to Odysseus above all, for them he was wont to revile." Such is the Thersites described by Heywood in The Iron Age and in Troilus and Cressida, a low-thoughted and repulsive cynic, deformed in mind and in body, a crusty grumbling fault-finder, a "snarling curr". The amplification of his character which we find in the two plays is so identical in tone that we must ascribe it to one author. The Thersites portion of the Hector - Ajax - Thersites Story is now to be analyzed scene by scene to establish Heywood's authorship by means of parallels taken from The Iron Age.

Hector - Ajax - Thersites Story

Thersites Portion.

Act II sc 1

Act. II sc 3 lines 1-68.

Act III sc 3 lines 234-close.

Act V sc 1 lines 1-64 and 86-close.

Act V sc 2 (Thersites part of this scene from the Troilus and Cressida Story).

Act V. Thersites appears frequently in appended scenes 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

The first references to Thersites which we find in Troilus and Cressida are the following interpolated passages from Act I sc 3.

Agamemnon: When rank
Thersites opes his
mastic jaws. ^{g-and c.} - I. 3, 73.

Achilles: Dogged Thersites,
I'll cleave thee to thy Navell
if thou op'st
Thy venemous Jaws. - 1 I. A.
327.

3

Nestor: Ajax * * sets
 Thersites -
 A slave whose gall coins
 slanders like a mint -
 To match us in compari-
 sons with dirt. -
 I.3, 192-194.

Ajax: Thersites? Canst
 thou rayle?
Ther: Oh yes, yes; better
 than fight.
Ajax: And curse?
Ther: Better than either:
 rarely.
Ajax: And spit thy ven-
 ome in the face of Greece?
Ther: Admirably.
Ajax: Doe, doe, let's heare,
 prethee for Heavens sake
 doe. - 1 I. A. 342.

In The Iron Age we find Ajax actually doing what Nestor in Troilus and Cressida accuses him of doing; that is, setting Thersites on to rail against the other Grecian generals. The relation between these two passages is sufficiently striking. As for the vexed question of Thersites' "mastic jaws," one glance at the first parallels given above should settle it for all time in the mind of anyone who looks at them.

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The first extended Thersites scene in Troilus and Cressida (T. and C. II. 1) should be compared carefully with the last Thersites scene in The Iron Age (1 I. A. 341-343) that the larger points of resemblance may be immediately perceived. It will be found that in both plays the Thersites scenes are not in verse, but in prose, and that, furthermore, the style of this prose is identical in the two plays. Series of short sentences abound, as in the following juxtaposed sections.

<u>Achilles</u> : Thersites! What's the matter man?	<u>Ajax</u> : Thersites? Canst thou rayle?
<u>Ther</u> : You see him there, do you?	<u>Ther</u> : Oh yes, yes; better than fight.
<u>Achil</u> : Ay, what's the matter?	<u>Ajax</u> : And curse:
<u>Ther</u> : Nay, look upon him.	<u>Ther</u> : Better than either: rarely.
<u>Achil</u> : So I do; what's the matter?	<u>Ajax</u> : And spit thy venome In the face of Greece?
<u>Ther</u> : Nay, but regard him well.	<u>Ther</u> : Admirably. - 1 I. A. 342.

Achil: Well! Why, I do so.

T. and C. II. 1, 55-61.

These two passages do not correspond in material, but the prose style of the two is the same.

It will be noted also that the two scenes under discussion are identical in tone and similar in substance. In both Thersites "spits his venom in the face of Greece"; in both Ajax plays the fool; in both scenes Ajax beats Thersites.

Ther: Why how now mad Greek?

Ajax: Thou Bitch-wolf's son, canst thou not heare? Ulysses? thus and thus (Beating him) Feel, then. I'll hammer on thy prooffe

Ther: The plague steel'd Burganet.

of Greece upon thee, thou mongrel beef-witted lord.

Ther: Hold Ajax, hold, the

T. and C. II. 1, 10-13.

divvell take thee

hold; I am Thersites, hell

rot thy fingers off.

1 I. A. 341-342.

The general resemblance between the two scenes is incontestable. 1 Iron Age 341-343 should be compared also with Troilus and Cressida II. 3, 1-68 and III. 3, 234-

close, for striking correspondence in thought and expression.

In order that the reader of this article may have before his eyes, for the purpose of comparison, one somewhat long passage from The Iron Age, I shall cite the whole of the short scene in which Thersites taunts Achilles (1 I. A. 312) in its relation to Act II sc 1 lines 28-40 of Troilus and Cressida, in which Thersites taunts Ajax.

Ther: Where's this great
sword and buckler man of
Greece?

We shall have him one of
sneakes noise,
And come peaking into the
Tents of the Greeks,
With will you have any
musicke Gentlemen;

Achi: Base groome, I'l
teare thy flesh like
falling **S**now.

Ther: When thou art
forth in the incursions,
thou strikest as slow as
another.

Ajax: I say, the pro-
clamation.

Ther: Thou grumblest
and raillest every hour
on Achilles, and thou
art as full of envy at
his greatness as Cerberus
is at Proserpina's beauty,
ay, that thou barkest at
him.

Ajax: Mistress Thersites! Thou the Champion of Greece,

Ther: Thou should
strike him.

Ajax: Cobloaf!

Ther: He would pun
thee into shivers with
his fist, as a sailor

Ther: If I had Hectors
face thou durst not
doo't.

Achi: Durst not?

Ther: Durst not, hee's in
the field, thou in thy tent

Hector playing upon the
Greekish burgonets,
Achilles fingering his effem-
inate Lute.

And now because thou durst
not meet him in the field,
thou hast counterfeited an
honour of love, Achilles?

a meere bug-beare, a
scar-crow, a Hobby-horse.

Achi: Ulysses taught thee
this, deformed slave.

Ther: Coward thou durst
not do this to Hector.

breaks a biscuit.

Ajax: (Beating him) you
whoreson cur!

Ther: Do, do.
T. and C. II. 1, 28-40.

Achi: On thee Ile practise
til I meete with him.

Ther: Ajax is valiant, and
in the throng of the Trojians
Achilles is turn'd Fidler in
the Tents of the Grecians.
1 I. A. 312.

It is plain that these are companion pieces. In both of them Thersites tauntingly reviles a Greek hero, and accuses him of cowardise; in both the outraged hero soundly belabors Thersites for his temerity. Both bristle with abusive epithets. The two passages correspond so closely in thought, style, and tone, that it is impossible to doubt that they were written by one author.

There follow a number of minor parallels from The Iron Age and Act II sc 1 of Troilus and Cressida.

Ajax: (to Thersites) Dog!
T. and C. II, 1, 7.

Ajax: (to Thersites) You
whoreson cur! (etc.

Ajax: Amongst these what's
Thersites?

Ther: A Rogue, a rayling
Rogue, a Curr, a barking dog,

ad infinitum).

T. and C. II. 1, 39.

Ther: I shall soon-
er rail.

T. and C. II 1, 16.

Ajax: I bade the vile
owl go learn me the
tenour of the proclama-
tion, and he rails upon
me.

T. and C. II. 1, 89-90.

Ther: (of Ajax): He beats Ajax: Thersites? Canst

the Pox take me else. -

1 I. A. 343.

Par: Peace Cinicke, barke
not dogge.-

1 I. A. 281.

Achi: Dogged Thersites
I'le cleave thee to the Nav-
ell if thou op'st
Thy venemous Jawes. -

1 I. A. 327.

Diom: Thersites is a rayler.

1 I. A. 274.

Ther: And doe and will,
and can, when all else
fayle.

Though neither sooth nor
speak wel: bravely rayle,
And that's Thersites humour.

1 I. A. 302.

Ajax: Thersites? Canst

me, and I rail at him. thou rayle?

T. and C. II. 3, 3. Ther: Oh yes, yes; better

Patroclus: Good Ther- than fight.

sites come in and rail. - 1 I. A. 342.

T. and C. II. 3, 21. Ther: * * and had he but
my rayling,

He were a man complete.

2 I. A. 358.

Ajax: Toadstool, learn
me the proclamation.

Ther: * * be my sweet Urchin

Syn: I will,

T. and C. II. 1, 20 And thou shalt be mine
ugly Toade.

2 I. A. 358-359.

Ther: (to Ajax) Thou art
proclaimed a fool, I think.foole. -

Ther: (to Ajax) Thou art a

T. and C. II. 1, 24. 1 I. A. 342.

Ther: Do, do.

Ther: Doe, doe, good Dog-

when hated!

T. and C. II. 1, 40. killer. - 1 I. A. 327.

Ther: Mars his

Ajax: Doe, doe, let's heare,

idiot! do, rudness, do,
camel, do, do.
T. and C. II. 1, 52.

prethee for heavens sake doe.
1 I. A. 342.

Ther: Ay, do, do;
thou sodden-witted lord!
thou hast no more brain
than I have in mine
elbows: an assinego
may tutor thee. Thou
scurvy-valiant ass!
thou art here but to
thrash Trojans; and thou
art bought and sold
among those of any wit
like a barbarian slave. -
T. and C. II. 1, 42-46.

Ther: Who thou the son of
Telamon, thou art a foole,
an Asse, a very bloke.
What makest thou here at
Troy to ayde a Cuckold,
beeing a Bachelour? Paris
hath stolen no wife of
thine: if Ajax had been
ought but the worst of
these he might have kept
his Countrey, solac'd his
father, and comforted his
mother. 1, I. A. 342.

Both these passages lay stress on Ajax' lack of wit.

Ther: I will begin
at thy heel, and tell

Ther: With whom shall I
begin?

thee what thou art by
inches. -

Ajax: Beginne with the head.
1 I. A. 342.

referring T. and C. II. 1, 48. ⁵³

Patroclus: No more
words, Thersites, peace!

Ajax: Peace.
Ther: Yes peace for shame.

Ther: I will hold
my peace * * *

1. I. A. 342.

T. and C. II 1, 110.

Ther: Achilles' brach. -
T. and C. II. 1, 111.

Ther: Prity puppy,
Of such a common brach. -
2. I. A. 406.

Ther: Ulysses and
old Nestor * * yoke you
(Ajax and Achilles) like
draught-oxen and make
you plough up the wars.
T. and C. II. 1, 102-104.

Ther (to Ajax): * * what art
thou now reckoned? a good
moyle, a horse that knows
not his own strength, an
asse fit for burthens, to
carry gold, and feede on
thistles - 1 I. A. 342.

These minor parallels require no comment. The cumulative evidence which they afford of Heywood's authorship of Act II sc 1 of Troilus and Cressida is conclusive.

The evidence in favor of Heywood's authorship of Act II sc 3 lines 1-68 is almost equally strong. In both plays Thersites' "spiteful execrations" are spoken of as his prayers. The amens scattered down the pages (T. and C. II.3, 19 and 30 and 1 I. A. 343) strikingly emphasize Thersites' curses, and form a definite point of similarity between the two scenes. In Troilus and Cressida Thersites curses Patroclus:

Thersites: The common curse of mankind, ignorance and folly, be thine in great revenue! Let thy blood be thy direction till thy death! * * * Amen.

Patroclus: What, art thou devout? wast thou in prayer?

Thersites: Ay: the heavens hear me! -
T. and C. II. 3, 24-32,

and in The Iron Age he curses Ulysses:

Ajax: But what's Ulysses my base adversary?

Ther: A dam'd politician, Scilla and Charibdie

swallow him.

Ajax: And greedily devoure him.

Ther: And utterly consume him.

Ajax: And eate up his posterity.

Ther: And rot out his memory.

Ajax: In endlesse infamy.

Ther: And everlasting oblique.

Both: Amen;

Ajax: Enough, no more: * * away Thersites, flye,
Our prayers now sayd, we must prepare to
dye. -

1 I. A. 343.

In both scenes the amens to the curses abound, and the curses are called prayers. The significant resemblance is perfectly evident.

Some minor resemblances follow:

<u>Ther</u> : I have said my prayers and the devil Envy say Amen. T. and C. II.3, 18-19.	<u>Ther</u> : * * these few times we prayed, The gods would hear no reason.- 2 I. A. 405.
---	--

Achil: * why, my cheese.
T. and C. II. 3, 35.

Ther: By this hee's gnawing
Menelaus Cheese. - 1 I. A.287.

Achil (to Ther): Come,
what's Agamemnon? -
T. and C. II. 3, 37.

Ajax (to Ther): What's Aga-
memnon our great Gen-
erall. -1 I. A. 343.

Ther: Peace, fool! -
T. and C. II 3, 50.

Ther: Agamemnon is a
fool - T. and C. II 3,52.

Patroclus: Why am I a
foole?

Menelaus: I am a foole then
say.

Ther: Make that de-
mand of the prover. It
suffices me thou art. -
T. and C. II. 3, 59-61.

Ther: And so thou art. -
1 I. A. 280.

Ther: * * all the argu-
ment is a cuckold and a
whore; a good quarrel to

Ther: I came to laugh at
madmen, thou art one;
The Trojans are all mad, so

Heywood. There is humour in the dazed stupidity of Ajax' self-conceit. In the scene as a whole there is more restraint and better character-drawing than is usual in Heywood. But even this scene has a companion scene in The Iron Age. Here Ajax mistakes Thersites for Agamemnon.

Thersites: He knows not me: I said 'Good-morrow, Ajax!' and he replies, 'Thanks, Agamemnon'. What think you of this man that takes me for the general? - T. and C. III, 3, 259-261.

There Ajax mistakes Thersites for Ulysses:

Ther: Why how now mad Greeke?

Ajax: And art thou come Ulysses? thus and thus
I'll hammer on thy proffe steel'd Burganet.

Ther: Hold Ajax, hold, the divell take thee,
hold, I am Thersites. - 1 I. A. 341-342.

One other resemblance, concerning the character of Ajax, may be noted:

Ther: (of Ajax): * * he wears his tongue in's arms.
T. and C. III 3, 67-68.

Ajax: I had rather fight than talk. -

But Ajax A. is mad.

1 I. A. 338.

~~But~~ This scene as a whole ^{however} has elements in it that cannot be referred to Heywood.

But the next scene pertaining to Thersites (T. and C. V. 1, 1-62) is wholly in Heywood's vein. Thersites' unclean curses and prolific use of epithets, among them "fool", "cur", and "varlet", are such as have been abundantly paralleled in preceding scenes. He again compares the Grecian generals with beasts of burden, as in the passage from The Iron Age quoted above on page 12. The whole scene is identical in characterization, style, and abusive railing tone with the Thersites passages in The Iron Age which have been referred to. Contempt for Menelaus is apparent in both plays:

Thersites: To be a dog, a mule * *, I would not care, but to be Menelaus! I would conspire against destiny. - T. and C. V. 1, 57-60.

Paris (to Menelaus): Achilles, Diomed, Ajax, one of three

Were noble prise, thou art no spoyle for mee.

1 I. A. 319.

The scene is similar

Thersites portion of which is now to be analyzed, is a scene in the second part of The Iron Age pages 362-366. These scenes should be compared. They are more closely parallel in general thought than in the phrasing of particular verses. In both scenes Cressida is solicited by one Greek, while another, a hidden witness, is convinced thereby of her faithlessness. In the one case it is Diomed who solicits Cressida; in the other, **Synon** (simply another name for the character of Thersites): in Troilus and Cressida it is Troilus who is convinced of Cressida's guilt; in The Iron Age, Diomed. It is plain that the foundation idea of both scenes is the same. But what concerns us most in this comparison is the character of Thersites. It should be recognized that wherever **Synon** is spoken of in The Iron Age we may understand the character of Thersites, because Heywood makes **Synon** and Thersites twin characters having the same attributes. The dominant note in the Thersites character in these two scenes is a cynical attitude towards women.

Ther: And any man

Synon: * * doe thou but put

may sing her if he can into one scale
 take her cliff; she's noted. A feather, in the other Cres-
 T. and C. V. 2, 10-11. sid's truth,

Ther: Now she sharpens The feather shall downe weigh
 - Well said, whetstone.- it - 2 I. A. 363.
 T. and C. V. 2, 74. Synon: And now faire Tro-

Ther: A proof of jan Weather-hen adew,
 strength she could not And when thou next lovest,
 publish more, thinke to be more true.-
 Unless she said My mind 2 I. A. 366.

is now turn'd whore. -
 T. and C. V. 2, 112-113.

Thersites and **Synon** have the same attitude toward
 Cressida. Two other parallels deserve mention:

Troilus: Let it not be Synon: * * nought more
 believed for womanhood! grieves me then to thinke,
 Think, we had mothers. - A woman was my mother. -
 T. and C. V. 2, 128-129. 2 I. A. 366.

Ther: Lechery, lech- Ther: Now all the World's

ery! still wars and lech- turn'd wenchers. -
 ery! nothing else holds 1 I. A. 301.
 fashion. - T. and C. V 2,
 193-194.

The similarity in tone between the remarks of Thersites and Synon, considered in the light of all the Thersites evidence up to this point, stamps the Thersites portion of Troilus and Cressida Act V sc 2 as Heywood's.

Act V sc 4 of Troilus and Cressida also offers some interesting Thersites material. To begin with, in the first long speech, lines 1-16, there are a number of Thersites words, the same words that are repeated ad infinitum in the Thersites speeches of The Iron Age. Some of them follow, with illustrations from The Iron Age.

T. and C. V. 4, 2. varlet. Syn: And now you witches,
 varlets, drabes, and queanes.-
 1 I. A. 367.

T. and C. V. 4, 3. foolish. Men: I am a foole then say.
Ther: And so thou art. -
 1 I. A. 280.

T. and C. V. 4, 4. helm. Achi: * * * * his sword
Late sparkled fire out of the
Spartan's helm. - 1 I. A. 326

T. and C. V. 4, 5. ass. Ther: * thou art a foole, an
asse, a very blocke. -
1 I. A. 342.

T. and C. V. 4, 5. whore. Syn: Twas this hot whore
that set all Troy a fire.
2 I. A. 394.

T. and C. V. 4, 7. drab. Ther: To kill so many
thousands for one drabbe. -
1 I. A. 394.

T. and C. V. 4, 8 swearing. Syn; Ile swear I do. -
2 I. A. 365.

T. and C. V. 4, 9 mouse-
eaten dry cheese. Ther: I smel this Sea-
rat ere he come a shoare,
By this hee's gnawing
Menelaus Cheese. - 1 I. A.
287.

T. and C. V. 4, 10 dog-fox,
Ulysses. Ther: * * the crafty Fox,
Ulysses.- 1 I. A. 334.

T. and C. V.4, 11. cur.

Ther: A Rogue, a rayling

T. and C. V. 4, 12. dog.

Rogue, a Curr, a barking
Dog. - 1 I. A. 343.

Such a similarity of vocabulary helps to make the
Thersites scenes in Troilus and Cressida and The Iron
Age homogeneous in character.

Lines 1-16 which we have just been examining are
followed by a little combat scene (V. 4, 24-30) which
should be compared in its entirety with a similar com-
bat scene in The Iron Age.

Hector: What art thou,
Greek? Art thou for

Ther: Hold if thou bee'st a
man.

Hector's match?

Troi: Stand if thou bee'st
souldier, do not shrinke.

Art thou of blood and honour?

Ther: No, no, I am
a rascal, a scurvy rail-
ing knave, a very filthy
rogue.

Ther: Art not thou Troilus,
young and lusty Troilus?

Troi: I am, what then?

Ther: And I Thersites, lame

Hector: I do believe thee,
live.

and impotent,
What honour can'st thou get

Ther: God - a - mercy,

by killing mee?

that thou wilt believe me; I cannot fight.

but a plague break thy
neck for frightening me! -

T. and C. 4, 24-30

Troi: What mak'st thou
in the field then?

Ther: I came to laugh at
madmen * * *.

Troi: But proud Achilles
Slew my bold brother, and
you Grecians all
Shall perish for the noble
Hector's fall.

Ther: Hold, the Pox take thee
hold, whilst I have breath
I am bound to curse thy
fingers.- 1 I. A. 325.

Both these scenes emphasize the clownish behavior of
Thersites in the battle, and his great cowardise. They
are companion pieces. Still more convincing is the
fact that certain lines of Act V sc 4, .24-30 are still
more closely paralleled by other passages in The Iron Age,
as for instance:

Hector: What art thou, Greek?

Ther: * * I am a rascal; a scurvy railing knave,
a very filthy rogue. - T. and C. V. 4, 24-27.

Ajax: Amongst these what's Thersites?

Ther: A Rogue, a railing Rogue, a Curr, a barking
Dog, the Pox take mee else.- 1 I. A. 343.

It is impossible to doubt the common authorship of these
scenes. It may be worth while to note in passing the
similar characterization of Hector and of Troilus to be
found in the two plays.

Ther: * I am a ras-
cal, a scurvy railing
knave, a very filthy
rogue.

Hector: Dishonourable Greeke,
Hector nere dealt
On base advantage, or ever
lift his sword

Hector: I do believe ~~thee~~, Over a quaking foe, but as
live. T. and C. V 4, 26-28. a spoyle

Troi: When many
times the captive
Grecian falls,
Even in the fan and

Unworthy us, still left him
to his fear.- 1 I. A. 321.

wind of your fair
sword,
You bid him rise and
live,- T. and C. V. 3,
40-42.

Troilus: Let's leave the Troilus: * * you Grecian all
hermit pity with our Shall perish for the noble
mothers. Hector's fall. 1 I. A. 325.

And when we have our
armours buckled on,
The venom'd vengeance
ride upon our swords,
T. and C. V. 3, 45-47.

There is one more short Thersites scene.

Troilus and Cressida Act V, sc 7, lines 9-close, which
is paralleled in fundamental idea by the scene from
1 Iron Age, 325 quoted above.

The last line of this scene closely resembles lines in The Iron Age.

Margarelon: The devil take thee, coward, -
T. and C. V. 7,22

Troilus: Let Cowards fight with Cowards and both feare.

The case Thersites is no match for mee. - 1 3 A 326

The above analysis makes it clear that the "ugly toad" Thersites, with his venom, his deformity, his cowardise, and his cynicism, who, as Coleridge said "despised and was despicable," vs a character that belongs, not in Shakespere's gallery, but in Heywoods.