

*letterature straniere moderne*

'A snapper-up of unconsidered trifles'  
(*The Winter's Tale*, IV.iii.26): Shakespeare's  
language awareness and his 'considered'  
use of a peculiar lexical category

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In times of plenty nobody cares much about humble daily bread, the very staple of existence.

Starting from the late Middle English period the English lexicon has undergone a tremendous growth and development, mostly through borrowing, but also through root creation, new combinations of native elements and sense development. But written production, with its preference for the learned word has much too often been one-sided in its appreciation of the resources of the language stock, so that, as H. Bradley said: «the homely expressions of everyday intercourse, the phrases of contemporary currency alluding to recent events, the slang words and uses of words characteristic of particular classes of society – all these have been but very imperfectly recorded in the writings of any age».

In this overall disregard for the genuine spoken word phrasal verbs, the daily bread of language use, are perhaps the most illustrious victims. They have been held in little esteem by men of science, by schoolmasters and old-fashioned grammarians (though good writers have always loved them). The Literati, particularly in neoclassical ages, have perversely frowned upon them. Dr. Johnson condemned them outright, even though he included a number of them in his *Dictionary*.

This sort of prejudice has been so catching that historical lexicographers and language descriptivists of later ages have seldom considered them worthy of scrutiny and record. Even

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major dictionaries in the past have failed to enter them in their wordstock, though they have exploited them abundantly to give definitions of more learned words: (Johnson's *Dictionary*) to emit = *to send forth*, to educate = *to bring up*, to omit = *to leave out*, to surrender = *to yield up*, to reduce = *to bring back*, issue = the act of *passing out*, retention = *a keeping back*.

As a result of this widespread prejudice in learned circles historical research on the growth and development of phrasal verbs in any age has suffered so much that a systematic and exhaustive survey is still overdue.

A revival of interest in phrasal verbs came about only as late as 1904 with Henry Bradley who first created the expression «phrasal verbs» in *The Making of English*. The hasty description he gave of them, anyway, sufficed to prompt a number of scholars to explore this untapped reservoir of historical and descriptive research, but all the enquiries produced thereafter have failed to envisage phrasal verbs as part of a more complex lexical system – the phrasal system – which produces both verbs, adjectives and nouns (only exceptionally adverbs) and which, besides being very innovative and prolific, constitutes a unique typological development in the Teutonic area.

This essay, therefore, far from claiming to break new ground, aims to point out the need to redeem this lexical category, used unstintingly and so effectively in Middle and Tudor English, from its state of neglect in the field of diachronic studies and thus redress the balance.

My exploratory book on phrasal verbs and expressions, in fact, published in 1981 was my first attempt to call the attention of scholars to the numerous historical and descriptive problems we are faced with in studying this lexical category and its 2nd edition of 1986 contained also a brief survey of phrasal nouns and adjectives used by Shakespeare.

But what do we mean by the phrasal system? An example will suffice. If we look up the verb *to blow* in the O. E. D. (practically a merger of two different anglosaxon verbs: *blāwan*, parallel to Latin *flare* and *blōwan*, parallel to Latin *florēre*) we find that it has developed about 33 meanings and combines with 17 particles (about, abroad, apart, away, back, down, from, in, into, off, on, out, over, through, to, up, upon), producing 17

highly polysemous combinations which, in their turn, have so far produced 20 nouns and adjectives (blowaway, blowalong, blowback, blowby, blowdown, blowoff, blowout, blowover, blow-through, blowup, blowing-in, blowing-off, blowing-out, blowing-through, blowing-up, blownback, blown-down, blown-in, blown-out, blown-up).

This process of lexical development, which has been going on for about 900 years, has become highly productive in Modern English. It has been studied descriptively and prescriptively only in contemporary English, but very little in Middle English (cp. H. Takahashi in the bibliography) and Early Modern English and practically never in the Elizabethan writers. As far as Shakespeare is concerned, it comes as no surprise then that only one specific article has been written so far on the subject: *Verb-Adverb Combination in Shakespeare's Language* by T. Fuji in 1965. But unfortunately Professor Fuji does not live up to our expectations. As a pioneering work his essay is certainly commendable, but his desperate attempt at a classification of phrasal verbs in Shakespeare, though admirable, produces only obscure and contradictory results: he does not succeed, in fact, in identifying a convincing, linguistically-based typology. His statistic data, based on only seven plays, cannot be applied to the whole of Shakespeare's production. Moreover, he ignores phrasal nouns and adjectives completely. Nonetheless his analysis of the dramatic and poetic effectiveness of phrasal verbs in Shakespeare is worthy of praise.

On the other hand, for a general approach to the problems, both historical and descriptive, of the phrasal system the only safe reference that can be made is to: *The Modern English Verb-Adverb Combination* by A. G. Kennedy, a slim but very inspiring booklet, a real seminal work, wide-ranging in scope, which has the merit of pointing out the numerous problems of the phrasal system still facing us, but which is unfortunately too dated, having been written in 1920. Thus, as for Shakespeare and Elizabethan usage, it seems the state of the art in this field has poor perspectives and little new to say. Authoritative scholars have either ignored the problem, or dealt with it too hastily. Professor Blake, for instance, in his lucid introduction to Shakespeare's language says that «extensions with verbal groups (and he means verbs with particle extension) are not

met with frequently in Shakespeare, because it was more usual to use prefixed verbs in Elizabethan English». But no statistical count has been made and we are not yet in a position to balance prefixed verbs against phrasal verbs. Vivian Salmon, in her essay on the use of colloquial language in the Falstaff comedies, even though she admits that phrasal verbs were plenty and that a lot of them have fallen into disuse, treats them as slang expressions.

R. Quirk, G. L. Brook, G. S. Gordon, G. D. Willcock, B. I. Evans, H. M. Hulme, I. Ewbank and A. Hart ignore them altogether. U. Lindelöf quotes only two phrasal nouns used by Shakespeare: *sneak-up* and *go-between*.

I. Koskenniemi quotes 12 phrasal adjectives used in Elizabethan English. She debates the problem of *p.p.* + *P* made into adjectives rather extensively, but ignores completely phrasal verbs and all other expressions derived from them. Her investigation is hampered by the fact that she lacked theoretical insight into the phrasal system and so failed to grasp the repercussions that it had on the English lexicon.

Onions records very few phrasal verbs and only one phrasal noun: *sneak-up*, whilst the third edition of his *A Shakespeare Glossary*, enlarged and revised by R. D. Eagleson in 1986, at long last does justice to phrasal verbs, nouns and adjectives, but is far from being exhaustive.

Alexander Schmidt's extensive survey enumerates many more such forms, but misses the opportunity to enlarge upon them and identify them as a special lexical category: he does not say anything, for instance, about how they patterned in Shakespeare's English.

In general, surveys of Shakespeare's language, both major and minor ones, give only those forms that are at variance with modern linguistic practice, taking it for granted that all the rest is identical with modern forms and usage.

All this proves how little the phrasal system has been investigated in Early Modern English.

Since phrasal expressions, that is to say, *nouns*, *adjectives* and in a few cases *adverbs*, are a further development of phrasal verbs, and since I have tracked down about 100 such expressions in Shakespeare (and I am not sure I have 'retrieved' them all), their presence in Shakespeare's language is clear evidence

that the phrasal system was used far and wide both in speech and writing and that it is wrong to classify its forms merely as slang expressions.

Shakespeare's exuberant verbal art is characterised by a surprisingly large and varied array of formative patterns that he used very deftly to unleash the language. An established place in this array of patterns is the one occupied by phrasal verbs and expressions that Shakespeare employed more frequently than we have so far assumed, exploiting all their potential expressiveness.

Since no wide-ranging and exhaustive investigation has ever been undertaken and no complete inventory has ever been made, from the little I have been able to observe, browsing through various works of Shakespeare, I can say that the phrasal system had already reached its maturity in Elizabethan English and was already very productive at a popular level. The phrasal system still lacked the idiomatic character that it would develop in the modern period and it only remained for it to divest itself of its popular flavour, that was an obstacle to its development, and enter written usage by full right, pouring forth all its vital sap at the hands of a great writer.

After realising how frequently and effectively Shakespeare used phrasal verbs and expressions one cannot but form the idea that he actually «snapped up» the opportunity of making the best possible use in his age of a lexical category that was still widely considered unworthy of literary dignity.

In spite of Dryden's criticism and that of most 17th century literati who later frowned upon such a widespread use of phrasal verbs and expressions in writing, Shakespeare proved, ahead of his time, that the phrasal system was an important asset of the language and he anticipated its success in modern spoken and written usage.

In the appendix to this paper two passages, taken at random, have been included: one is from *The Authorised Version of the Bible* of 1611, *Psalm* 78; the other is from *Timon of Athens* (act 1, scene 1). Both show a high frequency of phrasal verbs and it is somewhat surprising that this has never caught the eye of scholars.

It is a well known fact that *The Authorised Version of the*

*Bible* is largely based on Tyndale's translation. Tyndale translated straight from the Hebrew and Greek originals having in mind a Bible not designed for private reading, but to be read aloud in church: the Scriptures had to be unlocked for the ordinary man and the key was 'the vulgar tongue'. That is why his translation is so largely couched in simple and popular language.

It was thus that such popular forms as phrasal verbs first entered so widely-read a book, which helped spread them around further, giving them also acceptance in written usage and paving the way to the new social and stylistic status that they were to acquire in time. The striking fact about the prose of *The Authorised Version of the Bible* is that, according to the Renaissance conception of the use of English, it joins native continuity with humanist virtuosity and that is why we find in it phrasal verbs side by side with Latin polysyllables. But the fact remains that phrasal verbs, together with all other popular forms, constituted the 'carrier wave' of the biblical message.

In *Psalms* 78, in fact, out of 82 verbs with particle extension, 24 are phrasal verbs proper, that is to say, combinations where the particle is an adverb which often interferes, in various ways and degrees, with the meaning of the verb. The remaining 58 combinations are verbs followed by a preposition, 37 of which have a metaphorical meaning or constitute fixed expressions (the preposition is practically a bound form: *ask for, provide for, cast upon*).

In the face of this large number of V+P combinations we have only *six prefixed verbs*: overflow, overwhelm, forsake, awake, behold and believe. Most of these combinations enjoyed wide currency in the Elizabethan Age and were far from being dialectal or slang as Ms. Vivian Salmon suggests. Some of them diverge from modern corresponding forms only for their stylistic effect and idiomatic charge: two aspects of language closely bound up with the culture of an age. Nonetheless they maintain all their communicative strength also for the modern reader.

Incidentally we cannot fail to point out that the phrasal noun *passover*, which appeared for the first time in Tyndale's translation of *Exodus* of 1530, was most certainly coined by Tyndale as an English equivalent for *Pesach* (from which the

Italian term *Pasqua* is derived), the Jewish exodus from Egypt, and that the phrasal adjective *puffed up* in the sense of 'inflated with pride', 'very proud', appeared for the first time in Tyndale's translation of the *Epistle to the Colossians* of 1526.

Is this another of Tyndale's inventions or has it been picked up from popular usage? We do not know. We find that phrasal adjective also in Coverdale who says that his version of the Bible «is not puft up» and in the *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (5.2.): «And ye are puffed up».

A similar abundance of V+P combinations is also to be found in the other passage of the appendix, the one from *Timon of Athens*. Here, out of 47 verbs with particle extension, 17 are phrasal verbs whose adverbial particles afford a wide range of functions: from physical position or movement to perfective or continuative aspects, from metaphorical to highly idiomatic meanings. The remaining 30 combinations are verbs followed by a preposition and for some of them the preposition is not merely an unessential extension. Surprisingly enough only one prefixed verb appears in this passage. The only phrasal noun to be found here: *stirrup*, is not a phrasal noun at all, but a popular reinterpretation of an old compound which originally meant *sty-rope* and has nothing to do either with *stir* or with *up*. But is it not eloquent enough that obscured words should be re-shaped orthographically like phrasal nouns?

The phrasal system began to develop rather early within the Teutonic languages, but went its full course only in English, whilst it was stunted half-way in all other Germanic languages. The English phrasal system today represents the most advanced typological development in the Teutonic area. In many ways it is a phraseological tendency which has moved English away from the Teutonic family and brought it nearer to Romance languages, even though Norman-French influence has very little to do with the process.

The system arose from separable verbs which are a late development of prefixed verbs: in the Anglo-Saxon period the prefixed particle first separated from the verb and then, through the complete reorganisation of word-order within the sentence, was moved after the verb. Thus phrasal verbs were born and they, in their turn, as they continued to develop their



system, soon began to produce an adjoining system, that of phrasal nouns, adjectives and adverbs.

Modern linguistic theory (cp. Mitchell in the bibliography) has identified three phrasal types:

*phrasal verbs proper* (where the particle is an adverb: *to make up*),

*prepositional verbs* (where the particle is a preposition: *to look after*),

*phrasal-prepositional verbs* (those followed by an adverb and a preposition: *to put up with*).

The most distinctive feature of these three types is that the nexus between the various parts is so highly idiomatic as to make their meanings unpredictable, at least to non-native English users, with the various component parts having nothing or little to do with their literal meanings.

But side by side with this highly idiomatic system there exists a parallel non-idiomatic system of free-combinations with the same syntactic typology, which has also produced and is still able to produce phrasal nouns and adjectives.

Historically it was the literal, non-idiomatic system that developed first, and only later, through figurative and metaphorical processes, the idiomatic system arose. The phrasal verbs that we find in the two passages in the appendix are mostly literal in meaning, but there are some which have already developed an idiomatic or rather special meaning.

But since modern theory does not explain away all the subtle niceties and fine points that can result from this complex process of combination, let us see what happens when a particle is added to a verb (we obviously have to make do with an unsystematic overview of the facts):

1) if it does not interfere with the meaning of the verb, it remains a mere extension that expresses one of the various syntactic, conceptual and/or aspectual developments of the verb: every verb, according to its nature, has its own range of syntactic structures and semantic relations and the action or state it expresses is often subject to modes of execution or situational restrictions:

*to look up/down, in(to)/out (of), from/to, at, (a)round, away, back, through, on (prep.), on (adv.);*

2) if it interferes with the meaning of the verb, it usually carries out one or more of the following operations:

A) it develops in the verb a tendency toward figurative meanings:

*look ahead* (= to plan for the future), *look over* (=examine, inspect), *look back* (= remember, reconsider), *stand for* (= tolerate), *bring up* (= educate, rear);

B) it selects one specific meaning out of the general one or out of the various ones that the verb has, or generates new and very idiomatic ones that have little or nothing to do with the original one:

a) *to look at, to look through, to look into* are all different and restricted modes of execution,

b) *to look for* (= search), *to look after* (= take care), *to look out* (= beware), *to look forward to* (= expect), *to look down on* (= despise) are all new meanings generated through the combination;

C) it causes the verb to become polysemous:

*to look up* = 1. consult, 2. pay a visit, 3. improve (things are at last looking up), 4. look upward (literal),

*to look out* = 1. look outward, 2. beware, 3. search,

*to bring up* = 1. rear, educate, 2. call attention to, 3. summon, 4. vomit, 5. carry upward (literal);

D) the particle, because of its many-sided nature, can develop different functions and generate different meanings together with the verb, thus giving combinations that belong to quite different categories:

a) when I rebuked her, she *looked down* (adv.): intransitive phrasal verb with literal meaning,

b) He *looked down* the steep slope: prepositional verb,

c) I stopped in the middle of the bridge and *looked down* (the bridge), (prepositional adverb): intransitive phrasal verb,

d) the English *look down on* everything foreign (idiomatic): phrasal prepositional verb,

e) the little boy *rode on* his father's shoulders: intransitive prepositional verb,

f) Shall I *ride you on* my back?: transitive prepositional verb,

g) He needs some money *to tide him over* (adverb): transitive phrasal verb,

h) Can you lend me £10 *to tide me over* the next few days? (preposition): transitive prepositional verb,

i) His parents *looked on* with a triumphant smile (adverb – aspectual particle – literal meaning): phrasal verb,

j) He would *look on your refusal* as a deadly insult (preposition – figurative meaning): prepositional verb,

E) it causes the verb to enter into specific phraseological constructions and collocations that are highly situation-based (the combination usually acquires a fixed environment):

*to look in on* a person or *at* a place

*to look up the meaning of* a word in a dictionary

*to look somebody up*, *to look up an old place*;

F) it brings forth in the verb nuances of meaning that are to do with emotions, moods, attitudes, whims, behavioural conventions and established situations:

*to look to* (= trust and expectation), *to look up to* (= respect and admiration), *to look forward to* (= expectation and anticipation), *to look down (up)on* (= contempt), *to look in* (implies the idea of a short visit), *to look somebody up* (= a visit after a long time);

G) it generates in a non-verbal word the verb function:

*rough* – *to rough in*

*chin* – *to chin up*

*while* – *to while away*;

H) it modifies the verbal diathesis, that is to say, it changes a verb from transitive into intransitive or vice versa:

She *dried her hands* – Her inspiration *dried up*  
The wind is *blowing hard* – The wind *blew down* a tree;

3) it paves the way to synonymic development by allowing variation in the verb part, while keeping a fixed particle:

to *look* through – to *glance* through – to *skim* through – to *flick* through – to *run* through – to *rifle* through – to *leaf* through.

In all the cases described above the particle is, one way or another, linguistically and semantically justified, but there are cases where the particle is redundant (pleonastic) and has no justification.

Nonetheless the boundaries between redundancy and function are not always clear-cut. Since language is both content and form, allowance must be made for a 'redundant' particle, especially when it is used to improve euphony, articulation and prosody (rhythm), to intensify an idea, to round off the phrasological environment of an expression or only just out of a desire for form variation: all legitimate requirements of language. For instance, it is not easy to establish the degree of redundancy of the particle in the following examples:

... go, *fetch* my supper *in* (*The Taming of the Shrew*, 4.1.145)  
*Raise up* the organs of her fantasy (*MWW*, 5.5.45)  
Why *ring not out* the bells *aloud* throughout the town? (*1H6*, 1.5.50)  
You see how all conditions ... *tender down* their services  
to Lord Timon (*Timon of Athens*, 1.1.52).

The forceful rounding-off effect of the particle explains Shakespeare's marked preference for phrasal verbs particularly in imperatives, instead of monosyllabic or prefixed verbs:

Now Gods, *stand up for* bastards  
*Pull off* my boots  
*Put* my armour *on*

*Hold off* your hands  
*Shake off* this downy sleep  
As from your graves *rise up*, and walk like spirits

We know very little about how far the phrasal system had developed in Elizabethan English and it would be wrong to try to assess it by superimposing modern patterns on it. That would be either fatalistic or idealistic: there is nothing predetermined in language. Language develops in accordance with the communicative needs of the linguistic community and not to fit in with presumptive patterns identified a posteriori by linguists. Nonetheless modern patterns are a useful term of comparison.

In any case, even the hasty and discontinuous investigations conducted so far supply safe evidence that the three types of phrasal verbs identified in contemporary English already existed in Elizabethan English (the 3rd type was certainly the slowest to develop) together with what I call 'the fused type', where verb and particle have merged into one word: *to doff* or *daff* for *do off*, *to don* for *do on*, *to dout* for *do out*, *to dup* for *do up* (all four of them present in Shakespeare's English).

It also appears at first sight that the largest number of V+P combinations had a literal meaning and that only a limited number were apt to develop figurative and metaphorical meanings, but this is pure conjecture, since no careful and exhaustive verification has been made. From a syntactic point of view we notice occasional divergences from modern usage, as when Guildenstern in *Hamlet* (2.2.30) says: «we both obey, and here *give up ourselves* in the full bent» (we find the same word-order in the Bible: (*Job*, 39) «what time she *lifteth up herself* on high»), or when Hotspur in *1H4*, 3.1.95 says: «See how this river *comes me cranking in* (comes cranking in upon me)» and again when Richard in *Richard the Third* (4.2.60) says: «for it *stands me much upon* to stop all hopes». Since the latter example has been taken up and commented by Professor Blake, I think a few more points should be emphasised here:

*first*, that *the placing of the preposition after its object* was common practice in Anglo-Saxon:

*patt enngell comm annd stod hemum bi*

*his armez wythinne*

and that this tendency, which still survives in modern constructions such as: the *world over* and the *whole night through* or in substandard usage: I am sure the lorry would have *run us over / run over us*, evidently emerged again here and there in Elizabethan English, particularly in poetic writings where archaic forms enjoyed a privileged status;

*second*, that prepositions differ from adverbs in so far as they have a two-sided connection: with the verb that governs them and with the object that they govern. But the second connection in Anglo-Saxon prepositions was both *forward-pointing* and *backward-pointing*: *hemm bī*, whilst in Modern English prepositions have retained only the forward-pointing one (even a *dangling preposition* points forward to an object that has been displaced). The only survival in Modern English of a backward-pointing preposition (in actual fact a postposition) is to be found in the forms: *hereby, thereto, whereupon* ecc. which are linguistic fossils;

*third*, that in an age when the formal patterns of surface structures had not yet been prescriptively established by grammarians, it was the *inborn feeling of internal linguistic relationship*, or, to put it in other words, the awareness of deep structures, that directed language productivity.

Even though the three phrasal types were already present in Elizabethan English, we cannot however venture to say to what extent Elizabethan speakers and writers were possessed of the awareness of phrasal patterns and of the phrasal system altogether, but we can assert with all certainty that they had developed a full sense of the potential expressiveness of the particle.

Historically, it is interesting to note that after the fall of inflections there has been in English the proliferation of an astonishing number of particles, most of which have, in the long run, acquired a polysemous thickness and a wide variety of semantic functions. English is in fact 'a particle-based or particle-obsessed' language. A sort of obsession with the particle, that Shakespeare certainly shared with his contemporaries, is clearly exemplified in the two following quotations:

1. that fair *for* which love groan'd *for* (R. & J., 1.5.141):

2) you are looked *for* and called *for*, asked *for* and sought *for* in the great chamber (*R. & J.*, 1.5.10).

Particles operate on the syntactic level (adverb, preposition, prepositional adverb), on the lexical level (from structural words they tend to become content words and acquire a status other than their natural one: *Out* with his head! – That's the *in*-thing to do! – Let's *away* by night! – Teach-*in*, smoke-*in*, flower-*in*) and on the semantic level.

In the light of what has been said about the operations carried out by the particle in V+P combinations, on a semantic level the particle can be classified in the following way:

1) *extensive*: when it expresses physical position or movement and when it acquires an aspectual force (perfective, continuative, inchoative, conclusive, resultative, iterative, dispersive or merely intensive): *go up, come out, sail through; shut down, break off, speak up*;

2) *integrative*: when, added to a verb, it generates in it and together with it, meanings that are very far from the literal meanings of both component parts: *turn up, make up, turn out, come about, take after*;

3) *substitutive*: when it takes upon itself the verbal charge and relegates the verb to a mere instrumental or modal function: *look through, glance through, flick through, skim through*.

As can be seen from the examples above, this kind of particle is susceptible to generate synonymic variation. All the times the particle carries the burden of the action one is free to give vent to the whims of the imagination in the verb part. This type of combination has always been everybody's hunting ground at all cultural levels and has become one of the most creative patterns: *to wimp out, to chicken out* (informal usage), *Bristle thy courage up!* (Shakespeare), The landlady *curtseyed* the young man *back* to his cab and *floated* him *off* on her smiles (Dickens).

Occasionally Shakespeare exploits the verbal force of the particle by changing it into a verb through functional shift: «you may *away* by night», «... and let's *away* to part the glory of this happy day»,

4) *generative*: when, added to a noun, an adjective or an adverb, it causes them to become verbs: *to inch through*, *to tidy up*, *to while away*.

But this is only a schematic, rule-of-thumb classification that does not do justice to the complexity of semantic development all the times a verb and a particle are combined. Nonetheless it is useful as a provisional yardstick to evaluate the use that Shakespeare made of the particles he combined with verbs.

A few examples will suffice:

Are my chests *fill'd up* with extorted gold?  
(here the particle is perfective)

I have, in this rough work, *shap'd out* a man  
(here the particle is perfective, resultative and highly descriptive)

Now, Hamlet, 'tis *given out* that . . . a serpent stung me (here the aspectual value of *out* is both dispersive and figurative; the meaning conveyed is: announced officially. In fact we find in Shakespeare also the phrasal noun *giving out* in the sense of "assertion")

When she first met Mark Antony, she *pursed up* his heart (here we have a clear case of figurative use)

I'll *knock her back*, foot her home again  
(here the particle has a verbal force, it is substitutive and the verb only underlines the manner)

It is clearly substitutive also in the following examples from *Antony and Cleopatra*:

That I might *sleep out* this great gap of time (1.5.6)  
Pompey doth this day *laugh away* his fortune (2.6.110)  
If he do, sure he cannot *weep't back* again (2.6.111)  
We have *kissed away* kingdoms and provinces (3.10.6-8).

Another obvious example is from the third part of *Henry VI* (5.4.31): The tide will *wash* you *off*.

In the following three combinations that have not survived to modern use (only *to fetch up* is currently used in contemporary English), even though they retain a faintly literal meaning, the particles are integrative and highly idiomatic:



It makes the course of thoughts *to fetch about* (= wander, straggle) (*King John*, 4.2.24)

You speak this *to fetch me in*, my Lord! (= cheat, take in) (*Ado*, 1.1.233) I ... will *fetch off* Bohemia (= make an end of) (*WT*, 1.2.334).

Extensive particles are obviously the most numerous:

Thyself do grace to them and *bring* them *in*

but it is not seldom that an extensive particle takes on tinges of other functions and even when it is slightly redundant, it is highly descriptive and picturesque:

Even he *drops down* the knee before him.

Clearly a semantic of the particle, a semantic of the verb and a semantic of the combination should be developed to underline the forcefulness of such expressions.

The one thing that strikes the modern linguist most is that very few generative particles are to be found in Shakespeare's language. This is somewhat paradoxical in the sense that having Shakespeare indulged so profusely in the functional shift of words (He *childed*, as I *fathered* – *Virgin* me no virgins), he has on the contrary seldom used the particle to carry out the syntactic conversion of words. Is it really so, or is it only a blind spot in the enquiries? The only exceptions in my records are:

*to scarf up*: *Scarf up* the ... eye of ... day (*Mac.*, 3.2.47)

*to buoy up*: The sea ... would have *buoy'd up* (*King Lear*, 3.7.60)

*to silver over*: And sable curls *all silvered over* with white (*Sonnet* 12/4)

*to sickly over*: ... is *sicklied over* with the pale cast of thought (*Hamlet*, 3.1.85)

*to sugar over*: ... we do *sugar over* the devil himself (*Hamlet*, 3.1.48)

*to bristle up*: Boy, *bristle* thy courage *up* (*Henry V*, 2.3.4)

*to throe forth*: With news the time's in labour, and *throes forth* (*Antony and Cleopatra*, 3.7.79)

*to bolt up*: ... which shackles accidents and *bolts up* change (*Antony and Cleopatra*, 5.2.6.)

*to trammel up*: If the assassination could *trammel up* the consequences (*Macbeth*, 1.7.3).

In some of these examples the particle is also substitutive and aspectual, because often more functions pile up in the same particle. In fact I. Koskenniemi quotes six such forms she has found in Elizabethan English: *to bottle up*, *to blade out*, *to court out*, *to inch out*, *to jest out*, where the particle is also heavily aspectual and substitutive, even though it is clearly used to carry out the conversion.

But a confirmation of how extensively and forcefully Shakespeare exploited the phrasal system comes from the bulk of phrasal nouns and adjectives that I have found in his works. Since they represent a further development of phrasal verbs, they testify to the vitality and productivity of the whole system.

Of the 100 or so expressions that I have found, 26 are *base-forms*, 20 are *agent-nouns* in *-er*, 17 are *-ing-forms* and 37 are *participial adjectives* in *-ed*.

For simplicity's sake I have adopted a morphological approach, even though a functional and semantic approach would be more appropriate. In the beginning *base-forms* were derived by conversion from the *imperative* of a phrasal verb, had a *personal* value and were *derogatory*. We find them first used as epithets, nicknames or appositions: *Robert renne-about* (1377). But later, when grammatical conversion became widespread, they were derived from the *infinitive* and in the long run they lost their personal and derogatory character, enlarging their semantic field: action, state, result, concrete and abstract nouns. About 90 per cent of all existing phrasal nouns today are *base-forms* derived from the infinitive.

Of the 26 forms used by Shakespeare some are typical: *cast-away*, *runaway*, *go-between*, *sneak-up*, *start-up*, but a considerable number of them carry an unusual particle compared with later usage: *holdfast*, *let-alone*, *livelong*, *fly-slow*. Three of them are used as interjections or greetings: *sneck-up*, *lullaby*, *take-all*; one is a surname: *Mistress Kate Keepdown*; another is a real exception, and I think an absolute first historically: a Latin polysyllabic verb with an Anglo-Saxon particle: *surrender-up*. Then we have three typically Shakespearean forms: *be-all*, *end-all*, *take-all* (it seems he liked this sort of combination, but the term *spend-all*, which dates back to 1553, does not appear in Shakespeare); two picturesque forms: *have-at-him* (= stroke, «fendente» in Italian) and *slug-a-bed* (= sluggard), six assimi-

lated forms that are not based on V+P combinations: *stirrup*, *runagate*, *rudesby*, *syrup*, *handfast*, *hunts-up* and a partial nominalisation which gives food for thought to language analysts:

Returning were as tedious as *go o'er* (*Macbeth* 3.4.137).

By and large base-forms in Shakespeare show a variety of unusual and anomalous categories and unexpectedly few regular forms perfectly in line with their traditional pattern.

Far more interesting is Shakespeare's use of phrasal *agent-nouns* in *-er*. Compared with *base-forms* they are unexpectedly numerous and this can be explained in at least two ways: first, they easily retained the verbal force of the original phrasal verb, were more explicit and at the same time more picturesque; second, they were a handy expedient for variation and invention. Two of them are used in tandem, with a variation:

thou *setter-up* and *plucker-down* of kings

and later in the same play (*H6C*, 2.3.37 and 157)

proud *setter-up* and *puller-down* of kings.

Here the cliché of opposition is a handy matrix for two nonce words.

This leads us to a focal point of Shakespeare's inventiveness. How many of these terms are nonce words? For some of them we have sufficient textual evidence to ascertain this, but we fear we know Elizabethan usage too little to draw safe conclusions for other such terms. Even though we do not know much about the practice of nonce formations in the Elizabethan Age, it can safely be assumed that, generally speaking, new coinages first appeared as elicitations from the text and the situation and then acquired currency outside their context, settling down in ordinary usage. In other words, together with word-play and an unrestrained desire for variation, the process of nonce formations is a primary source of linguistic creativity and we know for certain that Shakespeare excelled in all of these practices.

We have an outstanding example in the term *blower-up* (*All's Well*, 1.1.132: Bless our poor virginity from *underminers* and

*blowers-up!*)), where word-play, figurative use and the interplay of meanings of the verb (blossom, deflower, cause to explode) conjure up the meaning of 'one who defiles virginity': it is a typically popular form of word-play.

*Climber-upward* is another nonce word brought about through figurative use.

With *broker-between*, *goer-between* and the more established *go-between* we have a clear example of how Shakespeare indulged in synonymic variation.

*Stander-by*, still widely used in *The Spectator* and only later displaced by the parallel and more ancient form *by-stander*, testifies to a preference for the phrasal system in Shakespeare.

By and large, the forcefulness of these expressions is self-evident:

the *cutter-off* of Nature's wit (*As You Like It*, 1.2.53)

the *finder-out* of this secret (*Winter's Tale*, 5.2.131)

a *weeder-out* of his proud adversaries (*Richard III*, 1.3.123)

the *putter-on* of these exactions (= instigator) (*Henry VIII*, 1.2.24)

a *snapper-up* of unconsidered trifles (*Winter's Tale*, 4.3.26)

the *thrower-out* of my poor babe (*Winter's Tale*, 3.3.29) (one who abandons)

old age, that ill *layer-up* of beauty (= preserver, storer) (*Henry V*, 5.2.230)

That I might prick the *goer-back* (= reluctant person) (*Cymb.*, 1.1.169).

I have also tracked down a considerable number of *-inglforms* + *P*, whose presence in Shakespeare's language can be explained with their wide functional, semantic and stylistic range: they can be both adjectives, nouns and partial nominalisations (they are half-way between a noun and syntactic structure); they can have specific or general meaning, indicate general activity or single action, although they always convey an abstract idea, and they are handy both in a synthetic and an analytic register. Shakespeare indulged in their use every time he wanted to avoid a Latinate style and adopt a more informal and phraseological mode.

As is consistent with a well-known Anglo-Saxon linguistic

trend, these forms easily assume a substantival and adjectival status while keeping all their verbal strength (deverbal formations we would say today).

A typical example is *coming-on*, which is used as an *attributive adjective* with the sense of 'complaisant': in a more *coming-on* disposition; as an *established noun* in the specific sense of 'attack': in robustious and rough *coming on* and as a partial nominalisation with a general meaning: *the coming on of time*.

One gets the impression that some of them are nonce words such as *bringings-forth* for achievements, *comings-in* for income, *putting-on* for incitement (we also have *putter-on* for instigator, both based on the Elizabethan meaning of 'instigate', now fallen into disuse) or popular forms used to avoid more learned words: *falling-off* for ruin, *giving-out* for announcement, *putting-on* for incitement, *setting-on* for decision, *taking-off* for homicide, *bringing-up* for education.

Then we have a number of partial substantivisations which join a syntactic phraseological structure with a nominal function: a long-established practice frequently met with in every age, contemporary usage included:

*the lifting up of day*  
*the falling-from of his friends (= defection)*  
*the giving up of some more towns in France*  
*the putting down of men*  
*the coming on of time.*

To finish the list, an example which is particularly effective in dramatic terms:

*this sudden sending him away*

where the syntactic and lexical levels overlap perfectly.

Also the number of phrasal adjectives used by Shakespeare is considerably high. I have found about forty and 37 of them are *participial adjectives in -ed*. But since adjectives are the most problematic word class (part of speech), counting and classifying them is far from simple. Often it is not easy to assess the adjectival status of an expression. Linguistically we

have to figure out a gradient of variation: only attributive adjectives enjoy full status. They are embedded in nominal groups and thus operate on the lexical level, but when they are predicative, appositive or predicative complements, they operate also on the syntactic level, because they have a structural and continuative function. Moreover, participial adjectives in -ed can have an ambiguous and sometimes a double status: if the idea of passive action is dominant, then they are past participles, but if it is the idea of state or condition that prevails, then they are adjectives in the full sense of the word. But there are dubious cases here and there:

And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is *sicklied over* with the pale cast of thought (*Hamlet*, 3.1.85)

Here the absence of an agent makes the case even more puzzling. There's also a small number of adjectives which invite special attention:

a) three of them are base-forms:  
the *fly-slow* hours  
in his *holdfast* foot  
the *livelong* day

b) two of them are adjectives reinforced by a particle:  
in *steep-down* gulfs of liquid fire  
the *steep-up* heavenly hill.

It is worth noticing here that starting from Early Modern English a particle is often added to nouns, adjectives, adverbs and prepositions, either to reinforce, modify or round them off: *face-down*, *hard-up*, *near-by*, *throughout*, *moreover*.

c) some -ed/forms are more elaborate than usual:  
*ill-thought-on*, *never-heard-of*, *new-cut-off*, *ten-times-barred-up*,  
*nine-years-fought-for*,

but this is nothing compared with the numerous fanciful and picturesque adjectival expressions invented by Shakespeare;

d) a most puzzling case is the one given by the expression *grow to* in *The Merchant of Venice* (2.2.18):

My father did something smack, something *grow to* . . .

It seems this term, in later editions emended into *grown to*, a past participle, has a dialectal basis. In certain dialects in fact, particularly in Warwickshire, *to grow to* meant 'to acquire an unpleasant taste as food does when burnt to the bottom of a saucepan'. So, taken literally it is supposed to refer to something which has a burnt taste. As a phrasal adjective it is quite anomalous.

The following examples will suffice to give an idea of how skilfully Shakespeare exploited the descriptive, intensive and poetic power of phrasal adjectives:

A jewel in a *ten-times-barred-up* chest  
... not so in grace as you, so *hung upon with* love, so fortunate  
The native hue of resolution is *sicklied over* with the pale cast  
of thought  
Honour comes *unlooked-for*  
Prouder than rustling in *unpaid-for* silk  
I am in blood *stepp'd in* so far  
At his heels, *leash'd in* like hounds  
... and all of you *clapp'd up together* in an Antony  
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, *bound in* to saucy  
doubts and fears  
*Mail'd up* in shame  
*Perk'd up* in glist'ring grief  
A *made-up* villain  
The *stretched-out* life  
The *unthought-on* accident  
With any *long'd-for* chance  
The *livelong* day  
*Worn-out* age

The last two expressions have now become current clichés.

Particularly effective, moreover, are the participial adjectives intensified by *all*:

And summer's green *all girded up in* sheaves  
Mine enemies *all knit up in* their distractions  
When I behold the violet past prime  
And sable curls *all silver'd over with* white

And *all unlooked-for* from your highness' mouth.

After Shakespeare this type of phrasal adjective has enjoyed great favour with poets and has become a recurrent stylistic feature in poetic language, but on the whole, Elizabethan writers had a special liking for participial adjectives pre-modified by *un-*, *all*, *so* etc.: a more elaborate type that bore the stamp of literary nonce formations rather than belong to the spoken idiom.

Judging from the number and frequency of phrasal verbs and expressions in Shakespeare's works, we realise that they enjoyed a relevant position in his linguistic choices and that thanks to him they have entered the literary language by full right.

In the 15th century the phrasal system had begun to show real strength, but was confined to speech and popular literature: we find about 20 new V+P combinations in *The Ballad of Robin Hood*. In the 16th and 17th centuries we find extremes of use, with learned works practically ignoring them, and more popularly oriented works such as the *Bible* and Elizabethan dramas abounding in them. But Shakespeare proved that whenever you wanted to use creative language you could not do without them.

To say the last word on the development, vitality and productivity of the phrasal system in Early Modern English a full exploration of all written production should be made, but no single individual, even if aided by computers, can hope to accomplish this in his lifetime. After my tentative investigation I feel assured enough that the following conclusions can be drawn:

*first*, the development of the phrasal system was at first hindered by the massive introduction into English of Latin verbs and the persistence of traditional prefixed verbs. Later, when writers became aware that English could be improved not only through borrowing, but also through the revival of native resources, they realised that the phrasal system was the most effective way of making up for the scarce effectiveness of monosyllabic verbs on the one hand and the unwieldiness and overbearance of Latin polysyllables on the other;

*second*, the old system of prefixed verbs, already too tradition-bound, offered little opportunity to extend the vocabulary of the language; the phrasal system on the contrary was like a



new mine apt to be profitably exploited for new linguistic inventions, and when the language began to expand in the 16th and 17th centuries the system proved an invaluable asset. Lots of new combinations were produced, most of them out of a desire for emphasis, for variation, for rhythmic effect, for a more direct self-expression. Moreover, they lent themselves to figurative and metaphorical use and were more forceful and picturesque than simple native verbs and more transparent than learned Latin polysyllables;

*third*, with Tyndale a copious number of phrasal verbs entered a written text for the first time: the *Bible*, and this was the turning point in the development and success of the system. Tyndale's example was soon followed by Elizabethan playwrights, who began to realise how useful the system was when creating a language of wide popular appeal. But in a situation of uncertainty and riotous variation it was only with Shakespeare's verbal exuberance and creativeness that the expressive potential of these popular forms was first explored and brought forth. He soon discovered and tested their linguistic range: informal directness, expressive immediacy, intensity, descriptiveness, and poetic power: all qualities that had escaped the attention of many of his contemporaries, so that, to conclude, we can rightfully say that he was a real 'snapper-up' of unconsidered trifles.

#### APPENDIX

##### *Legend:*

0 = prefixed verbs	5 = intensive particle
1 = adverbial particle	6 = idiomatic combination
2 = prepositional particle	7 = figurative combination
3 = aspectual particle	8 = redundant particle
4 = collocational particle	9 = phrasal noun

#### TEXT I

##### *The Authorised Version of the Bible: Psalm 78*

- 2, 4 Give ear, O my people, to my law: *incline* your ears to the words of  
 2, 4 my mouth.  
 2, 4 2 I will *open* my mouth *in* a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:  
 3 Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.  
 2, 4 4 We will not *hide* them *from* their children, *shewing* to the gene-  
 2, 4 ration to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his  
 wonderful works that he hath done.

- 2, 4 5 For he *established* a testimony *in* Jacob, and *appointed* a law *in*  
2, 4 Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make  
2, 4 them *known to* their children:  
2, 4 6 That the generation to come might know them, even the children  
which should be born; who should arise and *declare* them *to* their  
children:  
2, 4, 7 7 That they might *set* their hope *in* God, and not forget the works of  
God, but keep his commandments:  
1, 7 8 And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious gene-  
ration; a generation that *set* not their heart *aright*, and whose spirit  
was not stedfast with God.  
1, 7 9 The children of E'-phra-im, being armed, and carrying bows,  
*turned back* in the day of battle.  
2, 4, 7 10 They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to *walk in* his  
law;  
11 And forgat his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them.  
2, 4 12 Marvellous things *did* he *in* the sight of their fathers, in the land  
of Egypt, in the field of Zo'-an.  
1, 3 13 He divided the sea, and caused them to *pass through*; and he  
made the waters to stand as an heap.  
2, 4 14 In the daytime also he *led* them *with* a cloud, and all the night  
with a light of fire.  
2, 4 15 He *clave* the rocks *in* the wilderness, and *gave* them drink as *out*  
\*1+2, 6 of the great depths.  
1+2, 7 16 He *brought* streams also *out of* the rock, and caused waters to *run*  
1, 4 down like rivers.  
2, 4 17 And they *sinned* yet more *against* him by provoking the most  
High in the wilderness.  
2, 4 18 And they *tempted* God *in* their heart by *asking* meat for their lust.  
2, 4 19 Yea, they *spake against* God; they said, Can God furnish a table in  
2, 4 the wilderness?  
0, 1, 3, 5 20 *Behold*, he smote the rock, that the waters *gushed out*, and the  
0, 2, 4, streams *overflowed*; can he give bread also? can he *provide* flesh for  
his people?  
2, 4, 7 21 Therefore the LORD heard this, and was wroth; so a fire was *kin*  
1+2, 7 dled *against* Jacob, and anger also *came up against* Israel;  
0, 2, 4 22 Because they *believed* not *in* God, and *trusted* not *in* his salvation:  
2, 4 23 Though he had *commanded* the clouds *from* above, and opened  
the doors of heaven,  
1+2, 5, 8 24 And had *rained down* manna *upon* them to eat, and had given  
them of the corn of heaven.

\* 1+2 points out those verbs that are followed by both an adverb and a preposition.

- 25 Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.
- 2, 4 26 He caused an east wind to *blow in* the heaven: and by his power  
1, 4, 7 he *brought in* the south wind.
- 2, 4, 7 27 He *rained* flesh also *upon* them as dust, and leathered fowls like  
as the sand of the sea:
- 2+2+2, 4 28 And he let it *fall in* the midst of their camp, *round about* their  
habitations.
- 29 So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave their own desire;
- 2, 4, 7 30 They were not *estranged from* their lust. But while their meat was  
yet in their mouths.
- 2, 4, 7 31 The wrath of God *came upon* them, and slew the fattest of them,  
1, 3, 7 and *smote down* the chosen men of Israel.
- 2, 4 32 For all this they sinned still, and *believed not* for his wondrous  
works.
- 2, 4, 7 33 Therefore their days did he *consume in* vanity, and their years in  
trouble.
- 34 When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and  
2, 4 *enquired early after* God.
- 35 And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God  
their redeemer.
- 2, 4 36 Nevertheless they did *flatter him with* their mouth, and they *lied*  
2, 4 *unto him with* their tongues.
- 37 For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast  
in his covenant.
- 0 38 But he, being full of compassion, *forgave* their iniquity, and des-  
1, 7 troyed them not: yea, many a time *turned* he his anger away, and did  
1, 3, 7 not *stir up* all his wrath.
- 1, 3, 39 For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that *passeth*  
1, 4 *away, and cometh not again.*
- 2, 4 40 How oft did they *provoke him in* the wilderness, and *grieve him in*  
2, 4 *the desert!*
- 1, 4 41 Yea, they *turned back* and tempted God, and limited the Holy  
One of Israel.
- 2, 4 42 They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he *delivered*  
them *from* the enemy.
- 2, 4, 7 43 How he had *wrought* his signs *in* Egypt, and his wonders in the  
field of Zo'-an:
- 2, 4, 7 44 And had *turned* their rivers *into* blood; and their floods that they  
could not drink.
- 2, 4 45 He *sent* divers sorts of flies *among* them, which devoured them;  
and frogs, which destroyed them.
- 2, 4, 7 46 He *gave* also their increase *unto* the caterpillar, and their labour  
unto the locust.
- 2, 4 47 He *destroyed* their vines *with* hail, and their sycomore trees with  
frost.

- 1, 3, 6 48 He *gave up* their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunderbolts.
- 2, 4, 7 49 He *cast upon* them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by *sending* evil angels *among* them.
- 2, 4, 7 50 He *made* a way to his anger; he *spared* not their soul *from* death, 1+2,7,6 but *gave* their life *over to* the pestilence;
- 51 And smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham:
- 1, 4, 52 But made his own people to *go forth* like sheep, and *guided* them 2, 4 *in* the wilderness like a flock.
- 1, 3 53 And he *led* them *on* safely, so that they feared not: but the sea 0 *overwhelmed* their enemies.
- 2, 4 54 And he *brought* them *to* the border of his sanctuary, even to this mountain, which his right hand had purchased.
- 1, 4, 7 55 He *cast out* the heathen also before them, and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.
- 56 Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies:
- 1, 4, 57 But *turned back*, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they 1, 4, 7 were *turned aside* like a deceitful bow.
- 2, 4, 58 For they *provoked* him *to* anger with their high places, and *moved* 2, 4, 7 him *to* jealousy with their graven images.
- 59 When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel:
- 0 60 So that he *forsook* the tabernacle of Shil'-loh, the tent which he 2, 4 *placed among* men;
- 2, 4, 7 61 And *delivered* his strenght *into* captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand.
- 1+2,7,6 62 He *gave* his people *over* also *unto* the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance.
- 63 The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not 2, 4, 7 *given to* marriage.
- 2, 4 64 Their priests *fell by* the sword; and their widows made no lamentation.
- 0 65 Then the LORD *awaked* as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.
- 2, 4, 7 66 And he *smote* his enemies *in* the hinder parts: he *put* them *to* a 2, 4, 7 perpetual reproach.
- 67 Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of E'-phra-im:
- 68 But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.
- 69 And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which he hath established for ever.
- 2, 4 70 He chose David also his servant, and *took* him *from* the sheep-folds;
- 71 From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.

2, 4      72 So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and *guided* them *by* the skilfulness of his hands.

TEXT 2

*Timon of Athens: Act I, Scene I*

2,4      *Enter Poet, Painter, Jeweller, Merchant at several doors*

*Poet.* Good day, sir.

*Pain.* I am glad y'are well.

*Poet.* I have not seen you long; how goes the world?

*Pain.* It wears, sir, as it grows.

*Poet.* Ay, that's well known.

But what particular rarity, what strange,  
Which manifold record not matches? See,  
Magic of bounty, all these spirits thy power  
Hath conjur'd to attend! I know the merchant.

*Pain.* I know them both: th'other's a jeweller.

*Mer.* O, 'tis a worthy lord.

*Jew.* Nay, that's most fix'd.

*Mer.* A most incomparable man, breath'd, as it were,  
To an untirable and continue goodness.  
He passes.

*Jew.* I have a jewel here –

*Mer.* O pray, let's see't. For the Lord Timon, sir?

*Jew.* If he will touch the estimate. But for that –

*Poet.* [*Aside to Painter*] When we for recompense have  
2,4      *prais'd* the vild,  
2, 4, 7      It *stains* the glory *in* that happy verse  
Which aptly sings the good.

2, 4      *Mer.* [*Looking at the jewel*] 'Tis a good form.

*Jew.* And rich. Here is a water, look ye.

2, 4, 7      *Pain.* You are *rapt*, sir, *in* some work, some dedication  
To the great lord.

2, 4      *Poet.* A thing *slipp'd* idly *from* me.

Our poesy is as a gum which oozes  
2, 4, 7      *From* whence 'tis nourish'd; the fire i' th' flint  
Shows not till it be struck: our gentle flame  
Provokes itself, and like the current flies  
Each bound it chases. What have you there?

1, 6, 7      *Pain.* A picture, sir. When *comes* your book *forth*?

*Poet.* Upon the heels of my presentment, sir.  
Let's see your piece.

*Pain.* 'Tis a good piece.

1, 6      *Poet.* So 'tis; this *comes off* well and excellent.

*Pain.* Indifferent.

*Poet.* Admirable. How this grace  
Speaks his own standing! What a mental power

- 1, 7            This eye *shoots forth!* How big imagination  
                  Moves in this lip! To th' dumbness of the gesture  
                  One might interpret.
- Pain.* It is a pretty mocking of the life.  
                  Here is a touch: is't good?
- 2, 4            *Poet.*            I will *say of it*,  
                  It tutors nature; artificial strife
- 2, 4, 7           *Lives in* these touches, livelier than life.
- 1+2, 4           Enter certain Senators, who *go in to* Timon.
- Pain.* How this lord is followed!  
                  *Poet.* The senators of Athens, happy men.  
                  *Pain.* Look, moe!  
                  *Poet.* You see this confluence, this great flood of visitors.
- 1, 3, 5           I have in this rough work *shap'd out* a man,  
                  Whom this beneath world doth embrace and hug  
                  With amplest entertainment. My free drift
- 2, 4            Halts not particularly, but *moves* itself  
                  In a wide sea of wax: no levell'd malice  
                  Infects one comma in the course I hold,
- 1+1, 4, 3       But *flics* an eagle flight, bold, and *forth on*,  
 1, 4            Leaving no tract *behind*.
- 0            *Pain.* How shall I *understand* you?
- 2, 4, 7        *Poet.* I will *unbolt* to you.  
                  You see how all conditions, how all minds,  
                  As well of glib and slipp'ry creatures as
- 1, 5, 8        Of grave and austere quality, *tender down*  
                  Their services to Lord Timon: his large fortune,
- 2, 4, 7        Upon his good and gracious nature *hanging*,  
                  Subdues and properties to his love and tendance  
                  All sorts of hearts; yea, from the glass-fac'd flatterer  
                  To Apemantus, that few things loves better
- 1, 3, 7        Than to abhor himself – even he *drops down*
- 2, 4            The knee before him, and *returns in* peace  
                  Most rich in Timon's nod.
- 1, 4            *Pain.* I saw them *speak together*.  
                  *Poet.*            Sir,  
                  I have upon a high and pleasant hill  
                  Feign'd Fortune to be thron'd. The base o'th'mount
- 2, 4, 7        Is *rank'd with* all deserts, all kind of natures
- 2, 4            That *labour on* the bosom of this sphere  
                  To propagate their states. Amongst them all,  
                  Whose eyes are on this sovereign lady fix'd,
- 2, 4            One do I *personate of* Lord Timon's frame,
- 2, 4, 7        Whom Fortune with her ivory hand *wafts to* her,  
                  Whose present grace *to* present slaves and servants
- 2, 4, 7        *Translates* his rivals.

- 2, 4     *Pain.*        'Tis *conceiv'd* to scope.  
                  This throne, this Fortune, and this hill, methinks,  
 2, 4, 7     With one man *beckon'd from* the rest below,  
 2, 4     *Bowing* his head *against* the steepy mount  
                  To climb his happiness, would be well *express'd*  
 2, 4     *In* our condition.
- 1, 3     *Poet.*        Nay, sir, but *hear me on*: –  
                  All those which were his fellows but of late,  
                  Some better than his value, on the moment  
 2, 4     Follow his strides, his lobbies *fill with* tendence,  
                  Rain sacrificial whisperings in his ear,  
 9        Make sacred even his *stirrup*, and *through* him  
 2, 4, 7     *Drink* the free air.
- Pain.*        Ay marry, what of these?  
                  *Poet.* When Fortune in her shift and change of mood  
 1, 3, 5, 8     *Spurns down* her late beloved, all his dependants  
 2, 4     Which *labour'd after* him to the mountain's top  
 1, 4, 5     Even on their knees and hands, let him *sit down*,  
                  Not one accompanying his declining foot.
- Pain.* 'Tis common.  
                  A thousand moral paintings I can show  
                  That shall demonstrate these quick blows of Fortune's  
                  More pregnantly than words. Yet you do well  
                  To show Lord Timon that mean eyes have seen  
                  The foot above the head.
- 2, 4     Trumpets sound. Enter LORD TIMON, *addressing* himself courteously to  
 2, 4     every suitor; a Messenger from VENTIDIUS, *talking with* him; LUCILIUS  
                  and other Servants.
- Tim.* Imprison'd is he, say you?  
                  *Mess.* Ay, my good lord, Five talents is his debt;  
                  His means most short, his creditors most strait.  
                  Your honourable letter he desires  
 1, 3, 7     To those have *shut him up*, which failing  
                  Periods his comfort.
- Tim.*        Noble Ventidius. Well,  
 1, 4, 5, 7     I am not of that feather to *shake off*  
                  My friend when he must need me. I do know him  
                  A gentleman that well deserves a help,  
                  Which he shall have: I'll pay the debt, and free him.
- Mess.* Your lordship ever binds him.
- 2, 4     *Tim.* *Commend* me to him; I will send his ransom;  
 2, 4     And being enfranchis'd, bid him *come to* me.  
 1, 3, 5, 8     'Tis not enough to *help* the feeble *up*,  
 1, 4     But to *support* him *after*. Fare you well.
- Mess.* All happiness to your honour!

[Exit.]

Enter an Old Athenian

*Old Ath.* Lord Timon, hear me speak.

*Tim.* Freely, good father.

*Old Ath.* Thou hast a servant nam'd Lucilius.

*Tim.* I have so. What of him?

2, 4, *Old Ath.* Most noble Timon, call the man before thee.

*Tim.* Attends he here or no? Lucilius!

*Luc.* Here, at your lordship's service.

*Old Ath.* This fellow here, Lord Timon, this thy creature,

By night frequents my house. I am a man

2, 4 That from my first have been inclin'd to thrift,

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